Supporting young people through vocational education, training and employment

A submission to the Victorian Government’s VET Funding Review

April 2015
About YACVic

The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. (YACVic) is the peak body and leading policy advocate on young people's issues in Victoria. Our vision is for a Victorian community that values and provides opportunity, participation, justice and equity for all young people. We are an independent, not-for-profit organisation.

Youth Affairs Council of Victoria
Level 2, 180 Flinders St
Melbourne, VIC 3000

T: (03) 9267 3722
E: policy@yacvic.org.au
## Contents

The VET Funding Review and Young People  4
Why focus on young people?  4
Engaging with young people  6
Recent changes in the VET sector  7
Young people and VET affordability  10
Early school leavers  11
Place of residence, and gender  12
Addressing gender disparities  15
Koorie young people and VET  16
Refugee and migrant young people and VET  17
Recommendations  19
The VET Funding Review and Young People

The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) is Victoria’s state peak body for young people aged 12-25 and the services that support them. We are a vibrant, member based organisation, with 311 members – approximately half of them young people, the others comprising local governments, community and health services and research bodies, all committed to improving wellbeing, participation and equality for young people.

YACVic welcomes the Government’s decision to review Victoria’s vocational education and training (VET) sector, to consider how it might work better to ensure that more Victorians can become work-ready, and can access high quality training opportunities.

We particularly welcome the emphasis in the review’s terms of reference on quality and stability of training; rural and regional access; ensuring student costs are not a barrier to participation; and supporting vulnerable and high-needs learners to complete training and transition to employment. These are key issues affecting young people, and were discussed in our 2013 report *Vocational Education and Training (VET) and young Victorian: a way forward*.

Why focus on young people?

VET provides a significant pathway for young people, as they prepare to leave school, develop employment skills, and plan their careers. In 2014, young people aged 15-24 made up 40% of Victorians undertaking government-subsidised VET: around 178,439 young people.¹

However, engagement in VET is waning. Since 2012, the number of Victorians taking part in VET has declined, and the biggest decline was amongst those aged 15-19. Between 2013-14, this student group shrank by 18%.²

Unfortunately, young people are disproportionately vulnerable to both unemployment and unstable or casualised employment. In January 2015, 16.5% of young Victorians aged 15-19 who were not in full-time education were unemployed and looking for full-time work.³ (This figure does not capture those seeking part-time work, or those not in the labour force at all.)
Victoria has an ageing population; around one in four Victorians is expected to be aged over 65 in 2050, by which time workforce participation is projected to decline to around 56%. Our community’s future prosperity will demand on strong labour force engagement, but at present many young Victorians are not fully engaged in training, education or employment.\(^4\)

A strong, well-supported VET sector plays a vital role in assisting young people, notably those who want, or need, an alternative to academic schooling, and those facing disadvantage. VET can prepare young people for the workplace, connect employers and future workers, and boost literacy, numeracy and generalist skills.

In this submission, we call for VET pathways which are high quality, affordable, and valuable in helping young people transition into meaningful, sustainable employment – especially young people who are facing disadvantage.

A set of recommendations is included, aligned with the VET Funding Review’s Terms of Reference.
Engaging with young people

We understand the VET Funding Review will include consultations with TAFE institutes, private RTOs, industry representatives, peak bodies and employee associations. We urge that these consultations should also include consumers of VET. In particular, they should engage young people, who make up 40% of the VET student body in Victoria, and who are especially vulnerable to unemployment and other forms of disadvantage.

Engaging with young people would help this review to more fully understand their concerns and needs. Facilitating young people to come up with solutions to the problems in their lives helps to ensure fresh ideas and innovative approaches; it also builds young people’s confidence, initiative, and sense of connectedness to community.

The timelines for this submission did not permit YACVic to undertake significant new consultations with young people about VET, although we did engage our Youth Reference Group. The concerns they highlighted about VET included:

- Rising costs of VET.
- Aggressive marketing campaigns by some registered training providers, using social media and Facebook advertising targeted at young people, free iPads, and instant online sign-ups where the conditions are unclear.
- Fear of ‘dodgy’ providers and uncertainty about how to judge provider quality ahead of time.
- Feeling pressured by teachers and especially employers to undertake particular VET courses, even if the courses do not align with a young person’s own aspirations. This is problematic because young people can only get subsidised access to two VET courses at the same qualification level, and must pay the full cost of any subsequent training themselves.

We would be delighted to work with you in the coming months to host youth consultations or surveys, to learn from young people’s insights about how the VET sector could change to deliver more positive and equitable outcomes for all young people.

- See Recommendation 5
Recent changes in the VET sector

In 2012, the previous Victorian Government announced a number of very significant changes to how the VET sector would be supported in Victoria. These included:

- Removing caps on hourly fees for VET students, effectively enabling providers to set their own rates.
- Removing funding to TAFEs for specific activities, such as regional provision, facilities maintenance and honouring of enterprise agreements.
- Ensuring that all VET providers would receive the same subsidy rate. (Previously the TAFEs had received a higher hourly subsidy, in recognition of their greater delivery costs and community support role.)
- Varying subsidy levels to different VET courses, in bands ranging from $2 to over $10 an hour, according to the assessed value of the course to the economy. Foundational and apprenticeship courses would attract higher subsidies, with lower subsidies for lower level certificates. Areas which would attract high subsidies included construction, mining, manufacturing, and agriculture, forestry and fishing. Those attracting the lowest subsidies included administrative and support services, financial and insurance services, rental, hiring and real estate services, and retail.
- Changing the payment structure for concession card holders. Previously students with concession cards had been able to pay a small fixed fee; now they would pay a concessional rate of 20% of their course fees, up to Certificate IV level.
- Tightening the practice of providing 1.3 loading (multiplied by the per hour course subsidy rate) for any person under 20 who did not have a Year 12 qualification. Now this loading would only apply to early school leavers under 20 who were also defined as being from low socio-economic status backgrounds.

YACVic welcomed another decision taken at that time: to make ‘zero-fee’ training places available to young people exiting out-of-home care – a very positive step for a vulnerable group. However, the bulk of the changes to the VET system were regarded with concern, on the grounds that they were likely to make VET less accessible for many young people.

These new changes occurred on top of broader issues arising from the rapid increase of private VET providers, who are able to access contestable funding through the national training requirement, which guarantees Australians subsidised training at the registered
provider of their choice. The side-effects of this arrangement were discussed in a recent report released from the Business School of the University of Sydney, prepared for the Australian Education Union: *The Capture Of Public Wealth By The For-Profit VET Sector* (2015). Key points of the report include:

- TAFEs and other public providers remain the main ‘go to’ for vocational training for students at risk of disadvantage, including early school-leavers, regional students, Aboriginal students, and students with a disability.
- While government funding to non-TAFE providers has grown rapidly in recent years, spending on VET delivery per hour has dropped. Victorian Government spending per hour dropped by 20% between 2002-2012.
- There has been a significant transfer of public wealth to for-profit providers, which make approximately 30 cents of profit for every dollar of public subsidies received. In Victoria, training subsidies generated approximately $600 million in private profits between 2011-13.
- Regulators have not adequately addressed the unscrupulous practices of some RTOs, such as subcontracting delivery of training to unregistered providers; channelling students into different courses to what they originally wanted (to attract higher subsidies); allowing students to do their qualification in less than a quarter of the nominal duration of a course; and luring students with incentives like free iPads. Students have few means of assessing the quality of providers ahead of time, and can be vulnerable to aggressive marketing.
- The availability of VET FEE-HELP loans has encouraged some providers to sign up students to loans they may have little chance of repaying, if they end up working in low-paid areas such as aged care, childcare, or retail. The removal of the requirement that RTOs have a credit transfer arrangement with a higher education provider has had the effect of weakening quality control.  

- *See Recommendations 4 and 8*

In addition to these changes, young Victorians who are facing disadvantage have also been affected by the loss of some particular programs which previously helped them to become work-ready and engage better with training, education and employment.
One damaging development was the federal government’s decision to cease funding the Youth Connections program. Youth Connections had been funded under the COAG National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions, and was successful in addressing the disengagement of school-aged young people from education, training and employment. The program used to support around 4,600 vulnerable young Victorians each year. A study of one Victorian Youth Connections region by the Brotherhood of St Laurence found that almost three-quarters of the young participants were still engaged with education three months after exiting the program. Another study conducted by Dandolo Partners found that, where circumstances were known, the majority of young people who completed Youth Connections were still engaged with training, education and/or employment six months later.

The strengths of Youth Connections included its community-based case-management approach, program flexibility, independence from schools (which helped to build trust with young people), and capacity to provide intensive support and outreach to the most vulnerable young people. Since the program ceased, local governments are reporting a significant rise in demand for youth case management, in areas including mental health, homelessness, financial hardship and disengagement from school. The loss of Youth Connections has been felt especially keenly in rural and regional communities, which have fewer, if any, other options for alternative education or youth support.

- See Recommendation 2

An older cohort of vulnerable young people were also affected by the previous Victorian Government’s decision to cease funding ‘work-ready’ pre-employment and training programs for young people aged 17-24 who were facing significant barriers to employment, such as mental illness, family breakdown, young parenting, or involvement in the justice system. Before June 2013, the Department of Business and Innovation funded several such programs, run through youth organisations such as Whitelion and the YMCA. These programs helped young adults to develop job-ready skills; linked them to supports in areas like training, housing and health; worked with businesses to secure work placements for them; and helped employers to understand what approaches were needed to keep these young people in their jobs. Under the previous government, funding to these important programs was allowed to lapse.

- See Recommendation 3
Throughout these challenging times, an important role was played by the Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENSs), partnership brokerage bodies which take a place-based approach to tackling youth educational engagement and pathways to work. The LLENSs identify local service gaps and bring together trainers, employers, schools and communities to find local solutions to youth unemployment. They work with thousands of organisations and businesses across the state and are widely recognised as the main partnership brokers in the youth employment space. YACVic welcomed the current Victorian Government’s commitment of $32 million to continue the work of the LLENSs for four years, but the withdrawal of federal government funding to the LLENSs has meant that their capacity to do their valuable work has still been seriously reduced.

- See Recommendation 7

Young people and VET affordability

Young people, particularly those facing disadvantage, tend to have lower than average incomes, making them especially vulnerable to cost changes, such as the removal of course caps and flat concession fees. The ‘banding’ system also has implications for young people, as it tends to direct funding away from junior levels of VET, where young people make up a high proportion of the students.
Young people should not become stuck in cycles of junior level study without strong career prospects at the end. However, this does not mean that junior courses should simply be reduced in favour of Certificate IV and above. Traditionally VET has functioned as a pathway for many young people whose learning difficulties were not dealt with adequately in school. Certificate I-III programs, if well delivered, can play an important role in re-engaging young people who may not yet have the skills or capacity to study at a more senior level. For students facing serious disadvantage, re-engagement with education and training can be a positive outcome in itself.

**Early school leavers**

For young people who leave school without a Year 12 qualification, VET pathways can be crucial. In 2013, the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority identified that 16,855 young people had left school without a Year 12 qualification. Unfortunately young people engaged in VET outside of schools cannot access the sort of wrap-around supports that are available to their peers who are still in school (especially since TAFE cuts led to the reduction of student support services), although this cohort may need support the most.

This cohort of young people is also disproportionately vulnerable to unemployment. In 2014, 17% of early school leavers in Victoria were unemployed and looking for work six months after leaving school, compared to 5% of school leavers who had a Year 12 qualification.
In light of this, it is concerning that enrolments in government-subsidised VET at Certificate II level and above by young people aged 15-19 who do not have a Year 12 qualification declined during 2013-14, to levels lower than they had been since 2009.\(^\text{10}\)

- See Recommendations 1, 8 and 9

**Place of residence, and gender**

While early school leavers are a critical VET cohort across the board, young people’s engagement in VET (and their risk of disadvantage) also vary greatly according to their gender, income, and where they live.

Historically, VET pathways have been especially important for young people from lower-income communities, and from rural and regional communities. Additionally, young women and young men tend to engage in VET in different ways. In some respects, the uptake of VET could be said to mirror broader patterns of privilege and disadvantage, with traineeships and Certificate I-III study (which tend to lead to lower-paid and less secure work) associated with lower income communities, rural communities, and young women.

![Destinations of early school leavers, May 2012](image-url)

*(DEECD, The On Track Survey, 2012)*

- Metropolitan young women
- Metropolitan young men
- Rural / regional young women
- Rural / regional young men

% of young people engaged 6 months after leaving school
VET pathways are crucial in rural communities – in 2013, for example, approximately 31% of Victorian VET students were based outside of major cities.\(^{11}\) LLEN data from 2013 showed that, in proportional terms, the top 10 catchment areas where Year 12 graduates went on to apprenticeships or traineeships were all rural or regional. The same was true of early school leavers, with the exception of one region (Banyule Nillumbik).\(^{12}\)

However, rural and regional engagement in VET appears to be declining. Between 2012-14, publically subsidised VET enrolments in rural / regional Victoria appeared to drop by almost 22%, compared to a 13% drop in Melbourne.\(^{13}\)

This drop in rural and regional participation is likely down to several factors. The rise in fees for some VET courses presumably played a part; rural and regional young people and their families are at greater risk of financial disadvantage than their metropolitan peers, and so are less likely to be able to afford high educational costs. The median income for families with adolescent children (both dual- and single-parent families) is lower in rural Victoria than the state average.\(^{14}\)

Furthermore, the decline of Victoria’s TAFEs has hit some rural and regional communities especially hard. While the 2013 reforms to Victorian VET were explained as a response to the large and unsustainable growth of the VET sector, this approach did not take regional differences sufficiently into account. In 2012 (the last time DEECD’s Training Market reports published this data), it was evident that TAFEs were attracting higher percentages of students than private providers in the majority of regions, while ACE providers were attracting higher percentages of students in rural / regional areas than in Melbourne. The rapid growth of private RTOs appeared to be concentrated in a relatively small number of regions, notably western and southern Melbourne and the Grampians.\(^{15}\) Any reforms to VET should be sensitive to the significant differences in regional access.

– See Recommendations 1 and 6
VET pathways also differ between young women and young men, according to the average socio-economic status (SES) of the area they live in. Amongst early school leavers, Certificate IV+ study is more popular with young women than young men, but women’s participation declines according to declining SES status. Meanwhile, Certificate I-III is more popular with young women than men, but is most prominent in lower SES regions. Apprenticeships are more popular with young men, and seem most prominent in middle SES regions. Traineeships are more popular with young women. For both sexes, traineeships are most common in the lowest SES regions.16

![Destinations of early school leavers, by gender and socio-economic status, May 2013](DEECD, On Track Survey 2013)

Similar patterns are evident amongst young people who have completed Year 12, with traineeships and Certificate I-III study associated with young women from lower income regions, and apprenticeships associated with young men.17
Both Year 12 graduates and early school leavers in lower income suburbs are more vulnerable to unemployment than their peers who live in wealthier areas. Furthermore, young people do not only face the risk of unemployment – most common amongst metropolitan young men without a Year 12 qualification – but also underemployment. Here, rural young women without a Year 12 qualification are especially at risk.

– See Recommendations 1 and 6

Addressing gender disparities

The VET sector has a long history of female and male students being concentrated in different courses, with many women studying in areas more likely to lead to casual or poorly paid jobs. Given the rising expectations about young people’s qualifications when entering the workforce, and the fact that VET providers receive considerable public funding, it is important to ensure the VET sector is equally accessible to all.

For this reason, YACVic raised concerns about the VET subsidy ‘band’ system introduced under the previous government, which decreased support to many junior Certificate-level courses, and to courses in areas like commerce and hospitality, which tend to show a higher concentration of young women, notably early school leavers.

It cannot be assumed that young people will automatically adjust their choices according to industry demand and subsidy levels – for example, recent industry shortages in male-dominated trades have not been met with corresponding uptake by women. According to DEECD, between 2012-13 there was a 10% decline in the number of female students in subsidised training, mostly from courses in Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food, and Arts and Recreation (areas where government subsidies had been reduced). While this might seem positive, given the previous oversupply of training in these areas, it begs the question of what happened to the women who might have studied there.

A ‘gender blind’ approach to VET reform does not work, when young women are being actively encouraged by teachers, peers, family and the media into ‘feminised’ industries which offer poorer pay and conditions. Studies indicate that girls on VET pathways tend to choose training on grounds of what they know themselves to be good at and what they are interested in, while often being ignorant about pay, job availability, conditions and career
paths. Discrimination in workplaces and training settings also keeps female students out of non-traditional trade areas.

Factors which help women move successfully into non-traditional trade areas can include:

- support from employers through active equal opportunities policies
- pre-apprenticeship courses focused on basic skills and confidence building
- qualifications offered through VET institutes (not just through industry employers) which help women to set up independently in the trades
- training structures which employ at least one female trainer per course; and –
- clustering female recruits together for support.  

– See Recommendation 6

Koorie young people and VET

VET pathways are also significant for Aboriginal young people, who face significant educational barriers and inequalities. Certificate IV+ study and apprenticeships are popular with higher proportions of Aboriginal Year 12 graduates than with their non-Aboriginal peers, who are more likely to go to university instead. Meanwhile, Aboriginal young people who leave school without a Year 12 qualification are more likely than their peers to choose junior VET pathways, into traineeships or Certificate I-III study.  

![Graph: Destinations of school leavers, by Aboriginal status and educational attainment (2014)](image)
It is important that Aboriginal young people can access strong VET pathways which lead into sustainable employment, as this cohort are at higher than average risk of unemployment. In 2014, 10% of Aboriginal Year 12 graduates were looking for work six months after leaving school, as were 19% of Aboriginal early school leavers. This compared to the unemployment rates of 5% of non-Aboriginal Year 12 graduates and 17% of non-Aboriginal early school leavers.\textsuperscript{23}

Anecdotally, we have heard that Aboriginal young people have been negatively impacted by the rise in fees for many VET courses; the diminishing of the traditional role of TAFEs as ‘community hubs’; and the loss of key TAFE staff members who had fostered strong networks with Aboriginal students.

- See Recommendation 1

Refugee and migrant young people and VET

Young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds are also disproportionately vulnerable to unemployment. Amongst early school leavers in 2014, rates of unemployment six months after leaving school were higher for those born overseas (18%) than for those born in Australia (17%), and higher for those who spoke a language other than English at home (21%) than for those who spoke English (16%). Opportunities exist to strengthen the participation of multicultural young people in vocational training, notably in apprenticeships and traineeships, where the engagement of young people who were born overseas or speak a language other than English at home is relatively low.\textsuperscript{24}

A recent research report commissioned by the University of Melbourne and the Centre for Multicultural Youth, \textit{Facilitating the Transition to Employment for Refugee Young People} (2014) noted that refugee young people can face challenges to further education and employment, including language barriers, trauma, disrupted schooling, racism, low incomes, limited relevant vocational skills or work experience, limited networks, and lack of knowledge of the Australian labour market. Unfortunately these young people and their families can relatively reluctant to engage in vocational training, seeing it as a low status or ‘second best’ pathway. More work is needed to provide strong, appropriate VET options for multicultural young people, and to present these options to young people and their communities in a realistic and positive light.\textsuperscript{25}
While research in this area is limited, the University of Melbourne report summarised the existing literature about supporting refugee young people through education and employment transitions. From this, they identified a number of principles of good practice, which included:

- Engage employers and local businesses in programs which help establish networks for refugee young people, combat racism, and build cultural awareness.
- Support mentoring programs with a focus on helping refugee young people to build social and professional networks, and to understand the Australian labour system and workplace cultures.
- Take a holistic approach to employment and education by providing wellbeing support to address health and settlement issues, as well as training. This wellbeing component should be explicitly resourced within programs, not treated as an ‘add-on’.
- Provide flexible education support options for young people with disrupted schooling and language barriers.
- Take a gender-sensitive approach, which may include outreach to young women.
- Engage and inform the young people and their wider families and communities.  

- See Recommendation 1

We would be glad to discuss any of these points further. Please contact Jessie Mitchell, Manager of Policy & Projects, Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, on policy@yacvic.org.au or 9267 3722
Recommendations

1. Target resources towards VET programs which demonstrate they can achieve improved educational, employment and wellbeing outcomes for young people at heightened risk of disadvantage. This should include early school leavers in lower-income communities and rural communities, Aboriginal young people, and young people from refugee backgrounds. Indicators of success might include an increase in VET participation and completion by young people previously disengaged from education; increased transitions into work; increased transitions into more senior levels of study; reduced rates of arrest / imprisonment; improvements in literacy, numeracy and English-language skills; and improved wellbeing and community participation. Some stakeholders have told us that modules which allow students facing disadvantage to undertake foundation-level studies alongside a certificate qualification are especially valuable.

Relates to the VET Review’s Terms of Reference:
- b - ‘ensure all government subsidised training is high quality’;
- c – ‘allow rural and regional communities to access training that meets their local needs’;
- d - ‘meet community service obligations to support vulnerable and higher needs learners to complete training and transition to employment’;
- h – ‘ensure eligibility to access subsidised training is fair and well-targeted’.

2. Invest in an education re-engagement program to provide intensive, case-managed support targeting young people aged 13-17 who have disengaged, or are at risk of disengagement from school. (Case management might possibly be extended beyond the age of 17, to help young people transition into training, further study, and employment.) This program should be based on the following principles:
   a. Case management: individualised support that takes into account the young person’s needs, circumstances, and barriers to education.
   b. Flexibility: the ability to develop a case plan according to the needs of the young person, without a strict time limit or prescribed activities.
c. Outcomes-focused: the primary aim is for young people to complete Year 12 or an equivalent and to transition to further study or employment. Progressive outcomes, such as connection to family and improvements in health and wellbeing, would also be monitored.

d. Open referral: referrals can be received from different sources, including schools, families, police, youth justice, employment services and other community agencies.

e. Partnership-based: funded agencies work in partnership with a broad range of local agencies, including schools, police, local councils and community organisations.

f. Outreach capacity: workers need outreach capacity to support hard-to-reach young people.

Relates to Terms of Reference:
- c – ‘allow rural and regional communities to access training that meets their local needs’;
- d - ‘meet community service obligations to support vulnerable and higher needs learners to complete training and transition to employment’;
- k - ‘The implications of recommended reforms for other directly-related areas of education in Victoria’.

3. Fund a ‘work-ready’ pre-employment and training program, to provide intensive, case-managed support for young people aged 17-24 who face significant barriers to employment, such as mental illness, family breakdown, young parenting, or involvement in the justice system. In our 2014 election platform, YACVic calculated that an investment of $8 million over four years, to assist approximately 360 young people per annum, would ensure a level of support equivalent to that previously delivered through programs funded by the Department of Business and Innovation, before they lost their funding in 2013.

Relates to Terms of Reference:
- d - ‘meet community service obligations to support vulnerable and higher needs learners to complete training and transition to employment’;
- j - ‘How other government policy levers may be used to support the quality, stability and sustainability of the Victorian training market’;
- k - ‘The implications of recommended reforms for other directly-related areas of education in Victoria’

4. Consider the recommendations of the recent University of Sydney report *The Capture of Public Wealth by the For-Profit VET Sector*, including:

- Ensuring TAFEs are funded adequately to maintain infrastructure and provide support services for students facing disadvantage;
- Minimum hours of course delivery for providers, mandated through a quality framework which should also audit other inputs, including curriculum, teaching and assessment practices at the point of delivery;
- A ban on subcontracting the delivery of courses to unregistered providers, and an enhanced quality framework to require greater visibility of every component of training delivery;
- Better regulation of RTOs’ marketing and recruiting practices and business models.27

*Relates to Terms of Reference:*
- b - ‘ensure all government subsidised training is high quality’;
- e – ‘build a strong and responsive public Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector’;
- f – ‘manage training expenditure within the existing vocational training budget while preserving a framework of student driven choices’.

5. Undertake consultations with young people who are, or have been, engaged in VET, to learn from their insights about how the VET sector can deliver positive, equitable outcomes for young people, to help them into meaningful employment. YACVic would be happy to support such a consultation.

*Relates to Terms of Reference:*
- b - ‘ensure all government subsidised training is high quality’;
- d - ‘meet community service obligations to support vulnerable and higher needs learners to complete training and transition to employment’;
- g - ‘recognise the public and private benefits of training and ensure fees and student costs are not a barrier to participation’.
6. Address systemic inequality of VET pathways for young women experiencing disadvantage, including by: investing in VET programs which effectively engage and retain female students in non-traditional industry areas where there is a skill shortage; ensuring the review and reform of VET includes representatives with expertise in gender equality; and promoting new and emerging industries as career options for young women, especially early school leavers and rural young women.

*Relates to Terms of Reference:*
- **a** - ‘match training delivery to the growing job opportunities in Victorian industries’;
- **d** - ‘meet community service obligations to support vulnerable and higher needs learners to complete training and transition to employment’;
- **h** – ‘ensure eligibility to access subsidised training is fair and well-targeted.’

7. Invest in local brokerage bodies such as Local Learning and Employment Networks to foster strong relationships between students, training providers, schools, businesses and community support services.

*Relates to Terms of Reference:*
- **a** - ‘match training delivery to the growing job opportunities in Victorian industries’;
- **c** – ‘allow rural and regional communities to access training that meets their local needs’;
- **j** - ‘How other government policy levers may be used to support the quality, stability and sustainability of the Victorian training market’;
- **k** - ‘The implications of recommended reforms for other directly-related areas of education in Victoria’.

8. Strengthen the information about VET and career options provided to young people identified as being at risk of early school leaving, as well as their parents and teachers, to ensure they are not making major enrolment decisions later on without support.
9. Ensure young people aged 15-19 who are experiencing vulnerability in areas such as mental health, homelessness, or family breakdown, and who are engaged in VET outside of mainstream schools, can access wrap-around supports to at least an equivalent level as their peers who are still attending school.

Relates to Terms of Reference:
- d - ‘meet community service obligations to support vulnerable and higher needs learners to complete training and transition to employment’;
- k - ‘The implications of recommended reforms for other directly-related areas of education in Victoria’.
17 DEECD, *The On Track Survey 2013*, p.8
22 DEECD, *The On Track Survey 2014*, pp.11, 28
23 DEECD, *The On Track Survey 2014*, pp.11, 28
24 DEECD, *The On Track Survey 2014*, pp.12, 29
25 Sally Beadle, for the Youth Research Centre, Melbourne University, and the Centre for Multicultural Youth, *Facilitating the Transition to Employment for Refugee Young People*, Melbourne, 2014, pp.5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18-19
26 Beadle et al, *Facilitating the Transition to Employment for Refugee Young People*, pp.28-30, 32-33
27 Yu and Oliver, *The Capture Of Public Wealth By The For-Profit VET Sector*, especially pp.3-6, 10, 15-18, 23, 26-27, 42