



RWL4 Symposium Proposal

1.	Convenor(s) name(s) and complete contact details	
	Names:	Professor Roger Harris, and Associate Professor Clive Chappell
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2.	Symposium title	
	Building the capability of VET providers for the future	
3.	Symposium abstract (max. 300 words):	
	<p>Vocational education and training (VET) providers face a wide range of challenges in developing and sustaining a workforce that has the capacity to respond to the progressively more complex and changing demands of clients. The use of traditional workforce development practices such as qualification and experience based recruitment and in-service training courses, as strategies to improve individual and organisational capability, are no longer regarded as sufficient in themselves to satisfy the demands of the contemporary work environment. Problems of skill and knowledge transfer, flattened organisational structures, financial and time constraints, commercial pressures and the changing nature of work itself have led to renewed interest in finding learning solutions rather than training solutions to workforce development; with learning conceptualised as a central, on-going and integral feature of contemporary work.</p> <p>Workforce development strategies that focus primarily on individual workers within an organisation are inadequate if the goal is to develop organisational capability. Innovations in products, processes and services including teaching and learning innovations are rarely the result of individual initiative. Rather, they rely on group, managerial and technological systems which when brought together with individuals' capacities build organisational capability.</p> <p>Teachers and trainers are pivotal to the development of a flexible, responsive and agile VET system. The development and use of innovative teaching, learning and assessment strategies that are more learner-centred, work-centred and which explicitly promote employability skills are crucial to a system charged with providing flexible, high quality and client focused education and training programs. However, this VET workforce is characterised by considerable variation in qualifications, experiences and employment arrangements. Consequently, single, sector-wide models of professional development are unlikely to meet the diverse needs of the VET workforce.</p> <p>This symposium will critically analyse work that has already been completed on capacity-building of VET training providers, and discuss research that is currently being undertaken in Australia by the "Supporting VET providers in building capability for the future" Consortium. This research program has been designed to build upon the existing body of knowledge by providing soundly based evaluations and evidence on the evolving dynamics of the VET workforce and of the cultures and practices needed so that this workforce might be more adequately prepared to respond rapidly and effectively to emerging changes.</p>	
4.	Goal or purpose of the symposium	

	<p>The purposes of the symposium are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop a clearer understanding of the dynamics of the changing VET workplace and the capacity of training providers to respond to the increasingly complex and changing demands of clients• critically analyse key management, leadership, human resources practices and their applicability for VET providers• explore cutting edge practices in VET that support increased quality, agility and responsiveness• examine the inter-relationships between the development of people, practices and cultures and their impact on the capability of training providers
5.	<p>A preliminary list of speakers indicating whether they have already committed to give a talk, or just expressed interest in participating of the symposium.</p> <p>A selection of the following speakers, probably 4 to 5 of them (the idea has been put to each of them and they have expressed keen interest to participate):</p> <p>Professor Victor Callan: Approaches to sustaining and building educational leadership Professor Andy Smith: Human resource management in training providers for a changing environment Dr Michele Simons: Understanding career pathways in VET Associate Professor Clive Chappell: Investigating learning through work in VET providers Ms Berwyn Clayton: Impact of cultures and structures on individual and organisational capability Mr John Mitchell: Analysing critical issues in teaching, learning and assessment in VET</p>