Understanding equity strategies of training providers

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NCVER

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ISBN 1 920896 01 5 print edition
ISBN 1 920896 02 3 web edition
TD/TNC 79.01

Published by NCVER

ABN 87 007 967 311

Level 11, 33 King William Street
Adelaide, South Australia 5000
<http://www.ncver.edu.au>

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Acknowledgements

This research would not have been possible without the commitment and involvement of the two participating TAFE institutes, South Western Sydney Institute of TAFE and Chisholm Institute of TAFE (in Melbourne). From the outset, John Allsopp, Director of South Western Sydney Institute and Robert Sadler, at the time Executive Officer of Chisholm supported the project, most crucially by linking the researchers with key people on their staff to help identify and facilitate the data collection processes.

Alison Bray (South Western Sydney Institute) and Mary Woodfield (Chisholm) led us to the right people at the right times, as well as helping to locate key documents. At South Western Sydney Institute, Kevin Heyes gave valued orientation to the structure and culture of the institute and later, Di Murray, Rod Sutton and Merv Donovon gave additional assistance. Thanks also to all the staff at both institutes who gave their time to offer thoughtful, heartfelt and valuable insights about provider equity strategies.

Thanks to Elaine Butler who gave important feedback on an early version of the concepts of equity section which itself built on earlier work by Elaine Butler and Fran Ferrier.

Bernice Melville's wonderful detective work located many elusive documents. Thanks are also due to Linda Knight who sorted through some of the complexities of wrangling the tables and figures into shape.

Finally, our thanks to Jennifer Gibb from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research who patiently nurtured its outcome.

Executive summary

This report notes that traditional notions of equity in vocational education and training (VET) are changing. In particular, policy and research in this area need to move beyond a preoccupation with target equity group representation. While past research based on this notion of equity has generated a great deal of knowledge and influenced policy and provision, its focus on the learner has largely excluded a critique of systemic issues; that is, the institutional relationships and policies which determine equity provision. To date, little research has been undertaken to identify the strategies which providers adopt to identify equity clients, customise courses and develop pathways to employment and further training.

The objectives of the study were to:

- work with selected technical and further education (TAFE) institutes to identify equity strategies that are being employed to produce outcomes for disadvantaged clients living in their regions
- examine the institutional relationships and policies that structure, contain and enable equity provision
- clarify the relationship between equity strategies and the complex interactions of provider, client and local factors
- stimulate and contribute to informed debate about the development and management of equity strategies in vocational education and training at the state and regional level.

This report is aimed at managers and practitioners in the VET sector who are trying to grapple with equity issues. It details the approaches at two TAFE institutes at the time of the study in 1999:

- South Western Sydney Institute where equity is embedded into all aspects of policy, organisational structure and program delivery
- Chisholm Institute which operates under a 'managing diversity' philosophy which attempts to take a positive view of disadvantage; that is, one which understands difference as strength.

As well as containing an exhaustive description of the two approaches, the report focuses on the importance of understanding the areas which service VET sector clients; that is, TAFE catchment areas. It proposes a number of statistical measures of disadvantage and presents relevant data on disadvantage and VET participation for Sydney and Melbourne, using postcode and geographic units.

In summary, the research suggests three key principles which can assist in the framing of TAFE equity practices:

- Local equity policies and strategies need to reflect the complexities of socio-economic disadvantage and equity provision needs also to be considered in the context of the local community.

- ✧ Equity strategies must reach the appropriate disadvantaged individuals and be undertaken by committed and flexible staff who are led and supported by a focused management which attracts and directs adequate resources. Each of these elements is crucial: identification of potential students; committed and flexible staff; leadership by equity-focused management; and adequate resourcing.
- ✧ Equity is an area of practice which must be continually reinvented within the organisation. It should not be allowed to languish in the care of a committee or be limited to words within documents. Equity strategies are dependent on the enthusiasm and commitment of practitioners, including institute policy-makers and teachers. Nurturing this dynamic element is a key part of a systemic approach.

1 Introduction

Background

Australian equity research has reached a point where it is constrained by the nature of the dominant policy approach of recent years. In particular, policy-makers and researchers need to move beyond a preoccupation with the theme of targeted equity groups. Although past research based on this formulation of equity has generated a great deal of knowledge and influenced policy and provision (ANTA 1997), it has focused on the learner, largely to the exclusion of systemic issues.

As policy-makers are beginning to recognise (ANTA 1998), a shift of emphasis to systemic issues may be timely since there is currently a sense that equity thinking should move beyond participation and examine questions of what strategies will achieve outcomes for equity groups.

The trend in equity policy is to emphasise the development of workable solutions, and the achievement of outcomes for specific equity clients. Past research has shown how specific strategies need to be developed to meet the vocational education and training (VET) needs of disadvantaged clients. New research needs to build on past achievements and work towards greater conceptual sophistication in the research within the field.

If equity performance is to be understood as well as measured, there is a need for research designed to meet the challenge of understanding the complexity of 'patterns, options and pathways' (ANTA 1998) as factors in equity.

It has been argued that policy has neglected the important role of provider equity strategies at the regional and local levels. Technical and further education (TAFE) institutes in areas of educational and labour market disadvantage are known to have achieved high local participation rates by target equity groups (McIntyre 1999, 2000a). However, we know little of the strategies providers adopt to identify such clients to customise courses and to develop pathways to employment and further training.

The needs of individual clients in equity groups are often highly specific, and research needs to work at the local level if the achievement of equity outcomes is to be understood. This current research project builds on the foundation of postcode participation studies (McIntyre 1998, 1999), and gives particular attention to neglected issues of regional provider analysis. A focus on regional analysis acknowledges that disadvantaged people are often concentrated in particular localities with limited labour market opportunities, high levels of poverty, low levels of English language and literacy, fewer social services, and so on. Providers in these regions carry much of the responsibility for responding to the education and training needs of such clients of the VET system.

The research reported here results from collaboration with two urban TAFE institutes whose network of campuses are located in the most disadvantaged areas of Sydney and Melbourne.

The intention of the research was to identify issues faced by regional providers such as these in resourcing strategies for disadvantaged client groups in disadvantaged areas, and to inform

policy-makers about the effectiveness of equity funding regimes. The matter of how equitably the VET system distributes scarce resources is a key issue. Not only do providers face higher costs in resourcing effective equity strategies, such as pathway planning (McIntyre & Kimberley 1997), but disadvantaged clients face higher personal, social and financial 'costs' in participating in vocational education and training, and often need higher levels of support to achieve in the system.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

- ✧ work with selected TAFE institutes to identify equity strategies being employed to produce outcomes for disadvantaged clients living in their regions
- ✧ examine the institutional relationships and policies that structure, contain and enable equity provision
- ✧ clarify the relationship between equity strategies and the complex interactions of provider, client and local factors
- ✧ stimulate and contribute to informed debate about the development and management of equity strategies in vocational education and training at the state and regional level.

Research questions

The following questions guided the research for this project:

- ✧ In regions of known socio-economic disadvantage, given the complexities of the interaction of client, provider and local factors, how do VET institutions manage equity provision?
- ✧ How can a regional analysis research tool assist in the conceptualisation of equity provision?
- ✧ How can an understanding of case studies of VET equity providers help the development of analytical tools for mapping and categorising provider equity strategies?

Rationale

Refocusing research on the achievement of equity outcomes implies locating that achievement in its local and regional context. This re-orientation of focus raises questions regarding the complex interaction of provider, client and locality factors.

This research proposes to clarify how interactions among clients, providers and local factors determine how outcomes are achieved 'on the ground'. Outcome effects are complex, precisely because they involve interactions among specific client characteristics, provider equity strategies and locality factors.

In order to do this, the research needs to be sophisticated, conceptually robust and able to integrate perspectives on each of these dimensions. Fortunately, past research now makes possible a framework which can support analysis of a range of research questions.

Methodology

The project methodology comprises twin studies of TAFE institutes in disadvantaged areas of Sydney and Melbourne, each institute being well known for its strategic concern with equity in

participation. These institutes, Chisholm Institute of TAFE and South Western Sydney Institute of TAFE, agreed to collaborate in the research. The research was planned in five phases:

- Phase 1 of the project comprised a literature review of VET equity policy and concepts. This review gives an outline of the three perspectives of clients, providers and regions on equity research. Phase 1 also involved negotiated arrangements with the TAFE institutes, gathering preliminary data sources and documentation, and drafting interview protocols.
- Phase 2 comprised the regional analysis and provider profiling and employed a methodology outlined in the previous work of one of the researchers (McIntyre 1998, 1999, 2000b). First, a regional analysis by postcode using CData96 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1998b) and the socio-economic indicators for areas (SEIFA) were used to identify a range of equity client groups living in the postcodes comprising the nominal 'catchment' of the TAFE institute. Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Standard (AVETMISS) data were then used to identify precisely what courses have highest participation of various equity group clients, and where these course and client patterns are strongest. Close attention was paid to low schooling level, unemployment and labour force non-participation in defining client equity needs, as well as cultural and ethnic factors with which these interact.
- Phase 3 focused on analysing provider equity strategies. Interviews with key staff and analysis of institute documents identified strategies developed for particular client groups and the factors perceived to facilitate the achievement of equity outcomes.
- Phase 4 involved a synthesis of perspectives and integrated the perspectives of providers, clients and the regional profiling. This phase presented an opportunity for the researchers and stakeholders to reflect on the emerging findings and subject them to critique.

Structure of report

As noted above, this project was undertaken in four phases. Chapter 2 of the report describes the methodology adopted for field research (phases 2 and 3). The literature review—phase 1—is given in chapter 3, while chapter 4 describes the institute equity profiles in summary and chapter 5, the equity strategies adopted by each of the institutes. The final chapter provides an overview of the conclusions of the project. The appendices contain the interview schedule and the detailed description of the development of the institute equity profiles.

2 Methodology

Introduction

The field research (phases 2 and 3) documenting provider equity strategies for the current study fell into two stages:

- ✧ development of a profile of participation
- ✧ mapping the provider equity strategies.

The first stage involved profiling the participation patterns in each institute, establishing the catchment of the institute, and mapping it in relation to the nature of economic and educational disadvantage in the region.

With a clearer understanding of the extent of the success of the institutes in gaining the participation of disadvantaged groups, it was then possible to explore in detail, through structured interviews with practitioners, what strategies providers were adopting to bring about successful outcomes for particular equity clienteles.

Following the field research, the final stage of the research was the analysis of the data and development of a conceptual model of provider equity strategies.

Institute equity profiling—nature of VET participation

The first stage of institute equity profiling examines the nature of participation in the 'catchments' of two TAFE institutes serving some of the most disadvantaged areas of Sydney and Melbourne. As noted above, a rationale for this 'local equity analysis' has been developed by McIntyre (2000a, 2000b).

The guiding principle of local equity analysis is a comparison of the various participation rates for postcodes, say in greater Sydney, with social indicators such as unemployment and schooling levels for the population living in those postcodes.

The profiling process employed here has several steps. It first 'maps' the extent of TAFE participation in the nominated region served by one or more providers, calculating various participation rates (area participation analysis). In the case of equity analysis, the research is interested in how these patterns of participation reflect the patterns of disadvantage in the area. Therefore disadvantage has to be defined and 'mapped' in some way. The analysis then attempts to define the major localities served by a given provider, identifying a 'catchment' from TAFE client data. The interest of catchment analysis is to establish the extent to which participation is local rather than diffused. Finally, analysis becomes even more focused and attempts to discern the characteristics of the clienteles, which are being served by the provider. The question here is whether providers in 'disadvantaged areas' are delivering programs to the most disadvantaged postcodes and, more importantly, whether these programs are reaching disadvantaged clienteles—defined either in terms of socio-economic disadvantage, or in terms of the 'target equity groups' which the area analysis has identified as living in the provider's

catchment. Further, if they are participating, in what kinds of courses does this occur and with what outcomes.

Mapping regional disadvantage

Regional disadvantage can be mapped over either large or small units in a region, using either general indexes of disadvantage or specific social indicators, both developed from 1996 census data. Patterns of participation by postcode can then be 'mapped', as can provider catchments. The term 'mapping' refers to the applications of geographic information systems (GIS) mapping software to census analysis (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1998b). Information of various kinds can be displayed for clusters of postcodes. Postcode is the preferred geographic unit because it is smaller than a local government area yet not as small as a collection district (the size of a neighbourhood). In addition, 'client residential postcode' is a key client item collected by the AVETMIS Standard which enables these data to be linked to census data.

'Disadvantage' is defined as socio-economic disadvantage. A disadvantaged 'region' in this case is made up of postcodes scoring low on various indexes of disadvantage calculated for these areas from 1996 census data by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) provide both general and specific indexes of disadvantage (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1998c). For example, the general Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage is derived from a range of factors such as low income, low educational levels, unemployment and low-skill occupations. Specific indexes separate economic criteria of disadvantage (such as income and housing factors) from educational and occupational criteria. Research is yet to establish what kind of index is most suitable for predicting low participation and achievement in vocational education and training, although it is known generally from postcode studies that TAFE participation and low socio-economic status are highly correlated (McIntyre 1999).

In mapping regional disadvantage, the research displays tables which show both SEIFA indexes and specific social indicators, such as the proportion of the population which holds a post-school qualification, or the proportion of households with a household income in 1996 of less than $16 000. Socio-economic disadvantage is emphasised because this is the basis for identifying the 'target equity groups' who are under-represented in VET. Other specific measures of disadvantage can be mapped, such as 'born overseas in countries where English is not the primary language' or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity.

A key data item for the research is 'client home postcode' collected by the AVETMIS Standard. This allows research to 'locate' an individual client as living in a *disadvantaged area* as measured by a SEIFA index. Other AVETMISS data can then be used to determine whether the VET participants from this area are *disadvantaged individuals*, in terms of their employment status, schooling level and cultural background.

Mapping local TAFE participation

TAFE participation rates for the postcodes in south-eastern Melbourne and south-western Sydney served by the two providers can be calculated and mapped onto the postcode distribution of disadvantage. Obviously, in this research, it is TAFE rather than VET participation—private and adult community education (ACE) clients are excluded.

The *TAFE participation rate* for a postcode is calculated by expressing the number of net students enrolled in TAFE in a given year who are living in a postcode as a percentage of the adult population (defined as those aged 15 and over, as estimated from the 1996 census). Net students, not enrolments, are used. In addition to gross TAFE participation, it is necessary to calculate more specific participation indicators to answer questions about whether disadvantaged students are participating. Examples of these indicators include:

- ✧ the proportion of TAFE students from the postcode who are unemployed (or the 'unemployed client participation rate')
- ✧ the proportion of TAFE students from the postcode who have schooling of Year 10 or less (the low schooling participation rate)
- ✧ the proportion of women students engaged in basic or foundational education
- ✧ indices for specific cultural groups, such as the non-English speaking background students or Indigenous Australian participation rate.

AVETMISS statistics have made it possible to generate these more specific participation rates, given the adequacy of the data (small 'not stated' numbers for the categories of interest). There are limits to the degree of this disaggregation of client data at the postcode level because of the small numbers involved.

Client data for the analysis is supplied (at the request of the TAFE institutes) by the statistical sections of the state training authorities (Post-compulsory Education, Training and Employment, Victoria and the New South Wales Department of Education and Training). The data requested took the form of TAFE clients by home postcode disaggregated by age group, by sex, by stream and by prior schooling, by employment status, by languages other than English background and by Indigenous status. These counts of net students (wherever possible) were the basis for calculating simple proportions of students from different backgrounds participating in the institute.

Figure 1: TAFE participation in south-eastern Melbourne, 1996

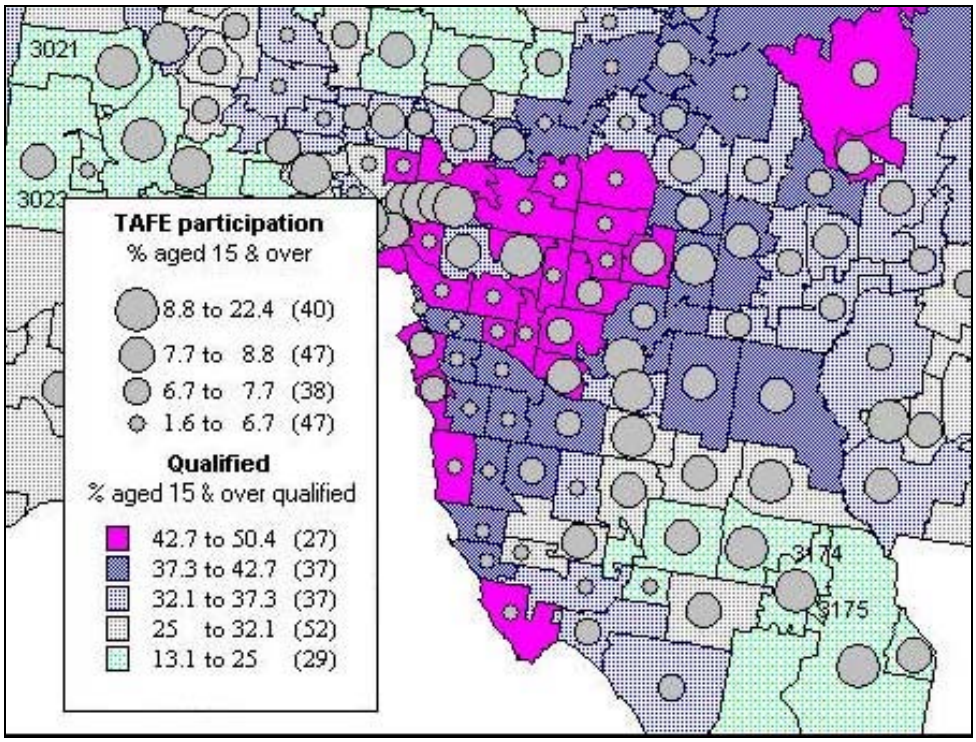


Figure 1 shows an example of this kind of mapping. Gross participation rates (shown as graduated circles) for eastern Melbourne postcodes using 1996 data have been mapped on to an indicator which is highly related to educational disadvantage and socio-economic disadvantage in general—the proportion of the population aged 15 and over who held a post-school qualification at the 1996 census. The notional catchment of Chisholm Institute ranges from Moorabin in the inner east, which has relatively high levels of qualification (darker shades), to the Mornington Peninsula (not shown). The disadvantaged nature of the south-

eastern part of the catchment has low levels of qualification (lighter shades). Those postcodes south-east of Dandenong, the main campus of Chisholm, have relatively high 1996 TAFE participation rates, some approaching 20%. The question therefore is to what extent this participation is by disadvantaged people from those postcodes.

Identifying provider catchments

The next stage of the equity profiling process is mapping a provider's catchment by identifying the main postcodes in which the institute's clients live. In other words, this is 'catchment' defined in terms of local residents served, rather than some other criterion such as the workplace postcode (for those employed). An institute's enrolment has large numbers of client home postcodes represented, but experience shows that a cluster of local postcodes usually predominates. It is expected that the local participation effect still strongly determines a provider's enrolments, and there is a pattern of regional participation. This effective catchment may correspond more or less to the institute management's assumptions about their notional catchment, defined by administrative or other boundaries.

It is desirable to calculate what proportion of all TAFE enrolments (or net students) from the catchment are attending TAFE locally; for example, what proportion of all TAFE clients living in Fairfield (New South Wales) are attending a campus of South Western Sydney Institute. Since both institutes are multi-campus entities covering a wide area, the analysis shows a breakdown of participation from local postcodes by local campus.

It is intended to produce maps of the participation patterns in the selected regions, and the catchments of the institutes, where participation is mapped on the disadvantage indicator as described above.

Client profiling

A further stage of analysis then examines selected characteristics of students attending the institutes (by stream, age, sex, employment, prior schooling and cultural characteristics such as from a language background other than English or Indigenous Australian background).

The central question to be answered here is: to what extent are the TAFE clients who live in catchment postcodes, and more particularly the most disadvantaged postcodes' in the catchment, *clients who have a disadvantaged profile*. As described above, it is not sufficient to identify such groups, for example, as from a language background other than English or Indigenous clients, and it is necessary to determine the proportions of students who are disadvantaged socio-economically. The analysis calculates the proportions of students who are reported as unemployed, with low levels of prior schooling, from a language background other than English or Indigenous Australian background, or these in combination with female gender or each other, or other factors such as age.

It is helpful to employ the concept of the 'provider equity profile' to refer to the proportions of institute clients who fall in these and other categories of disadvantage. Again, the total clientele of the institute may come from a wide range of postcodes—and may do so precisely because the institute is known to offer special programs for equity groups (disabled people, Indigenous Australians, recently arrived migrants and so on). However, the key interest of the research is the extent to which people living in the most disadvantaged postcodes in the catchment are attending. An important outcome of the study is an estimate of the extent to which this is occurring, since the research is interested in the resourcing questions which arise from meeting the needs of people in disadvantaged areas.

Again, the analysis 'maps' this provision on to a broad profiling of disadvantage in the region. The analysis does so through a combination of maps and tables.

Institute equity profiling—understanding provider equity strategies

The second stage of the research involved structured interviews at each institute. Each institute director was asked to identify key informants who were involved in the development, implementation and performance of equity strategies. Other key staff members were identified as the interviews proceeded. The interviews were primarily undertaken with senior and middle management as well as selected 'equity' staff in order to identify and examine the lines of equity strategy development. In fact, the South Western Institute of TAFE interviews focus on the former, Chisholm on the latter. It was also important to gain an understanding of how equity strategies 'fitted into' the policy and planning processes of the institute. A small number of teaching staff were also interviewed, in particular those involved with customised programs. No data from teaching staff are presented

Table 1: Areas covered by interviews

Equity focus	What is analysed
Awareness/ understanding of equity and equity strategies	Examples of concepts of equity and disadvantage from practitioners' and students' perspectives
	Snapshot of educational disadvantage across a selection of classes
	Consistency between management, practitioner and student perspectives
Knowledge of regional factors & interaction with regional stakeholders	Examples of processes used to identify regional factors which influence disadvantage
	Pattern of liaison and collaboration with external agencies
Policy development	Institutional framework: provider concepts of policies
	Processes for development of institute access and equity policy
Implementation strategies	Institute strategies and practices
	Stories illustrating effective equity strategies
	Stories illustrating gaps in appropriate support
	Processes for evaluation and renewal of strategies
	Stories illustrating institute responsiveness to changing client needs
	Examples of customisation of programs, curriculum and assessment to enhance equity
	Specific strategies including role of staff development
Resourcing	Institute equity resourcing strategies
	Processes for allocation of resources
	Student perceptions of adequacy of resources
Client outcomes	Strategies for enhancing outcomes
	Outcomes valued by staff and students
Pathways	Equity management strategies
	Stories of successful transitions
	Stories of difficulties experienced in transition pointing to improvements
Evaluation and improvement	Quality management processes including processes for staff and client group feedback

Note: Although this table includes students, no student interview data are presented. In the South Western Institute of TAFE interviews the emphasis was mainly on senior managers; in Chisholm it was with equity staff and support workers

The interview sampling schedule (see appendix 1) indicates that the interviews were seeking participants' awareness of how equity strategies operated in their institute and more broadly, their understanding of how disadvantage manifested itself in their area. The interview schedule sets out the detail of the semi-structured interviews (appendix 1). Table 1 sets out the particular focus of each area of the interviews.

3 Perspectives on equity

Introduction

Government policy has played a major role in developing equity practices in the vocational education and training sector. In the last decade in particular, equity policy and practice, critique, analysis and research have contributed to the development of a broader view of equity in this educational sector. The emphasis of the activities of government and researchers is always to explore and develop two interrelated issues. The first issue is that of equity as an expression of 'educational fairness' or a 'fair go for all'. This debate is concerned with funding levels, targeted versus mainstream programs and individualised versus community development responses. The second issue relates to effectiveness and the search for specific strategies which deliver equity outcomes, and the parallel search for satisfactory measures of the outcomes of these strategies.

Various approaches have been used to examine at equity in VET. McIntyre (1999, 2000a) stressed that it is important to have an approach to equity which takes account of the compound nature of educational disadvantage. Butler and Ferrier (2000) suggested that equity policy should be interrogated for its role in enabling a 'screening' of the privileges of the 'norm' as well as acting as an organising principle through which equity or justice can be 'distributed'. Powles and Anderson (1996) suggested an approach to equity provision which examines the underlying goals of provision, and whether policy and practice serve a social service role (that is, whether they are based on the nature of disadvantage) or whether they serve an economic utility role and are based on the levels of disadvantage. In many European Union countries, in particular in Britain, use of the term 'equity' has largely been replaced by 'social exclusion of social inclusion'. This concept is a response to globalisation and highlights a re-igniting of the social and economic divisions between those who benefit from the new economy and those who are 'left behind' or excluded. There is a concern for the costs that result from social alienation (Rodgers, Gore, & Figueiredo 1995).

This first section explores concepts of equity and how these concepts emerge within the practitioner context. One of the continuing criticisms of equity policy both at government and at institution level is that it is a marginalised and 'optional extra' to main service provision, that 'the business of equity has never been central to the 'real' business of VET' (Butler & Ferrier 2000, p.92).

The second section examines client, regional and provider perspectives of equity.

Background to equity policy and concepts

This section provides some context for the concept of equity, a background to the development of equity concepts and an outline of the strategies previously developed to address equity issues in VET.

Education, along with welfare, is one of the leading mechanisms for addressing social justice and equity issues in Australia. While welfare is considered more of a compensatory mechanism aimed at essential life support and maintenance of human dignity, education is often perceived

as the vehicle for individual, and indeed, social change. Education is understood to provide opportunities for people to change their life circumstances. As a subset of education, VET has contributed to this role and is associated with two purposes. The first purpose of VET relates to the labour market and the need for a skilled workforce. This was termed 'manpower' in the post-war period, but now emphasises the need to 'respond to industry training needs' (ANTA 1997). The second purpose of VET is to provide opportunities for those who are disadvantaged and to offer them, through education, the ability to improve their employment prospects and thus their access to economic benefits. Contemporary equity policy, in particular since the introduction of the Australian National Training Reform Agenda in the 1990s, underlines the role of VET in improving an individual's opportunities. Both purposes led to extensive policy development, although both strands have not necessarily featured in the same policy.

Equity: Ideology, philosophy, concept

Equity appears in VET policy in varying guises. The storyline of contemporary equity policy is of a person lifting themselves from the social and economic ignominy of the dole queue or single parent's benefit to the buying power and opportunities of a well-paid job. Through their participation in VET and hence the labour market, individuals become respected and valuable members of society. By contrast, some earlier policies (especially in the 1970s and early 1980s) emphasised the need for an appropriate response to address poverty. Reform measures reflected a concern to overhaul the state and its institutions as the key to overcoming the poverty at the heart of uneven life experiences. The Kangan (1994) and Fitzgerald (1976) reports reflect this view of equity policy development.

Each of these contrasting snapshots of VET equity policy is underpinned by a different concept of equity. On the one hand, there is a view of the individual who needs help to overcome barriers and gain access to a multitude of opportunities. But on the other hand, equity was seen to be impossible to achieve without addressing the inequity of the systems supporting the state. Yet another view, perhaps a Marxist view of equity, would suggest that without changing the capitalist state itself, equity is not possible. Thus the concept of equity is highly variable in meaning and reflects origins based on different paradigms or modes of thinking about society. Each paradigm attributes the causes of disadvantage to a different foundational cause, and is grounded in a different political and philosophical ideology. Each provides an explanation of multiple forms of social disadvantage—economic, social, political and cultural.

Table 2 presents an interpretation of the relationship of these concepts to underlying social theory. The divisions should not be viewed as rigid. For example, although a strategy (for example, target equity groups) may emerge through one view of society (that is, distributive justice), it may well be considered to be a suitable (or pragmatic) strategy through another (such as economic rationalism). The benefit of this representation of concepts is that it offers an indication of the sources of some of the stresses involved at both policy development and policy implementation levels.

Table 2: Concepts of equity

Political ideology	Conservative	Neo-conservative	Neo-liberalism	Liberal/liberal humanism	Socialism, radical socialism
Dominant policy tools, issues	Maintenance of the status quo, social and class reproduction	Utilise human capital, managerialism	Allow/enable the marketplace to dictate. Economic rationalism, mutual obligation	Address social disadvantage, arbitrate between competing interests in society	Challenge dominant power structures e.g. through unionism and structural change
Focus or goal of equity	Opportunities are available to all, there is a natural order to society and only some can benefit	Develop each individual to maximise their economic potential. Enable individuals to improve themselves, thus they will have access to the benefits of society and improve their return to society through increased productivity. Avoid waste of talent	Individual choice Social exclusion is a failure of the relationship between the individual and society and arises through problems of resource allocation and also involves power relations, culture and social identity	Distributive justice Make the education system accessible to the individual. By redistributing resources, inequalities can be addressed	Social justice Non-dominant groups should be supported and resourced to develop tools to challenge an oppressive system
Role of work	Work and equity do not have an association	Work is how people express their value to society	Welfare through work	Work is an important aspect of people's lives—all people have the right to work	All people have the right to participate in work under healthy and suitably valued conditions
Strategies to promote equity in VET	Equity strategies not needed: provide welfare to those who are unable to support themselves	Provide access courses and 'second chance' education opportunities to enable people to move in from the margins	Manage diversity, address social exclusion through close connections between welfare and the labour market	Remove barriers to increase the level of representation of target groups	Go out to the people, work with them to identify and develop tools to empower collective social action

Source: Drawing on Butler and Ferrier (2000)

The table was constructed through an examination of various strategies for addressing equity issues and also various perceptions of work. The role of work is included in recognition that it has become a key component in current views of equity concepts. More broad connections are then made with the overall focus or goal of equity strategies in the education system and subsequently with some of the broader policy issues associated with each of the parent ideologies. One important limitation of such a table is that it fails to take account of the contextualised nature of equity practice which may be equally influenced by prevailing macro- or micro-level policies, resource availability, organisational flexibility and so on, as it is by underlying concepts. Examining this interplay is the project of this research.

A (brief) modern history of equity in VET

This section provides a brief review of some of the key developments in policy for VET equity strategy. An excellent summary of reforms is given in Butler and Ferrier (2000).

Planting the seeds grounded in social justice—the Kangan and Fitzgerald reports

Two federal government reports commissioned in the mid-1970s laid significant policy groundwork for developments in equity strategies. Twenty-five years later equity continues to form an important, if contested element in government and institution policy-making. In the TAFE sector, the 1974 Kangan report opened up the possibility of an Australia-wide system. The report emphasised that the distinguishing feature of TAFE provision was its flexibility and responsiveness to individual, industry and community needs. The overall purpose of TAFE was that it should supply 'each person with education to meet his [sic] freely chosen vocational need'. The report also examined the major barriers of access to TAFE, including women's participation, access courses, selective admission and fees.

Two years later, the Fitzgerald report (Fitzgerald 1976) on the effects of poverty on education in Australia was the impetus for subsequent examination of equity issues. The report was significant in making explicit some early guidelines about recognition of what Fitzgerald termed 'socio-economic factors of disadvantage'. He recognised a clear link between poverty and educational disadvantage, and thus people who were disadvantaged were effectively alienated from accessing the education which was seen as the source of addressing their disadvantage.

Fitzgerald also raised the important question of whose problem it was to address disadvantage and speculated about whether it was the role of the individual or of the education system. He also made the observation that disadvantage appeared to coincide in socio-economic terms with the lowest income groups and with what he termed 'ethnic minority groups'. Thus disadvantage itself was seen as a barrier to access. As well as being seen as a tool for developing and supporting economic prosperity, vocational education and training was given an important role in enabling people to gain access through training to the benefits of society and for addressing inequalities. The concept of equity was grounded in the prevailing goal of social justice.

Target equity groups

Fitzgerald's broad view was focused on one solution, that of addressing poverty. However, a more exact (and measurable) view of who was experiencing disadvantage would, it was hoped, enable a different and more tailored kind of response. One of the key early equity strategies was, therefore, to move from identifying the causes of disadvantage to identifying groups of people who had little/limited participation in vocational education and training. These became known as 'equity target groups'. This created a new binary, which later received some

attention. What happened if you were not a member of a target group and yet experienced disadvantage or if you were a member of a group but were not disadvantaged (McIntyre 2000a). The other difficulty was that the focus shifted from individuals, to looking at a supposed group common experience. Once these experiences were identified, they could be addressed by appropriate strategies with the assumption that there would be a positive impact across the group. This approach could not guarantee to benefit all members of a target equity group.

Barriers to participation

Once the target equity groups had been identified, an important theme of research and subsequent policy concerned barriers experienced by these groups. The general aim was to increase the 'level of representation' of that group.

Understanding the barriers faced by each group was complemented by analysis of the areas on which these barriers impinged, such as enrolment procedures, lock-step curricula, pre-qualifications, adequate protection from sexual harassment and so on. 'Access', 'participation' and 'outcomes' were the three linked concepts which continue to shape thinking around development of specific strategies. The debate about whether the ultimate purpose of equity strategies was to provide equal opportunities or to result in equal outcomes (Powles & Anderson 1996) was ongoing.

'Outcome' was the least quantifiable and most problematic area in terms of scale of the concepts. More strategies related to 'access' and 'participation' are identifiable, and more measurable data collection methods are available (Golding, Volkoff & Ferrier 1997; McIntyre et al. 1997). It is interesting to note that reports of outcome measures for successful equity programs can have unplanned political consequences. For example, reporting the successes of programs to increase retention and positive outcomes for girls in secondary schools resulted in a backlash against the equity agenda.

The concern with 'outcomes' enhanced the role that equity strategies could play in reducing the waste of untapped talent among the equity target groups. This in turn led to the enrichment of the skill pool seen as increasingly important to Australia's competitive prospects in the globalising economy. What was previously an unfair human 'waste' became an economic loss of human capital (Dawkins 1988; Powles & Anderson 1996). Another useful spin-off was that there was now clarification for the 'outcome' aspect of the equity triumvirate of equal access, participation and outcomes—the outcome was participation in the labour market, very quantifiable.

Pathways

This foregrounding of the relationship between vocational education and training and employment also changed the concept of equity from one concerned with addressing barriers to one concerned with 'developing pathways' (McIntyre & Kimberley 1997). One of the consequences was that this constituted a clear conceptual tool for breaking down the homogeneity of the equity target groups approach. A pathway both conveyed a series of events, possibly not in a linear sequence (rather than a one-off solution) and the idea that the pathway was trodden (and owned and developed) by an individual, underlining the need for equity strategies to be individualised and negotiated.

A pathway into vocational education and training was not necessarily linear. Research into how people negotiated VET indicated that there were multiple pathways in—sometimes through the adult and community education (ACE) sector or other informal courses. Therefore partnerships with adult education providers of whatever sort were important, as were issues about articulation and accreditation (Golding 1996; Mageean 1990).

The role of VET providers is crucial in developing effective pathways as this can only be done in relationship and partnership with local agencies and potential employers. Effective equity strategies often involve more than one provider, and the key to this effectiveness is the relationship between providers; for example, ACE to TAFE, TAFE to other providers (McIntyre & Kimberley 1997), and providers to the labour market. A pathway may involve the creation of linkages by learners between one VET provider and another, or one kind of learning experience with another (for example, a pathway between informal and formal learning). A pathway may refer to the ways in which barriers can be overcome through institutional or individual action or through negotiations between the two.

There are some assumptions made about VET pathways. It is assumed that learners will move along from 'peripheral' courses (that is, informal, non-accredited, relating more to semi-skilled positions in the labour market), to more mainstream courses which are formal, accredited and related more to skilled and professional positions in the labour market.

The concept of pathways has challenged notions of 'quick fix' solutions to disadvantage. It also highlights the cost to disadvantaged participants of involvement in vocational education and training. Equity provision is usually represented as an extra given (that is, at some additional cost), whether indirectly in the form of programs, staff, time taken to develop policy or through direct funding costs. Apart from McIntyre (1999a), scarce mention is made of the direct and indirect costs required of the participants. A 'normal' or 'mainstream' VET pathway involves primary and secondary education which provides adequate academic preparation for further study usually undertaken on a full-time basis while financially and emotionally supported by parents/guardians. With no break or only a small break, VET training proceeds until successful completion which usually ensures a smooth transition to the labour market. For the disadvantaged or 'minority' VET participant who needs to access VET through a non-standard trajectory or pathway, major costs are involved with being 'out of sync' with the mainstream, as well as hidden costs which are less easily absorbed by disadvantaged participants. In the situation where there is no charge for actual classes, there are costs involved with travel, child care, as well as the longer-term commitment and delayed 'payoff' involved in undertaking catch-up courses in literacy or other pre-qualifications.

Managing for diversity or managing diversity

'Managing diversity' (ANTA 1998) is a term coined by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) and encompasses a strategy aimed at harnessing corporate involvement and responsibility for development of strategies which will create a diverse client base. (The terminology of this strategy refers to 'clients' rather than 'participants'.) Managing diversity is an attempt to recruit the 'demand side' of VET and to improve the level of investment in VET made by industries, the major consumers of the benefits of this sector of education. Rather than enlisting involvement through a social justice agenda, the approach is purely economic—it makes good business to be able to manage diversity. Equity target groups do not feature because the emphasis is on recognising and valuing individuals. However, as Rachel Robertson points out, managing diversity, although it offers a close fit with moves toward user choice in training, 'does not appear to offer a position from which to question how the system advantages some learners above others' (1999). In fact, one of the problems with approaches which focused on individual responses to disadvantage is that they tend to mask systemic causes and bypass the imperative for systemic responses.

Social exclusion

Social exclusion offers a different approach and is described as the outcome of alienated citizens and as a problem, it is distinguishable from poverty, inequality and unemployment. However, by tackling social exclusion, those other social problems are also addressed. Social exclusion suggests that the key issue is one of re-integrating people into society to address the

failure of the relationship between the individual and society. This approach can be seen as a way of examining and addressing processes—how do people become disadvantaged in education and in the labour market environment and how do they become 're-advantaged'. It is a valuing of social cohesion and social capital and its key strategy is to take a community development approach. There is significant criticism of this concept of equity in that it licenses a greater surveillance of citizens and that there is a 'stick' (especially related to welfare benefits) for those who do not take up the 'carrot' (often related to the 'welfare to work' philosophy which takes work as the starting point for welfare provision) (Armstrong, Armstrong & Barton 2000).

Important critiques

This section gives a brief overview of key critiques of current VET equity policy and practice.

Who benefits?

In their analysis of access and participation policies in TAFE, Powles and Anderson (1996, p.102) proposed two deliberately dichotomous views which they term 'the social service view' and the 'economic utility view'. From the social service view, equity of access is seen within the broad framework of social concern as a guiding principle. This view directly follows from the Kangan report which proposed TAFE as supplying the person with education to meet a freely chosen vocational need rather than mainly as the supplier who meets the needs for skilled labour. An economic-utility view, although equity remains an issue, is grounded in an economic argument about increasing the pool of human resources. As the Dawkins report (1988) argued in the late 1980s, it is a loss to the economic wellbeing of a nation if all its resources, including human resources, are not utilised.

Shortcomings of the target equity group approach

Target equity group strategies were current in ANTA policy in 1996 (ANTA 1996a, 1996b) as well as forming part of equity discourse at practitioner level. A significant body of critique has developed (see for example McIntyre 2000a; Volkoff & Golding 1998; Falk 1999), neatly summarised by Elaine Butler and Kate Lawrence (1996 cited in Butler & Ferrier 2000):

- ✧ Target groups inevitably find themselves in competition with each other (at policy level) both for access to resources and for prioritising on a hierarchical ladder of 'need'.
- ✧ There is a tendency for target groups to be represented as homogenous, disguising the diversity and heterogeneity within each category. This in turn requires a high level of expertise when consulting with or for such groups, and the subsequent planning.
- ✧ Individuals and groups are often represented in more than one target group and so experience multiple or compound disadvantage.
- ✧ Advantage is neither discussed nor analysed. This then ignores the question of who is receiving the advantage of the nation's investment in VET.
- ✧ The equating of industry/business with individuals as clients of VET weakens the concept of target groups, and further obscures equity.

Thus there is a move to resist 'category' equity provision, although as Bacchi (1996) and Butler and Ferrier (2000) agree, it is not the categories themselves which constitute the problem, it is the 'political uses' to which categories are put, and this can be done to the benefit or detriment of members of those groups.

Distributive justice

Butler and Ferrier invite a more probing examination of equity through a postmodern view of what Foucault (1991) has termed the 'art of distribution' which rests on three techniques of sorting and ordering, enclosure, partitioning and ranking. Thus through a process of division and sub-division, groups which are initially categorised as 'equity', 'disadvantaged', 'special' and 'target' are further segregated into groups such as 'women', 'disabled', Indigenous' and so on. Far from serving the cause of equality, this process enables a 'screening' of the privileges of the 'norm', as well as acting as an organising principle through which equity or justice can be 'distributed' (or re-distributed) in order of perceived or constructed needs, ideology and political expediency (Butler & Ferrier 2000).

The postmodern critique, although it does not concern itself with developing alternative action, does provide an insight into the complex manifestations of power. However, a recurring theme throughout Butler and Ferrier, among others (see also Robertson 1999) is that 'unless equity is a central organising feature of the whole of VET', limits to equity will be experienced.

Client, provider and regional perspectives of equity

We have argued that equity policy and thus equity research have been limited by conceptual weakness. To move beyond the goal of increasing VET participation by 'target equity groups' to a focus on outcomes requires a better understanding of how participation results in the achievement of outcomes by people experiencing disadvantage.

To understand how participation and outcomes are achieved through a complex set of interactions among specific client characteristics, provider equity strategies and locality factors, a robust framework is required which brings together client, provider and regional perspectives on equity research. This section sets out such a rationale for the research.

- *Client perspectives*, the dominant framework for understanding equity, can be developed from the research on the nature of 'equity target groups'. This research has produced a good understanding of the complexity of their social and economic disadvantage, and its implications for VET. This perspective recognises that several factors compound disadvantage, creating barriers to access, retention and success which are often exacerbated by systemic and institutional barriers, including early school leaving, long-term unemployment, low income, and low literacy, language and numeracy levels and disability. These interact with gender, as well as with highly varied and situated Indigenous and ethnicity factors.
- *Provider perspectives* highlight the role of the provider in generating equity outcomes through delivering or brokering 'workable solutions' at the local level. A provider perspective would examine what is required to customise equity strategies for local disadvantaged clienteles, including the development of pathways and options, and raise issues regarding the resources required for this to be effective. This perspective, which was dominant in the early 1980s, sees providers as identifying and responding to the needs of local clienteles, influenced by their knowledge of the locality and region.
- *Regional perspectives* emphasise that what equity the VET system can achieve is constrained by great social and economic variations within the capital cities, and between urban and regional and rural communities. Their differing labour market, employment and socio-cultural profiles influence how providers and clients interact within regions and localities. They also need to 'locate' the 'equity groups' of national policy in relation to disadvantaged areas where they live.

Client perspectives

The client perspective refers to research undertaken from the point of view of those disadvantaged individuals or groups who are under-represented in VET. The focus of much of the equity research during the 1990s has been on categorisation of single equity target groups within vocational education and training, and their comparison with the broader VET population, for example:

- ✧ women (Davis 1992; Barnett 1993; Lyall & Hawkins 1993; Women's Bureau 1993; Barnett & Wilson 1995; Smith & Ewer 1995; Barnett, Foyster & Werner 1996)
- ✧ people from non-English speaking backgrounds (Department of Employment, Education and Training 1993; Mawer & Field 1995; Non-English Speaking Background Ministerial Consultative Group on VET 1995; NSW TAFE Multicultural Education Unit 1995)
- ✧ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Finch 1992; McIntyre et al. 1997; Teasdale & Teasdale 1996)
- ✧ people with a disability (Meadows & Tronc 1990; Reynolds & Barnett 1993; Dundas 1994)
- ✧ people living in rural and remote areas (National Board for Employment Education and Training 1991, 1994; Rodwell et al. 1996; Butler & Lawrence 1996; Kilpatrick, Williamson & Thrush 1997).

ANTA (1996a) targeted these key client groups, realising that identification of those at risk was an important first step in identifying barriers which members of these groups faced, and hence the development of strategies to address those barriers. The ANTA (1996b) focus on access and participation in vocational education and training is evident through its reference to 'individual groups under-represented in vocational education and training' (p.4). Additional disadvantaged groups have since been identified. These include: people leaving institutional settings (ANTA 1996b); the long-term unemployed (Fincher & Nieuwenhuysen 1998); people with inadequate functional skills in English language, literacy and numeracy (Golding, Volkoff & Ferrier 1997; ANTA 1998); and those within correctional facilities (Golding & Volkoff 1999a; ANTA 1998).

While focused on raising representation in VET, *Equity 2001* (ANTA 1996a) also recognised that high participation rates for disadvantaged groups did not necessarily result in equitable outputs or outcomes (ANTA 1996b).

The identification of disadvantaging factors can be assisted by consideration of those factors which appear to advantage individuals; for example, older age, existing qualifications, full-time employment and male gender (Long 1996; Golding, Volkoff & Ferrier 1997). Advantaged groups have better access to training and are better placed to participate effectively. They are able to build on the experience of previous study, have confidence in their capacity to succeed, and are more able to link their training to vocational outcomes (Golding & Volkoff 1999a). They are also likely to have more optimistic goals and the widest choice of program and provider.

The complexities of disadvantage emerge through the findings of studies focused on people belonging to multiple equity target groups; for example, non-English speaking background people in rural Australia (Mageean 1990); women with disabilities (Lawless 1991); non-English speaking background women (Zinopoulos 1992, Stephens & Bertone 1995; VandenHeuvel & Wooden 1995) and Aboriginal people in remote communities (Coles 1993).

Further concentrated work on the nature of 'equity target groups' has produced a good understanding of the complexity of their social and economic disadvantage and its implications for VET (Butler & Lawrence 1996; Butler 1997; Golding, Volkoff & Ferrier 1997; Volkoff & Golding 1998; Ball 1998; Golding & Volkoff 1999a, 1999b). This perspective recognises that

several factors compound disadvantage in vocational education and training, creating barriers to access, retention and success which are often exacerbated by systemic and institutional barriers (Sharpe & Robertson 1996). These include early school leaving, long-term unemployment, low income, low literacy, language and numeracy levels, and disability. These factors interact with gender, as well as with highly varied and situated Indigenous, ethnicity and disability factors. The impact of low skills and unemployment, individually or together, are particularly important in shaping intentions in undertaking VET and subsequent course and provider type selection. These factors act upon all VET participants (including English speaking urban males), but have a particularly devastating effect on vocational outcomes when they compound disadvantage through membership of other groups.

It can be demonstrated that specific client characteristics reduce the probabilities of module success and the degree to which they do so (Ball 1998; McIntyre 1999). In addition, it can be shown that the degree of 'multiple membership' of disadvantaged groups clearly influences the rate of successful outcomes of VET (McIntyre 1998), diminishing as the number of groups belonged to increases (Volkoff & Golding 1998).

In addition to the complication of cross-group factors, there is further complexity arising from the variability between learners within the same 'category of disadvantage'. There may be as much 'within group' variability as there is difference between groups (Elkins 1994). The diversity within a group such as women points to the need to attend to multiple contexts of gender equity, recognising the situation of particular women, and moving beyond consideration of women as a single target group (Butler 1997; Golding & Volkoff 1999a; McIntyre 1999). Being rural or remote can be seen as a factor compounding the difficulties of particular individuals and groups, such as Indigenous Australians (Butler & Lawrence 1996), rather than necessarily a disadvantage of itself.

The focus of equity discourse on level of representation of particular (targeted) groups in vocational education and training, and subsequent employment outcomes, ignores powerful factors beyond the VET sector itself, such as geographical and socio-economic location, self-perceptions and motivations for entering VET. Ball (1998) points to the need to deal with equity in 'an eclectic, broad manner' (p.5) to isolate mechanisms which compound disadvantage, and develop strategies to address them. Concentration on individual client groups can ignore the fact that common mechanisms act to entrench and intensify disadvantage for different client groups. Lack of recognition of the potential outcomes of VET, inappropriate and inaccessible information about training options, and lack of knowledge by providers of potential learner groups impact on access to VET across groups.

Butler and Ferrier (2000) point to the trend to frame groups, for example, women and people from English speaking background as 'problem groups' in vocational education and training. The resultant response to such 'problem groups' is to act to transform them into mainstream groups. This approach ignores the notion of productive diversity, and fails to acknowledge women and members of multiple disadvantaged groups as '… legitimate clients of the training system, whose needs must be considered as equal to those of the advantaged groups' (Connole 1997, section 3).

Current national policy has moved beyond the identification of barriers and measurement of participation rates towards the framing of strategies to improve and measure the outputs and outcomes of training for client groups. Introduction of key performance measures (ANTA 1998) should facilitate analysis of the relationships between participation, outputs and outcomes.

Provider perspectives

A provider perspective is an essential component of equity research and policy. Fundamentally, equity outcomes are achieved 'on the ground' and the key questions concern who takes

responsibility for the participation of disadvantaged client groups and ensures that their participation results in the achievement of satisfactory outcomes—from the point of view of the clients and from the standpoint of system and government priorities.

A provider perspective examines the capacity of the VET provider to identify disadvantaged clients, and to respond with appropriate measures to ensure their participation and achievement. To some extent, the process of training reform down-graded the 'local' or 'community' dimension of TAFE participation as it reasserted the primacy of its industry training role (McIntyre 2000a). Nevertheless, effective equity strategies, whether employment-based or institute-based, depend on local knowledge of disadvantaged client groups and labour market opportunities created by employment and industry in the region.

In practice, it is providers, particularly TAFE institutes, which decide what groups of disadvantaged people ought to be 'targeted' and provided for, and what will constitute 'satisfactory' outcomes for those groups. There is also the question of the extent to which people experiencing disadvantage are actually able to influence the provision offered on their behalf at the policy level.

By comparison with the literature on client groups, there has been relatively little recent discussion of provider strategies, at least since the debates in the 1980s about the desirability of the 'North American community college' model for TAFE. Based on questions of access and equity, the numerous planning studies conducted served to highlight the local and regional needs for technical and further education. The period of the Training Reform Agenda saw a number of studies examining the effects of restructuring on providers, and their capacity to maintain access and equity in a competitive training market (for example, Barnett & Wilson 1994, 1995).

Lundberg and Cleary's 1995 study of a 'negotiated targets strategy' in six Victorian TAFE colleges between 1990 and 1993 is one exception to the neglect of the provider perspective. This strategy aimed to increase the participation of client groups by persuading institutions to meet quotas for these groups. They found 'modest success for the scheme' in increasing places, particularly for women, sole supporting parents, people of non-English speaking background and the long-term unemployed, with less success for isolated rural areas, people with disabilities, and Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Since Lundberg and Cleary's work, targeted funding strategies have been discounted in favour of strategies emphasising employment-based training (ANTA 1998). These still imply a key role for providers in organising 'pathways to employment' for disadvantaged clients, and supporting education and training, but they go beyond the objective of increasing their participation in the system.

However, the continuing participation of equity groups cannot be taken for granted. There is a question of what incentives there are, apart from the exhortations of policy, for providers to continue to effect high levels of participation of disadvantaged clients, and how they make decisions to do so. Resourcing questions are deeply implicated in efforts to increase participation and ensure that it results in outcomes for disadvantaged clients.

How 'participation' is to be understood is also significant. The provider perspective is necessarily not limited to a statistical interpretation of the 'representation' of groups in the provider's clienteles. To understand effective provider strategies, it is necessary to understand participation as a socio-cultural activity. A cultural perspective is essential for making sense of the 'problem' of the exclusion of disadvantaged people from the VET system. Cultural factors are obvious influences on the participation of Indigenous people and people whose language background is other than English. Overcoming cultural and socio-economic barriers in turn has costs for providers that many may not wish to bear in a competitive funding environment, especially in the absence of incentives to do so.

Participation is fundamentally a matter of social and cultural choices and the ability to make such choices. Participation patterns reflect the demands of clienteles for types of courses

where some clienteles make more demands than others on providers, and have greater inclination and capacity to take certain courses, in terms of the personal and financial resources required to do so. Demand is affected not only by the financial costs to participants but cultural costs—whether what is provided is culturally accessible and amenable to groups residing in an area (McIntyre, Brown & Ferrier 1997). Demand is known to be depressed by lower levels of educational qualification, levels of employment and labour force participation, and lower occupational differences, as major Australian Bureau of Statistics surveys demonstrate in detail (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1998a). Potential VET clients lacking the 'cultural advantages' which enable participation are overwhelmingly concentrated in certain urban regions in capital cities.

Achieving equity for these disadvantaged clienteles has high costs. Targeted equity funding of the kind discussed by Lundberg and Cleary (1995) has usually assumed that providers need to be persuaded to develop programs for under-represented groups by directing resourcing to this end, an acknowledgement that both providers and would–be participants may be resistant to participation. The disincentives may be greater in a more open and competitive system, where providers are more sensitive to the demands of students for certain types of courses and make resource allocation decisions in the light of policies and the social and economic character of their particular context. Providers make assumptions about the kinds of participants they want in programs, and it may be that providers avoid targeting disadvantaged groups of students who pose 'difficulties' for normal practice, and require more costly program design (counselling, work placement, literacy tutoring (compare McIntyre & Kimberley 1997). Thus resourcing and socio-cultural issues are integral to the provider perspective.

The funding regime for the public VET providers is likely to influence the efforts which providers make to customise courses for disadvantaged clients, especially since reduced funding impacts first on marginally funded places. The threats to equity of a demand-driven, 'open training market' have consequently been much debated and documented (Anderson 1998), and it remains a question how far equity goals can be achieved by competitive tendering mechanisms. There have been numerous papers which have questioned the effects of the 'training market' on equity in the system, particularly as governments move to a 'purchaser–provider' relationship, reducing resources to the public TAFE system which has historically played a leading role in meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups. It might be argued that a more diversified VET system creates a net increase in opportunities to participate in vocational education and training. Underlying this is the question of who takes responsibility for the delivery of equity outcomes within a diversified VET system.

It cannot, for example, be assumed that community agencies take up the 'equity burden'. Research on the economics of ACE in New South Wales (McIntyre, Brown & Ferrier 1997) demonstrates that inner-city and northern Sydney ACE providers have prospered by targeting various groups in relatively affluent postcodes with high population densities, ensuring high-fee incomes and reducing unit costs, and tending to ignore those postcodes which yield fewer fee-paying students, and have more disadvantaged clienteles.

The provider perspective acknowledges the role of ACE as community agents, as brokers of education and training, and their linkage to employment in the region. Effective local equity strategies involve provider organisations playing various roles; for example, as 'intermediaries' in bridging clients disadvantaged in the labour market and employment opportunities. Providers have 'local knowledge' of both clients and opportunities and what steps are needed to do this bridging, as shown in the pathway planning processes followed by ACE providers in the study by McIntyre & Kimberley (1997). Providers, in mounting effective strategies, also play an inter-agency role, negotiating with other agencies working with disadvantaged clients, such as social security beneficiaries. However, a disturbing finding of the pathways research was that in most states there was little incentive for large TAFE institutes to build partnerships

with small community providers, even though such partnerships are demonstrably cost-effective in reaching particular equity groups (McIntyre & Kimberley 1997).

It is in the work of providers that system priorities and resource constraints meet the realities of identifying and customising VET delivery for local clienteles. Such perspectives involve assumptions about the nature of disadvantage as it is experienced by local clienteles, what their needs are, what 'interventions' are effective, and what resourcing such interventions require in order to be effective. This research therefore highlights the nature of provider perspectives as a key problem in the complex set of provider, client and regional factors which influence the participation of disadvantaged people in vocational education and training. These perspectives may be investigated by examining TAFE managers' assumptions about the characteristics of client groups, the barriers they face, demands of particular courses, the known costs of effective provision and support, and the nature of strategies possible in achieving educational and employment outcomes in the locality.

Regional perspectives

Regional perspectives on equity have a long history originating in the Kangan report and the Poverty Commission of the 1970s (Kangan 1974; Fitzgerald 1976). There have been numerous reports on rural disadvantage and education and training regions since the National Board of Employment, Education and Training review of 1991 concluded that: 'the provision of post-compulsory education and training … for non-metropolitan Australians remains uneven and inadequate' (National Board of Employment, Education and Training 1991, p. xi). Reports have highlighted how distance and isolation disadvantages rural populations and exacerbates the problems of Aboriginal people, women and young people.

Unfortunately, according to Butler and Lawrence (1996), who criticised the neglect of rural and remote areas in equity policy, training reform led to an unhealthy 'metrocentric' conception of vocational education and training. Only late in the process of training reform did governments rediscover regional development, and the need to make education and training responsive to regional needs. Recent work by Falk and others has further challenged the narrow socio-cultural base of the concept of vocational education and training, and has attempted to broaden it by recognising the scope of informal learning in rural communities, and the social matrix in which it occurs (ed. Falk 1998; Falk & Harrison 1999).

A regional perspective acknowledges that disadvantaged groups and individuals are concentrated in particular areas, including urban regions such as south-western Sydney and south-eastern Melbourne. There are great socio-economic variations within the major metropolitan areas, as well as between urban, rural-urban and rural and remote areas. Economic and educational inequality is not evenly distributed in geographic terms. One of the most serious limitations of the 'equity group representation' approach to disadvantage is that it 'dis-locates' disadvantaged people from their regional context. As noted earlier, the trend to a 'dislocated' view of educational and economic disadvantage in VET policy is partly due to the way the industry focus of training reform swept aside questions of the 'community' role of TAFE and the new broader VET system.

A key question therefore, is how regional disadvantage is to be defined and mapped in regard to VET participation, given the suggested inadequacy of 'equity target group representation' concepts. As already indicated, membership of a nominal 'equity target group' may be a poor indicator of disadvantage regarding VET participation and achievement, by comparison with underlying socio-economic factors such as poverty, limited employment opportunities and low levels of schooling and skills. There are well-accepted definitions of disadvantage developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics from census data, on the basis of *socio-economic factors* which indicate those individuals and groups most likely to experience disadvantage. These definitions of disadvantage are as yet little exploited in VET policy, although widely used in other areas of public policy, especially health.

The current research maps regional disadvantage by applying the Australian Bureau of Statistics Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) indexes (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1998c). These comprise three 'general' and two 'specific' socio-economic measures. An index combines several different data items into a single index. For example, the general Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage has components of low income, low educational levels, unemployment and low skill occupations, whereas the Index of Education and Occupation and the Index of Economic Resources are specific, and separate out educational and occupational criteria from economic criteria of disadvantage (such as income and housing factors). The indexes also distinguish between urban and rural disadvantage. These are described more fully in table 4 in appendix 2.

Such socio-economic definitions are appropriate, because AVETMISS provides client data items which can be used to indicate individual socio-economic disadvantage, including employment and educational levels, as well as cultural group membership. As the methodology discussed in the previous section notes, client home postcode is a vital data item which enables a mapping of TAFE participation onto patterns of regional disadvantage.

A regional disadvantage perspective thus opens up questions about comparative participation rates in areas known to be disadvantaged. Working with assumptions that equity can be defined in terms of the equitable distribution of resources, the research asks to what extent the VET participants from such areas represent their 'disadvantaged' populations. It would be a serious failing of equity policy if the resources available in 'disadvantaged areas' were mainly consumed by individuals who are relatively advantaged in educational and employment terms. Thus, in areas with a large Indigenous population, to what extent are TAFE courses and facilities monopolised by non-Aboriginal people living in the area? In areas of high unemployment, to what extent does TAFE enrol mostly employed people? Such questions illustrate what is meant by the distributional justice assumptions of local equity analysis (McIntyre 2000a).

A regional perspective brings into the foreground questions about the way the system is responding to regional disadvantage. It follows from the 'social facts' of disadvantage that issues arise in relation to the way VET resources are allocated to different strategic objectives, including how far they are allocated to reflect the different degrees of social need which follow from regional differences in disadvantage. If there are great disparities in localities and regions, it might be assumed that national and state VET policies acknowledge this as a factor in redressing disadvantage. Also relevant is whether attempts by state training authorities to influence VET providers through current equity policies should include explicit strategies to address local disadvantage.

A major implication of taking a regional perspective on equity in VET is that current approaches, such as ANTA's employment-based equity strategies, have to acknowledge the wide variations in local labour markets and skill populations which will influence how industry-specific strategies can be effectively implemented. The capacity of regions to implement industry and employment-based strategies depends on the nature of local labour markets, their typical employers and employment opportunities. Again, the 'burden' of equity is by no means evenly shared across labour markets, local employer networks and VET providers.

Thus, in terms of the 'representation' of equity groups in VET, it is their 'representation' in those localities where they live in large numbers that is of interest (McIntyre 1999, 2000a). McIntyre (2000a) describes three approaches to local equity analysis:

- *Area participation analysis*: this approach assesses the extent to which people living in a postcode or other locality participate in VET. It employs indicators such as participation rate (the number of students enrolled in VET in a given year expressed as a proportion of the population aged 15 years and over). Area analysis might also make sectoral comparisons and calculate, for example, participation rates in ACE, private VET and higher education. Area participation analysis is the basis for identifying whether disadvantaged areas are

experiencing depressed participation. Analysis can examine differences between high and low rates and seek relationships between participation and various social and economic indicators known to be associated with adult participation, such as higher levels of education, occupation and income.

- *Catchment analysis*: this examines participation from the standpoint of particular providers in the VET system (TAFE, ACE, private) and asks what postcodes make up their nominal catchment. This dimension of equity analysis can open up questions regarding the kinds of clienteles which providers are reaching in particular localities. From an equity perspective, the interest is whether providers in 'disadvantaged areas' are delivering programs in those postcodes and to what extent they are targeting more 'advantaged' areas. An important function of catchment analysis is establishing the extent to which participation is local rather than diffused. However, it will not discern the characteristics of the clienteles who are being served by the provider.
- *Provider equity analysis*: a third kind of analysis builds on the results of catchment and local participation studies. It asks what kind of participants are represented in the enrolments of a provider, and particularly whether the 'target equity groups' are represented in proportion to their numbers in the local area and the nominal catchment, taking into account some analysis of the VET needs of the area in relation to local industry and employment. Such an analysis would note whether there were high concentrations of particular equity groups and their educational and economic disadvantage. The analysis might also ask to what extent relatively advantaged clienteles are participating.

These studies of the two TAFE institutes employed these approaches. They make use of the concept of a provider 'catchment' defined in a group of adjacent postcodes. How far such catchments are distinguishable, rather than overlapping, is an interesting question in terms of the 'targeting' of advantaged clienteles already mentioned as a factor in competitive environment. This research tests to what extent the two institutes enrol local students who have a disadvantaged profile as opposed to students who live beyond the nominal local catchment.

4 Institute equity profiles in summary

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary analysis of the two TAFE institutes in their urban regional context—South Western Sydney Institute and Chisholm Institute in eastern Melbourne.

As outlined earlier, the purpose of this analysis is threefold:

- ✧ to determine whether the institute's programs are reaching disadvantaged clienteles by profiling the institute clients living in local postcodes, in terms of their employment, education and cultural characteristics. Data quality permitting, it can also establish kinds of courses these clients are participating in, and with what outcomes
- ✧ to identify the catchment of each TAFE institute, by using TAFE client data to determine the main postcodes in which the provider's clients live. This analysis 'maps' local TAFE participation in the region served by the institute
- ✧ to identify the nature of disadvantage in the region, by assembling data about its socio-economic profile, including both indexes of disadvantage and specific indicators which refer to levels of education, employment and the presence of significant Indigenous or ethnic communities.

The chapter illustrates the great potential for analysis of TAFE client profiles which can now be generated from the data collected through the AVETMIS Standard. It shows that it is possible to analyse patterns of client participation in TAFE providers in ways which may materially assist planning and the development of effective equity strategies.

The detailed analysis using the SEIFA indexes and the AVETMIS Standard is given in appendix 3.

South Western Sydney Institute

The South Western Sydney Institute characterises itself as servicing one of the fastest growing, most populous, young and ethnically diverse areas of greater Sydney. The region has one of the largest concentrations of Indigenous Australians in the state, and many ethnic communities.

The south-western Sydney region is defined for TAFE purposes in terms of local government areas, but it can be described in terms of boundaries at different levels. Within greater Sydney, it comprises the three statistical sub-divisions and their constituent local government areas (see figure 10 in appendix 3). These are Central Western Sydney (Parramatta and Holroyd), Fairfield-Liverpool (Fairfield and Liverpool) and Outer South Western Sydney (Camden, Campbelltown and Wollondilly). In terms of area and population density, the region extends from the older inner city suburbs around Parramatta through the extensive suburban developments around Fairfield and Liverpool to the newer suburban estates surrounding the cities of Camden and Campbelltown. The latter districts are still largely rural in character, with

much of Wollondilly Shire comprised of rural holdings, water catchment and national park. The region is traversed by the main south-western transport corridor to Canberra and Melbourne.

Recent TAFE NSW planning documents summarise the nature of the region and its enrolments in the following terms:

> The demographic, economic and industrial profile of the south west Sydney region has not changed significantly over the past ten years. The population of the region continues to be, on average, more disadvantaged economically, socially and educationally than other regions. A large proportion of the population comes from non-English speaking backgrounds, and many are not yet proficient in English. There also continues to be a higher level of unemployment, especially youth unemployment, than in other parts of the Sydney metropolitan area. Consequently, the South Western Sydney Institute has a social responsibility to provide for the special needs of this largely disadvantaged population.
>
> Being also the major manufacturing region for Sydney, the general nationwide decline in manufacturing industries more acutely affects this region in terms of falling employment opportunities in a number of local industries. The corresponding decline in demand for training in industries such as fitting and machining and metals manufacturing has impacted on this institute. It has been necessary to consolidate provision and in some locations reduce the number of teaching staff in this sector. The institute has also needed to change the usage of facilities, which had been previously specially designed for training in these industries.
>
> (South Western Sydney Institute Education and Training Profile 2000–2001)

How 'disadvantage' is defined here is not discussed. By no means are areas of the region disadvantaged equally or in similar ways.

However, this project in compiling the equity profile for south-western Sydney followed the following process:

- ✧ Firstly, ranking of disadvantage in this area compared to other parts of Sydney is examined in order to get an overall view of relative disadvantage
- ✧ Secondly, each postcode in the south-western Sydney area is examined and then ranked from high to low (level of advantage) using the SEIFA indices. This gives a locality-level unit of analysis which enables a finer-grained identification of disadvantaged areas
- ✧ Thirdly, the postcodes are ranked according to their participation in TAFE using AVETMISS data
- ✧ Finally, through examination of the tables produced in the second and third steps, it is possible to produce an analysis of the levels of participation in TAFE at a postcode level of people who are disadvantaged.

In the Sydney analysis, socio-economic disadvantage is greatest in Fairfield and Liverpool, although outer western Sydney is both 'advantaged' because of the rich rural holdings, particularly around Camden and Campbelltown, yet disadvantaged in terms of the characteristics of some populations living in these districts (see table 5, appendix 3).

Institute catchment

It was argued earlier that the concept of a 'provider catchment' continues to be an essential concept for effective equity planning at the regional level. One question to be answered is the nature of participation within the region and how far it is possible to speak of regional patterns of participation. For example, do many local residents participate locally, at the institute's campuses within the region?

The catchment of the institute can be established by counting the number of TAFE clients attending the institute in 1999 by their home postcode. Data analysis revealed the following about this catchment area:

- The most disadvantaged postcodes in the region are Blairmount, Cabramatta, Villawood, Macquarie Fields, Miller, Fairfield, Bonnyrigg, Smithfield, Auburn, Guildford, Holsworthy, Chester Hill, Liverpool and Granville, in that order.
- The postcodes with the largest share of the total enrolment are Liverpool, Campbelltown, Cabramatta, Bossley Park, Miller, Fairfield, Minto, Wentworthville, Auburn and Merrylands. To a degree, this reflects the fact that these postcodes have the greatest numbers of residents, for example, Liverpool. These postcodes are the 'heartland' of the institute's provision.
- The highest local participation rates were in Macquarie Fields (10.4%), Miller (10.0%) (both suburbs have younger average populations), Blairmount (near Campbelltown, 9.7%), Bonnyrigg (9.5%), Fairfield (8.7%), Badgery's Creek (8.6%), Bossley Park (8.2%), Minto (8.1%), Narellan (near Camden, 8.1%), Campbelltown (7.9%), Liverpool (7.7%), Ingleburn (7.5%), Smithfield (7.4%) and Granville (7.1%). To some extent, high local participation, which is relative to the size of the postcode's population, reflects the presence of local campuses, for example, at Miller, Campbelltown, Liverpool and Granville.
- By contrast, some postcodes which are outside the regional catchment, although disadvantaged, have notably low South Western Sydney Institute participation rates; for example, Mt Druitt and Penrith. This may be interpreted as further evidence of the strength of local participation in the main postcodes of the adjacent Western Sydney Institute catchment.
- Participation rates are quite high in the most disadvantaged postcodes in the south-western Sydney region, which are indicated by their low values on the SEIFA Economic Resources Index (ERS) and Education and Occupation Index (EDO). Thus Fairfield had some 2146 participants in South Western Sydney Institute courses, or some 8.7% of its 1996 enumerated adult population.
- The great variations in socio-economic disadvantage across the main postcodes are seen in the level of qualifications and the size of the 'blue collar' occupational group in these postcodes. Thus Cabramatta has nearly half of its labour force in the major occupational groups 7, 8 and 9 (including plant operators and labourers), while less than a third hold formal post-school qualifications. The picture is almost reversed for the more advantaged areas such as Baulkham Hills which has higher levels of qualification and notably fewer residents in lower occupational groups.
- There are significant populations of Indigenous Australians in some postcodes—Blairmount (5% in this most disadvantaged locality), and Mt Druitt, Macquarie Fields, Minto and Campbelltown have more than 2% of their 1996 residents identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- Most of the postcodes have high proportions of people speaking a language other than English at home—nearly three-quarters of Cabramatta and Bonnyrigg residents, and over 50% in other postcodes (Villawood, Fairfield, Auburn, Holsworthy, Lidcombe), compared with the national figure of less than a quarter.

The regional picture, dissected by postcode, thus shows a great degree of variation in both participation and the concentration of disadvantaged residents (see tables 7 and 8 in appendix 3).

VET participation and client profiles

The nature of VET participation may now be mapped to the regional picture. The focus of the analysis is particularly on the educational and employment levels of VET clients as reflecting their socio-economic disadvantage and demonstrated that (see table 8 in appendix 3):

- ✧ South-western Sydney's most disadvantaged postcodes (for example Liverpool and Cabramatta) have large numbers of residents who are institute clients, and high local participation rates.
- ✧ The proportion of clients who are female does not vary as greatly as do other characteristics, but is lowest in some postcodes outside the region (for example, Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Penrith, Baulkham Hills, suggesting that when residents from outside the catchment participate, they are likely to be men rather than women, possibly due to lack of availability of transportation or a car.
- ✧ There are differences in the youthfulness of the clients from different postcodes although there are generally large numbers of clients aged 25 and under—often around 50% of clients—reflecting the youthful demographic of the region, as well as significant 'draw' of youth into certain courses, such as apprenticeship.
- ✧ The proportion of clients with Year 10 or less is a significant measure of educational disadvantage in clients. Some 50% of clients from Campbelltown and adjacent postcodes fall into this category, with other postcodes rarely less than 30%. Many institute clients are clearly from less educationally advantaged backgrounds.
- ✧ The proportion of institute clients who are employed appears to closely reflect levels of disadvantage by postcodes, suggesting that those residents disadvantaged in the labour market are accessing courses—34% of clients from Cabramatta, 38% from Minto, 40% from Auburn, 38% from Bonnyrigg, 39% from Macquarie Fields, 22% from Blairmount. Interestingly, institute clients from outside the region tend to have higher levels of employment, for example, Mt Druitt, 75%, although this is a disadvantaged postcode, Penrith 79% and so on.
- ✧ In those postcodes with large proportions of Indigenous or residents who speak a language other than English, institute participation is comparable to the demographic. For example, Blairmount has over 5% of residents who are Indigenous, compared with 8% of its TAFE institute clients; Macquarie Fields, 3.4% compared to 4.2% of clients; and Miller, 3.4% compared with 4.1%.
- ✧ As demonstrated in earlier studies, the very large populations of speakers of languages other than English (and those born as mainly non-English speaking countries) in these postcodes are very well represented as institute clients from the same area. For example, Cabramatta has nearly 87% of its clients speaking a language other than English at home; Fairfield, 84%; Auburn, 87% and Lidcombe, 83%. These are remarkable levels of participation by any measure.

Looking across these postcodes, the range of values for the different VET client characteristics is large. There is marked regional variation which tends to follow the distribution of disadvantage along regional lines. It would be very difficult to conclude much about the differentiation of VET clienteles if the main catchment postcodes appeared to have similar profiles—yet the pattern is one of great heterogeneity. There is some evidence for 'out of region' residents to have a more advantaged profile in their educational, economic and socio-cultural backgrounds, even though their numbers are not large.

The evidence presented suggests that that South Western Sydney Institute draws deeply on the socio-economically disadvantaged and ethnically diverse populations of the regions for its client base.

Chisholm Institute of TAFE

The development of a profile for Chisholm differed from the approach taken to South Western Sydney Institute due to differences in the data made available to the project. The Victorian analysis worked with unit record data rather than aggregated tables for the institute.

South-eastern Melbourne

The Chisholm Institute serves a huge area of south-eastern Melbourne, from the Richmond campus in the inner city, through the south-eastern suburbs following the south-eastern freeway to the Mornington Peninsula. It includes the outer metropolitan campus at Rosebud and a rural campus at Wonthaggi on the Bass Coast, well to the south-east.

Chisholm is a consolidation of several former TAFE institutes which were themselves created from smaller TAFE colleges in the 1980s and 1990s—Casey Institute, centred on Dandenong and Moorabin, Frankston based in the City of Frankston and the Peninsula College covering the Mornington Peninsula. This amalgamation brought together TAFE entities which had developed in different ways to serve the needs of their districts. Thus, there may be distinct catchments within Chisholm's south-eastern region.

This region is socially and economically diverse. It includes the more advantaged areas of Richmond and the bayside suburbs running down to Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula. Fine-grained analysis shows that there are pockets of relative poverty as well as affluence in these areas. There are, for example, in some retirement areas, populations with low economic resources as well as low education levels. Greater Dandenong City has the highest urban disadvantage, the lowest economic resources and the lowest educational levels of any sub-region (see table 9 in appendix 3).

Institute catchment

The main postcodes served by the institute are shown by those campuses with the largest number of individual clients (see table 10 in appendix 3). The largest numbers of students were at Dandenong (11 479), Frankston (10 505) and Moorabbin (10 246)—more than 60% of the total institute students of 51 805. There were over 13 000 students, or a quarter of the total, registered in workplace programs. The smaller campus of Berwick (near Monash's Clayton campus) has some 1953 students or 4% of the total and Bonbeach had 1442 (2.8%). The smallest campuses had fewer than 1000 students, Rosebud (869), Wonthaggi (601) and Cranbourne (673) (see table 10 in appendix 3). The main campus totals include off-campus students.

There were 50 postcodes with over 200 students, in sum 33 127 or 68% of the total Chisholm enrolment including those living outside Melbourne, the first 30 postcodes accounting for over 50% of the total students, the greatest numbers being found in the 'home' postcodes of the major campuses. Frankston and Dandenong had some 5500 students between them, or more than 10% of the total. The first 10 postcodes account for 26% of students. Although this reflects quite a marked concentration of participants from the south-eastern suburbs, as one might expect, further analysis showed that this participation is highly concentrated around the local campuses. For example, of those registered at Dandenong campus, nearly 20% live in Dandenong and Noble Park, 3174 and 3175. The first ten postcodes account for 50% of the 11 000 Dandenong students.

It became clear from the analysis (see table 11 in appendix 3), which ranked the postcode by degree of disadvantage on the Index of Education and Occupation, that:

- ✧ The socio-economic differences within the total catchment are very marked, while at the same time, participation rates in TAFE are quite varied. There is no simple relationship with the socio-economic disadvantage of a postcode area.
- ✧ A postcode such as Hallam may not have a large share of the total Chisholm enrolments, because it is a small postcode with fewer residents than others (and the outlying newer suburbs are more populous) but it may have a high participation rate.

- ✧ The ten most disadvantaged postcodes have quite healthy TAFE participation rates with those of 3175 Dandenong (6.9%) and 3174 Noble Park (5.5%) the highest. It is very likely that these higher rates are due to the presence of the Dandenong campus.
- ✧ The ten most advantaged suburbs such as Beaumaris, Mornington and Glen Waverley have more variable rates, and this also may reflect the presence of campuses—Berwick (8.6%) and Mornington (6.5%) stand out, in this respect. This effect points to the need to check the 'disadvantage status' of VET clients from these areas—do they reflect the 'advantage' of these areas, or are they more disadvantaged?
- ✧ There are very large concentrations of people speaking a language other than English at home in some postcodes (although these communities are proportionally lower than those of south-western Sydney).
- ✧ While levels of qualification increase steadily with decreasing 'education and occupational' disadvantage, it can be seen that 'economic resources' are quite variable, as reflected in the variation in the proportion of residents having an annual household income of less than $16 000.
- ✧ There is a significant population of Indigenous people in Doveton (1.3%) although generally the south-east has small numbers compared with other parts of Melbourne, and indeed to south-western Sydney.

VET participation and client profiles

The socio-economic profile of Chisholm Institute VET clients can now be mapped on to this picture of Chisholm's catchment in the postcodes of south-eastern Melbourne with the following results:

- ✧ The range of values for both schooling and employment is very great across the postcodes. Those with low schooling range from 82.6% in Pakenham to as low as 30% in Beaumaris.
- ✧ By and large, the most disadvantaged postcodes have higher proportions of clients who attended only Year 9 and 10—above 70% in Doveton, Dandenong, Cranbourne and Hampton Park and Narre Warren and less than 33% in the more advantaged postcodes of Moorabbin, Cheltenham and Bentleigh, for example. This suggests that educationally disadvantaged clients are certainly attending from disadvantaged postcodes.
- ✧ Those employed in some capacity range from less than 60% in the more disadvantaged areas to nearly 90% in some more advantaged areas, although this indicator is quite variable.
- ✧ Regarding people with language background other than English participating in Chisholm, it is true to say that the majority of students are from a non-English speaking background. This also holds for the most advantaged areas.
- ✧ Participation by Indigenous Australians was negligible in this 1999 data—only 117 individuals recorded they were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. These students were thinly distributed over the postcodes. (The low participation may reflect the large non-stated number of 11 268. See table 12 in appendix 3).

The language other than English background figures are worth remarking upon, since they are both very high and in this respect similar to those of south-western Sydney. Some 34 274 individuals or 70.3% of the total Chisholm enrolment recorded they were from a non-English speaking background (spoke a language other than English at home).

Local effects: campuses and former institutes

This overall analysis of the institute tends to blur over possibly important differences between the selected campuses and former institutes which were amalgamated some years ago. These

may draw on their localities to a greater or less degree, affecting their client profile (see table 13 in appendix 3).

In the context of the various campuses and the former institutes, the analysis (see table 14 in appendix 3) indicated that:

- ✧ There are significant differences in profile between the different campuses on all of these client characteristics, and by and large these reflect the marked differences in the disadvantage of the campus catchment postcodes.
- ✧ Females are notably under-represented in the workplace training sites, and somewhat less well represented on the Dandenong and Frankston A and Moorabbin campuses.
- ✧ The greatest proportions of clients with low schooling are found at Berwick, Frankston B (but not Frankston A), Moorabbin, Noble Park and Wonthaggi. There are variations between Moorabbin A and B that are very marked.
- ✧ By no means does employment status mirror low schooling: again the pattern is quite varied. The highest levels of employed students are found at Frankston and Moorabbin and (it follows) the workplace sites.
- ✧ Very high proportions of people of language other than English background are found at Berwick, Bonbeach, Frankston and Moorabbin and one of the workplaces.
- ✧ Table 14 in appendix 3 is interesting for what it tells about the socio-economic profile of clients enrolled in off-campus courses at Frankston, Moorabbin and Dandenong. They are more likely to be female, and to have higher levels of schooling at Moorabbin and Frankston though not at Dandenong.
- ✧ Frankston off-campus has a significant representation of Indigenous people (1.5%) and a large cohort of people with disabilities (12.1%).

These data suggest that there are relatively high proportions of disadvantaged clients enrolling at these campuses, although the picture is a varied one, with significant variations in both educational and employment and socio-cultural disadvantage across the campuses.

5 Provider equity strategies

Introduction

This chapter describes the various equity strategies of the two TAFE institutes, South Western Sydney Institute in New South Wales and Chisholm Institute in Victoria. The descriptions draw on information collected from interviews with staff. At each institute, the director was asked to identify a key staff member who could assist the research team to gain access to various members of staff who could act as either informants or who would be willing to be interviewed. The main emphasis was on staff who were in management or policy development roles or who had been involved with equity initiatives within the institute. Staff members took part voluntarily and were able to contribute anonymously if they chose. Over 20 interviews were undertaken at the two institutes over a three-month period in 2000. In addition, many people made available various documents relating to the institutes' operations and policies.

As revealed below, there is a significant variation in the two institutes' approaches to equity. These differences are due to a large number of contextual factors, including state policy and regional and institute factors, and highlight the complexities which need to be taken into account in developing regional-based provider equity strategies. This issue is discussed further in the final chapter of this report.

South Western Sydney Institute

Overview of the scope of the institute

South Western Sydney Institute of TAFE was created in 1992 by amalgamating six previously independent TAFE colleges into one institute. In 1996, the institute was the winner of ANTA's inaugural Training Provider of the Year Award. Other awards the institute has won are the New South Wales Premier's Public Sector Award for Workforce Diversity (1999) and TAFE NSW Quality Award for Outstanding Achievement (1999).

In 2000, South Western Sydney Institute of TAFE provided over 10.28 million annual student contact hours. In 2000, 56 000 students were enrolled. This was in part due to the pre-Olympics environment, since the institute had a significant role in providing specialised training for both paid and unpaid Olympics staff. Of the 56 000 students, 7295 were enrolments in training programs for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. On the adjusted figures, South Western Sydney Institute is the fourth highest institute behind Sydney, North Sydney and Hunter. The growth in students in the period 1996–2000 (excluding Olympics-related enrolments) is 10.4%.

The institute is spread over six college campuses in outer Western Sydney: Granville; Liverpool; Macquarie Fields; Wetherill Park; Miller and Campbelltown. Three of these campuses have on-site childcare available (Campbelltown, Granville and Wetherill Park). Each college has a women's strategy officer to support students wishing to study in courses considered traditionally male, and Granville College has a women's room.

The institute also supports other equity groups through Aboriginal coordinators, institute multicultural coordinators, and disability consultants whose role is both to provide a direct service to students and to participate in the institute's annual planning cycle. Outreach Programs operate from each of the colleges, providing courses within both a community setting and on campus. Counselling and adult basic education support are available at each college and there are also special programs and courses to support students who are unemployed and wanting to develop skills which will enhance their ability to compete for jobs. In addition, the institute has an employment advisory service (based at Granville College) offering help with specific job-seeking skills.

Over 2000 staff are employed at South Western Sydney Institute. The institute offers over 450 full- and part-time courses, including industry training packages. In the second semester in 2000, South Western Sydney Institute offered courses (in order of core-funded annual student contact hours) in general education programs, business services, access courses, electrotechnology (includes information technology), administration services, construction, furnishing, automotive, building design, manufacturing, hospitality and accommodation services and mechanical technology. Other smaller courses (fewer than 100 000 core-funded annual student contact hours) include vehicle body, child studies, community services, hairdressing and beauty therapy, sport and recreation, library services, information technology, medical skills, design, fine arts and contemporary crafts, learner support, agriculture/horticulture, travel and tourism, and media. These studies are offered at all levels including 'courses in' statements (for accredited short courses), statements of attainment, certificates I–IV, diplomas, advanced diplomas and graduate certificates. VET in Schools courses, New Apprentices and customised training (through TAFE Plus) are also offered.

As the institute profile described in the previous chapter indicated, South Western Sydney Institute 'draws deeply on the socio-economically disadvantaged and ethnically diverse populations of the region'.

New South Wales State TAFE equity policy

Each year, the New South Wales Department of Education produces an annual VET Plan which is written following on from the broad national priorities for VET as agreed by all state and territory ministers and set out by ANTA. The Department of Education aims to develop and implement a range of initiatives in line with the New South Wales Charter for Equity in Education and Training which provides an equity policy framework and curriculum guidance through its 'developing inclusive curriculum' guide. In their development phase the New South Wales VET plans also seek input from a variety of stakeholders, including providers and industry. These plans offer guidance to both planners and providers for TAFE. One of the six strategic directions of the charter is 'Supporting everyone to participate equitably in vocational education and training throughout life' which is described as narrowing ' gaps in outcomes that reflect prevailing social conditions'.

As well as these annual plans, a longer range strategic plan is established; for example, in its 'Strategic directions plan 2000–2001' (NSW TAFE 2001), the department identifies as one of its key strengths that 'Principles of social justice and public service underpin all our operations'.

The following sections are organised around a number of strategies. These have been identified as 'strategies' by the researchers and as such, each can be understood as a strategic equity principle which frames the way the institute both understands and enacts equity.

Strategy 1: Equity as core business

In 1992, in light of the clear disadvantages inherent within the catchment community of south-western Sydney, the new management team, with staff from all six colleges, agreed that access

and equity would be the focus of the new institute. The motto 'Equity with excellence' was adopted, with equity established as a core goal and an operating touchstone which continues today under the current director.

> What they did, right from the start, was embed it in our business. Equity, that's our business. And that became the culture of the organisation. So it was right up there as part of our 'this is how we do business' approach. You can't run an institute without a Finance Unit, you can't run it without a unit to make the cabling happen and the computers run. Our institute was structured to say, 'you can't run an institute without an equity provision or focus'. (College director)

Equity has not been left to chance at South Western Sydney Institute. This is exemplified in the way, for example, programs for women, Aboriginal students or young people with physical disabilities and so on, are not seen as 'add-ons', but as the core business itself. This is seen to be critical at a time when such programs could be at risk in an economic rationalist call for a return to 'core business'.

Equity issues and outcomes have been incorporated into key elements of the institute's structure and procedures in order to track, develop, promote and integrate equity into the work of the staff. The effectiveness of this can be seen in the responses of the staff interviewed for this research. All staff were able to articulate key elements in the institute's approach to equity and to nominate a number of specific projects and strategies which demonstrated this commitment.

The key elements described by staff include: management commitment to equity through organisational structures and processes; the integration of the institute within the community it serves; the establishment of key planning and evaluation processes which incorporate equity issues; sustaining an organisational culture which supports and nurtures the development of equity outcomes.

Importantly, equity was established as the responsibility of senior management alongside other key areas of accountability, such as financial management and human resource management. In the current structure, equity is clearly identified as one of the key responsibilities of the deputy director of the institute, and the full-time responsibility of the equity manager. Other designated positions (such as outreach coordinators, multicultural coordinators, and disabilities consultants) support the implementation of institute-wide access and equity policies and participate in the development of local initiatives within each college.

The business plan is the key planning and implementation document. It captures the policy directions which may filter down from the state government to TAFE generally, the policy directions to which the institute has related its mission, as well as proposals which have been discussed in various institute committees (where part of the parameters of these discussions is to establish performance measures in all areas to achieve equity). The business plan guides the institute in delivering programs and services which are tailored to the diverse needs of specific groups within the community. Given the community that it serves, this means that the whole basis of the institute's activities is concerned with equity strategies.

Furthermore, each unit has its own role in promoting equity aims:

> Each faculty and each teaching section had to really start thinking about what they were doing in their own area to promote access and equity, and I think that's probably been the most proactive strategy that we've had in the institute. So it's about saying well OK, the Equity Unit and people working in that will support you. They will say well OK in the engineering faculty in the last two years we've had no students from the Aboriginal community, why? What are you going to do to try and promote that? So it's something they've had to go away and work out together, what they can do, and ownership about equity is everybody's responsibility and everyone's role. (Equity Unit)

The institute's Quality Council also has a role in equity through provision of funding and management of projects which improve any element of the provision of services. In mid-2000 there were 14 projects, including improvement of support services for teachers, and improving communication with part-time teachers.

Strategy 2: Working with the community

A crucial element of the institute's establishment in 1992 was the dedication of the director and staff to the reality of their location and the diverse needs of the community they serve. The south-western Sydney region is one of the fastest growing industrial areas, with one of the youngest, most multicultural populations in Australia. The institute's six colleges cover a geographical area of more than 3500 square kilometres, servicing a population of more than 750 000 people. Thus the mission of this institute is:

> To develop and deliver quality learning programs and services that are responsive to industry and community needs, enabling effective participation in the workplace and society.

This mission emphasises the positioning of the institute as part of the local community and this perception is an ongoing reference point:

> It's being able to ensure that what we are providing is in fact going to meet some long-term needs and contribute to community development. I think the community development and educational aspect of what we do is about being able to discuss with people the broader conceptual things that sit around education and training skills development and opportunities, as opposed to just putting something out there and hoping it works. (Senior member of management)

One example of the community strategic approach to equity comes through the TAFE PLUS commercial arm. Like other areas within the institute, there is awareness of how educational disadvantage impacts on the business community:

> A lot of people in our small business community in this region don't seem to be as conversant with computers and technology, compared with maybe Castle Hill or the North Shore. When the Government recently sent out small business training vouchers [over 2500 across New South Wales] in this region very few people read them, they went in the bin. We did research on it, sent people out to speak with them, contact them by phone. People just didn't read what was sent out to them … they thought these vouchers would be used for people to do mostly computer training, and it was but we're talking 30–40 people out of a few hundred. We found out that very few people have that equipment in their workplace. (Senior manager)

In mid-2000, South Western Sydney Institute TAFE PLUS had 360 companies for whom they were delivering programs. Often when employees are sent along for accreditation in particular courses for example, forklift driving, security, customer service (an Olympics-oriented program), there is an awareness that they will be dealing with people who have had little schooling and often have poor literacy levels. Part of the role of the TAFE PLUS consultants is to negotiate the kind of support these students need through access to the same supports as the institute's mainstream students. TAFE PLUS programs are also seen as a way for students to make contact with further education, and great care is taken that even short courses articulate and are accredited as part of other programs, rather than providing category 3 courses which lack detailed accreditation.

Working on the assumption that the institute is both an important aspect and a key tool of the community, great effort is made to integrate into the community. To this end, there is extensive involvement in local groups, organisations and activities, including schools, social, community and employment groups. The ongoing pay-off is the establishment of formal and

informal networks of information, referral systems and a level of awareness about, and positive perception of the institute.

Strategy 3: Understanding the complexity of disadvantage

As outlined earlier, concepts of equity are related to how disadvantage is perceived. Institute staff who were interviewed demonstrated a consistent view on how the impact of disadvantage was perceived. In particular, educational disadvantage was perceived as infiltrating and influencing all aspects of people's lives.

> It's huge, it filters into every aspect of a person's life … from their confidence, their self-esteem to the way they relate to the broader community around them, to their future potential. There are pockets of people in this area as there are in other areas, who suffer extreme disadvantage with education. And we can't just say education, or it's just about family and support—it's about income levels, it's about the class structure, it's about expectations … the modelling they have around them. So when you look at a whole range of factors which impact on people's lives, education is significant in that it probably brings to the forefront all those things that you either have or you don't have. (Equity Unit)

One of the perceived outcomes of disadvantage in the area is that education is not considered by those who experience disadvantage as a tool for improving life and creating opportunities.

> The socio-economic realities of our population have led to disadvantage. What we have investigated over the years is how that has been self-perpetuating in some ways, because of the fact that people have not seen education necessarily as the way in which they would develop their opportunities. (Head of Studies)

Such an understanding provides an explanation for the institute's resistance to the 'quick fix'. It is understood that no single strategy or program is expected to produce the level of social change that is required to achieve the larger equity purpose of South Western Sydney Institute:

> It's about looking to the future, it's about empowerment, so it's working from that premise, not so much as a reactionary thing. (Equity Unit)

Strategy 4: Structural approach to equity

South Western Sydney Institute demonstrates a structural approach to equity. It fits into the same systems and has accountability, change management and performance measures. It operates within similar combinations of directives and autonomy.

A key initiative by the equity manager was to map all students who fell somewhere within the broad category of equity. This was done not only to get an overall view of the student population, but also to get some close-up perspectives. Different aspects of the emerging picture were examined: by gender, by disability and so on. It was then possible to draw conclusions about improving performance and outcomes.

> We could look and say, well OK, what's happening in our institute, we're getting people in, but once they get to this level they all go. So what's happening, what are we doing or what can we do better to have that movement from here to here, which then means that if we do that bit more, people have more employment opportunities, more access to opportunities in the community. (Equity Unit)

Review structures have been put in place to support ongoing examination. Until a couple of years ago, people with high support needs were concentrated in the certificate I and II programs. One of the structural changes which had a significant impact was changing the status of students who had undertaken a course with an Outreach, Aboriginal or high school program number. Previously, in order to move on to other courses within the institute, they would have had to apply on a competitive basis as if they were newcomers to the institute.

Through lobbying from the Equity Manager, this issue was addressed through the institute business plan so that each faculty then looked at developing articulation processes which they could put into place to support the continuation of students who came in from an equity access background.

Strategy 5: Employment focus

An important direction of the institute integral to its equity position is the need to address the issue of employment barriers in the community.

> We can train them and train them and train them, but if someone's not going to give them a job, it just shifts emphasis back on the person, 'so how dumb am I, I did a course in plumbing and I still can't get a job'. (Equity Unit)

The significance of this is highlighted by the fact that western Sydney has been particularly hard hit by the reduction in manufacturing industries in the last ten years. This is understood as one of the many factors contributing to a high unemployment rate, particularly among young people.

As mentioned earlier, employment barriers are related to factors leading to disadvantage. Some of these barriers include early school leaving, long-term unemployment, low income, and low literacy, language and numeracy levels and disability. These interact with gender, as well as with highly varied and situated Indigenous and ethnicity factors. As one senior manager said:

> If equity in educational training was really successful then you'd see the same [representative] proportions across employment sectors and across level of achievement in further education and in employment areas as you see in the population of the community. Also it would be reflected in things like representation in local, state and federal government and in community power and lobby groups and in the boards of large corporations.

One aspect of the institute's focus on employment is to ensure TAFE learning programs are relevant to work:

> Ultimately from our perspective, if in fact you really wanted to talk about building skills for individuals so that they can access what they want to access which is either further education and training or employment, then it is really about being able to structure a program, or a series of programs that are going to enable them to do that. It is not about putting together something to keep people busy. (Senior management)

Some of the strategies which have been introduced include starting with simple things such as using some of the employers they already work with to take on people for work experience, contacting many others by phone and inviting their involvement, setting up an institute Aboriginal Advisory Committee chaired by the director, and including members of the institute board involved with industry, as well as members of Aboriginal community groups. This then encourages direct networking between the Aboriginal community and the board members. The board members are asked to discuss recruitment provisions in their companies with various classes.

In addition, the institute organises and participates in industry forums, breakfasts for local business people as well as regular meetings with employers and visits to factories and small businesses.

Strategy 6: Localising initiatives

Each college is expected to develop its own strategies to address equity needs in its particular area. Priority areas are established in a number of ways. They may come as the result of a government priority or through the consultation processes between colleges and the manager

of equity. The business plan then formalises priorities, and funding is allocated. In terms of implementation, the specific factors of each community need to be taken into account.

> The autonomy comes from what they do, where they do it and whom they do it with and what kind of program it might be. That's entirely up to them, but as long as it's part of the bigger effort, it would be fine. (College Director)

A current example is the Youth at Risk program which is funded as an institute-wide priority. While each program has the same target group, the structure and desired outcomes differ from college to college according to identified local needs and other factors such as the particular partners. Although broadly targeted at 'youth at risk' there is recognition that this is not an homogenous group and each program is oriented toward specific local needs.

At Macquarie Fields the program is a partnership with schools, youth justice centres and TAFE and works off campus through Outreach with very marginalised youth over long periods as a way of addressing chronic truancy problems. Students drop in and out of the program but contact is maintained by staff.

At Liverpool, the Focus on Skills course operates a flexible program with ongoing enrolment available for 15 and 16-year-olds, including young people released from detention centres and homeless young people. Students work within the college in their own designated room set up with access to their own facilities. It's seen as 'a transitional program, it's like a holding pattern for the lost souls who stumble on us at all sorts of odd times' (College Director).

The Wetherill Park program is the most recent. Here a generic Work Skills course was operated with a cohort of young people identified by the Department of Education as school refusers. One of the specific issues being addressed by this program is the development the young people's skills in working and interacting effectively with others. As well as incorporating team building into the program, the program has enrolled students as a single group which stays together throughout the course. The two earlier programs are already producing outcomes where students have returned to school, are involved in other TAFE programs or have maintained contact with the coordinators. Each of these outcomes is considered to be positive.

When working with access programs generally, it is seen as important to maintain a flexible and dynamic approach and not to 'institutionalise' a program on the basis of its prior success. By attempting to replicate this success, there is the risk that a lookalike program will not be responding to the needs of the new location.

> If [a program] has been there for that long it just stays the same because [staff] can't be bothered doing anything about it. It gets a bit stale and the kids turn off it. It's easier not to customise programs, it's easier because you can get a lot more bums on seats if that was your only purpose. I mean, there's not a shortage of students out there. If you sat here and advertised ESOL [English as a Second or other Language] or WOW Computers [Women and Work] you'd never have to get out of your chair! (Outreach coordinator)

Individual colleges are no longer responsible for targeting any particular group. The cross-campus focus provided by the equity manager, as well as the officers whose responsibility it is to look after the women's programs, the Aboriginal programs and the multicultural programs, was seen as important to ensure that colleges did not fall into the trap of concentrating on 'tried and true' program areas.

> You know that people do develop around what they can deliver rather than what may be needed … I'm not saying that was totally incorrect as a way of ensuring the skills base, but sometimes you might have found, as we did, that the programs were being repeated in that same area over and over again but not looking at the other programs that might have been developed for that area … So we felt that our focus should be more on looking across the whole institute instead of relying on a college to just develop and provide those programs themselves. (College Director)

Strategy 7: Addressing disadvantage as a pathway

All equity success stories are pathway stories. Time is accepted and embraced as a key element. Building relationships, uncovering need, negotiating programs, influencing less committed staff, awaiting the effect of efforts—all take time. Time is not an enemy, but is an element that can be worked with as a factor promoting change.

> Sometimes it's taken ten years for people to get so depressed and so disenfranchised that an eighteen week course is not going to undo. So we need to be prepared to put some more time investment in there, and not have these unrealistic expectations on the persons themselves, nor the staff, as I think that's really stressful. (Equity Unit)

The following is a story emerging from Outreach:

> There was one particular woman who had arrived as a Bosnian refugee, landed here with her family, and they just tried to get any work that they could, she somehow heard about one of our WOW courses which is Work Opportunities for Women, enrolled in that, and was also with other Bosnian people that she hadn't even met in the area, and other sorts of people, this was particularly targeting … women, so it was a nice opportunity to meet other people in similar circumstances. They did really well, then got some support in terms of just networking and confidence … language skills, with access to information technology, whatever it was they were interested in. Anyway that woman just grew from strength to strength, completed the WOW program, came and did another certificate course, has now finished her graduate diploma in adult education at the University of Technology, Sydney and is working back in the Outreach program, assisting other women. (Outreach coordinator)

Awareness of pathways has led to significant changes in Aboriginal programs:

> For some time, we'd say with Aboriginal students, OK let's start them in on CAFE and personally I think everyone was so CAFEd out, it was just like going back to school, and we're talking about adults, so whilst I think it served its purpose and it helped quite a few people I think it needed to be a bit more creative in the way it was applied. About two years ago, we started realising that people stopped turning up even though they say they're getting an ABSTUDY allowance. The two Aboriginal coordinators we have just been dynamic and terrific in terms of consulting and networking with the community, and linking it to something that was relevant, so instead of just coming in and doing CAFE you would come in and you would do a CAFE plumbing, CAFE building, CAFE childcare, so you are actually getting immediate skills in an area that you have showed interest in, with the literacy stuff integrated. You don't want to come in and just do reading and writing. (Head of Studies)

Summary of South Western Sydney Institute

The key South Western Sydney Institute strategy 'equity as core business' is manifested in the diversity of approaches adopted by institute and college managers and practitioners. These illustrate the way rhetoric around 'equity' can be enacted at both the macro- and micro-level practices.

Chisholm Institute

Overview of the institute

It is important to note at the outset that this snapshot of Chisholm Institute's approach to enhance equity has been taken at a time very early in its history as an amalgamated

organisation. Taken at this time, it provides an insight into the challenges faced by educational institutions undergoing transformation through amalgamation.

The Chisholm Institute of Technical and Further Education is one of the largest TAFE institutes in Australia. It was formed on 1 July 1998 from the amalgamation of Barton, Casey and Peninsula Institutes of TAFE.

The institute employed about 1700 staff in 1999 and offered 7.1 million student contact hours to almost 52 000 students. It is located on nine campuses from the south-eastern side of Melbourne along the eastern side of Port Phillip Bay to the Bass Coast. The three main campuses are Dandenong, Frankston and Moorabbin, with smaller campuses located at Berwick, Bonbeach, Cranbourne, Noble Park, Rosebud and Wonthaggi. As figure 2 shows, Chisholm Institute campuses are spread from high-density inner urban areas (Richmond) through suburban and bayside areas to the rural town of Wonthaggi, about 130 kilometres from central Melbourne.

The institute equity profile given in the previous chapter identified that, within the Chisholm Institute catchment, there were significant differences in profile between the different campuses on a broad range of client characteristics. Further, it indicated that these differences reflected the marked differences in disadvantage of the campus catchment area.

Overall, the data suggested that there were relatively high proportions of disadvantaged clients enrolling at Chisholm campuses although there was variation in educational, employment and socio-cultural disadvantage across the campuses.

The institute offers a range of courses, including certificates I–IV, diplomas and advanced diplomas, apprenticeship/traineeship training programs, short courses, VET in Schools programs, Adult Victorian Certificate of Education, double award programs by arrangement with Monash University, resulting in a Chisholm Diploma and a Monash degree, and graduate certificate courses. Major study areas include art and design, automotive, building and construction, business, electrical/electronics, engineering, environmental, health, language, literacy and numeracy, management, food technology, horticulture, hospitality and tourism, information technology management, metals manufacturing, personal services, polymers, social and community studies, warehousing and transport. The institute also offers a range of programs designed to assist students returning to study and those preparing for tertiary entry.

Figure 2: Chisholm Institute campus locations

Victorian State TAFE equity policy

In 1996, the Victorian Government's Office of Training and Further Education replaced its negotiated targets approach to equity with a 'managing diversity' policy. This policy formed part of the State Training System's commitment to 'improving access for all Victorians to vocational and further education, embracing the needs of a diverse and evolving society' (Office of Training and Further Education 1997). The policy connected closely with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation and had a strong focus on best practice. Six key principles were defined by the policy as follows:

- ✧ valuing diversity
- ✧ access to and effective participation in vocational and further education
- ✧ an outcomes focus on performance
- ✧ responsiveness to clients with special needs
- ✧ reporting on achievement
- ✧ managing diversity as a corporate responsibility (Office of Training and Further Education 1997).

In broad terms, the managing diversity policy took an inclusive approach focused on individuals rather than target groups, linked to corporate strategies and planning. TAFE institutes were not required to develop a 'managing diversity' plan although some institutes did so. However, Office of Training and Further Education required each TAFE institute to submit agreed outcomes and performance indicators against those outcomes, associated with their annual plan. A renewed and strong focus on equity was introduced by the Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria (Kirby review 2000), which specifically addressed issues related to young people. This review's reported findings included the following:

- ✧ The current data on levels of participation hid poor outcomes for a significant number of young people and these young people were frequently concentrated in groups and geographical regions.
- ✧ There were uneven patterns of education and training participation and outcomes, including transition outcomes across the state.
- ✧ There was evidence of a weakness in guidance and advisory services available for young people.
- ✧ Greater systemic and local or community accountability for the outcomes and destinations of young people needed to be developed within post-compulsory education and training.
- ✧ Governments, providers and other stakeholders needed to work together to achieve a greater level of cross-sectoral integration of programs and services.

The Kirby review processes and initial findings were the subject of discussion amongst staff at Chisholm Institute at the time of data gathering and were beginning to influence equity strategies.

Institute directions

The state policy shift from 'equity' to 'managing diversity' is followed through in the policy directions of Chisholm Institute. In line with the new direction, the language of equity is invisible in institute policy documents. Promotion of equitable access, participation and outcomes of learners does not figure as a primary concern of the institute. There are no specific references within the institute's vision and values statements about commitment to equitable access, participation or outcomes for disadvantaged local communities.

Following its formation in 1998, the amalgamated Chisholm Institute adopted a vision to 'transform lives through learning and lead the way in market-focused applied education'. The notion of serving markets figured prominently in documentation of the institute's directions and goals. It aimed to 'serve the needs of markets' and to 'stimulate new markets by providing relevant and robust applied education' (Chisholm Institute of TAFE 1999). The following eight values were nominated by Chisholm as underpinning its vision:

- ✧ innovation and courage
- ✧ ethical and accountable conduct
- ✧ profitability and financial strength
- ✧ stakeholder relationships
- ✧ community involvement
- ✧ lifelong learning
- ✧ integrated diversity
- ✧ mutual respect.

'Innovation and courage' were linked to identifying and seizing opportunities and managed risk-taking. 'Stakeholders' embraced 'staff, industry, students and representative bodies, communities, government, central agencies and service and product providers' whose perspectives 'will be sought and taken into account' (Chisholm Institute of TAFE 1999). In parallel with this, 'mutual respect' was linked to recognising the value of different perspectives of learners, staff, council and other stakeholders. 'Community' referred to 'diverse communities, of staff and students within the institute and municipal, professional, social, industrial, cultural and other communities external to the institute' (Chisholm Institute of TAFE 1999). These were described as the 'fabric' of the institute's existence and 'involvement of, and within these communities are the building blocks of the institute's future'. 'Diversity' was similarly defined in a broad way. It applied to the 'multitude of physical and non-physical resources, educational and learning practices, types of students and industry base customers, a diverse staff, a geographically disparate campus network and a vast range of programs and services' (Chisholm Institute of TAFE 1999).

Such a shift in policy language and focus provided a dilemma for a research project which focuses on 'equity'. This is particularly the case given the relative 'youth' of these policies and the fact that there are only hints of emergent understandings of the policy consequences on disadvantaged groups. Nevertheless, equity issues continued to be discussed and considered during the interviews. The following sections therefore attempt to draw attention to some of the directions and issues which emerged in the interviews with institute staff relevant to the provision and management of programs for disadvantaged groups. They reveal a number of tensions but these need to be understood in relation to the early stages of not only the amalgamation but also as a radical shift in policy directions for meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups. Some of the strategies are of a similar order as those described in the case study of South Western Sydney Institute, while others (see strategy 1, 2, 4 and 9) differ considerably as they reflect the macro rethinking and reconceptualising which is required of the policy shift at Chisholm.

Strategy 1: Shift from equity to valuing diversity policy

The amalgamation of the three TAFE institutes prompted the realisation that a coordinated approach to managing diversity was required. Discussions led to the establishment of the Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group (MAVDAG) in November 1999. As one member of the group reported: 'Before the amalgamation, each [campus] did our own thing. Diversity has escalated with the amalgamation. We all saw that there needed to be some sort of coordination of diversity in the institute'.

The terms of reference for the Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group state that:

> Valuing Diversity focuses on treating everyone at Chisholm as an individual, with his or her own special needs. It is also about achieving better business outcomes through providing flexible and innovative opportunities so that individuals are able to reach their full potential. (Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group 1999)

Group members acted on behalf of the entire institute and made 'recommendations to Directorate for the development, evaluation and review of the institute's managing diversity plans, policies and procedures' (Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group 1999). Chaired by the General Manager, Strategy, membership included general managers, core and corporate sector staff, two student association representatives and seconded staff or advisors, as required.

Chisholm Institute had no budget particularly set aside for equity. There was a small budget to manage the Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group and for its reports to be printed. Strategies were funded through operational planning, so funding of strategies depended on the capacity of staff in program and corporate areas to prepare submissions and argue for their acceptance within a context of competing demands on resources.

Resourcing of policy development was mainly by departments through general manager offices. The Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group was one of five groups in the directorate and had a small non-salary budget to cover policy development. The executive officer's role was almost exclusively focused on policy. The role of the group involved monitoring, reviewing and reporting to the Directorate on:

- ad hoc Chisholm interest/working groups engaged with issues relevant to diversity, which may partially or directly report to the MAVDAG when appropriate
- the realisation of institute strategic goals and targets
- the strengths and opportunities for improvement identified through the internal assessment processes of the Chisholm Management framework
- current policies against the requirements of the relevant state and federal legislation, government authorities such as ANTA and Office of Technical and Further Education and government policy frameworks
- the development of new strategies, plans, policies, procedures and programs in relation to the demographics, needs and satisfaction status of the staff and student populations, and the professional development needs of staff
- new developments in diversity practices such as technology, research, case law, case studies, and other relevant information
- quarterly monitoring sufficient to meet the corporate governance requirements of council.

(Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group 1999, p.2)

One of the initial and key outcomes of the group was the development of Chisholm's diversity policy. The *Diversity policy and procedure* summary separates the policy into two parts, diversity and anti-discrimination. Diversity was defined as being 'about people having diverse needs and having the right to the opportunity to reach their full potential'. Anti-discrimination involves 'respecting the rights of individuals and groups to operate in an environment free from discrimination' (Chisholm Institute of TAFE 2000). The policy also identified council policies, executive policies and institute procedures which have diversity content.

One member of the Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group drew a clear distinction between 'equity' and 'diversity':

> Equity is the old legislation-driven equal opportunity. You will do it because … Diversity is where everybody is special, has special needs, right to have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Businesses that manage and value diversity naturally do better than

> businesses that don't because you have happy staff and students. You are trying to cater for their individual needs and it is better for everybody if you embrace the diversity thing … everyone is diverse.

As a first step, a brochure, 'Valuing diversity—anti-discrimination and managing diversity', was produced and distributed to over 100 teaching and non-teaching areas. It was also distributed at diversity talks to orientation students and hospitality students.

The brochure included the following statement about diversity:

> Managing and valuing diversity appreciates the differences and strengths that people have such as cultural/family issues, personal style, interests and abilities. Chisholm Institute recognises this and encourages people to have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

This brochure stated that Chisholm policies meet the requirements of both state and federal equal opportunity legislation, in particular, the *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995*, the *Public Sector Management and Employment Act 1998*, and the *Federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The institute's diversity policy and valuing diversity brochure focused more on its policy on anti-discrimination and its complaints procedure and less on learner diversity and equity. Documentation provided by Chisholm concentrated almost exclusively on the rights of staff and students to be free from discrimination. When questioned about Chisholm's approach to equity, one member of Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group, acknowledged that Chisholm was 'trying to move over to managing diversity rather than the old EO discrimination sort of areas'. Although the group was relatively new, the member believed it was lifting the profile of diversity at Chisholm and becoming a key coordinating body. She felt that, since the group had been formed and an action plan developed, diversity had gained a much higher profile amongst staff. Staff with direct experience of the policy review and creation processes provided some insights into related problems and issues. One of the key factors raised was the amalgamation and the effects that had on policy and culture of the organisation. One staff member explained that:

> … there were no structures, policy procedures. What had existed in the three previous organisations were fused in the amalgamation and because it was a fusion and not really a takeover by any dominant partner, all previous policies were thrown into the melting pot to be re-negotiated and recreated. So there was no structure for addressing these sorts of issues.

While such an approach offered freedom to be innovative, there was also a temporary vacuum in terms of policy and uncertainty in direction. Anne Younger and Robyn Hill, writing in the Chisholm Centre for Innovation and Research publication, *Transfer*, reported that the amalgamation in 1998 had brought about 'the second largest TAFE institute in Australia'. They also observed that staff were '… not used to the freedom that such size can bring or the bigger list of unanswered questions' (Younger & Hill 1999, p.19).

Initial policy development focused on staff recruitment and management related to equal opportunity legislation, as one senior management member described it, 'policy which is developed in relation to equity which is mandated, for example, EO and then a strategic response to the environment'. The main emphasis was on staff: diversity, equal opportunity, anti-discrimination and grievance procedures.

Strategy 2: Localising equity

The complexity of addressing equity at the local level was exemplified in the interviews by the diverse opinions expressed.

According to one senior management member, policy related to equity is '… mostly developed locally … usually initiated by one area, for example, HR or Student Support or a teaching area

and then it goes through consultation and then gets to the point of endorsement at Executive Policy level'.

A different perspective on policy development was offered by a worker in Student Support Services who reported that access and equity policy was addressed through '… the process of developing any policy: consultation, reflection, benchmarking so any function we perform would not ignore those things and would not necessarily focus on them'.

When asked about the process of equity policy development at Chisholm and how that connected with federal or state legislation, one staff member stated that it was:

> … difficult to answer because I feel it is in such early stages of trying to establish those communication processes. As a member of the committee, we now … discuss that at a sector level, issues that seem to impact on the ability for students to access or have that participation … [but] I haven't at this stage ever written or developed a policy that is specifically about our area.

From the point of view of a student support worker, equity was '… about access and not putting barriers up and making things difficult, keeping things simple, straightforward, so all can work, live with them and benefit from them'. She perceived that:

> … organisational goals regarding that [equity] are embedded in each one of them [goals], because our goals are about enhancing expectations for what you learn and how you can apply what you learn, and I don't think that we would need to separate that concept for any group. That needs to be available to everybody, individual, organisation, agency regardless of whether we have the infrastructure to support the variations within those groups.

There was an apparent tension between an approach based around a universal focus and one which, for more practical reasons, required particular needs to be identified.

Strategy 3: Identifying needs to address equity

Staff interviewed at Chisholm perceived the catchment of the institute to be 'quite diverse, very broad'. Descriptions of student populations were generally in accord with the profile analysis. While Frankston campus was described as having a 'fairly mono-cultural sort of population with a high youth group and large issues of youth unemployment', Dandenong campus was perceived to be 'much more culturally diverse and impoverished … [with] a Koori community in existence … small-to-medium enterprises facing economic downturn … displaced workers … limited economic prospects for the area and high levels of youth unemployment'. However, both areas were perceived to have substance abuse problems. Cranbourne was described as a corridor of 'big population growth', including 'women who want to get back to study'. Berwick, the site of a newer campus, is a dormitory suburb of Melbourne, with young people who 'want to get into the city, the big smoke but are prevented from doing so by limited public transport'.

In addition, interviewees reported that they were beginning to recognise a target group in 'boys dropping out of school early'. The Kirby review supported this view, highlighting that the percentage of 'early school leaving among boys' was greater than 36% in the Mornington area and 31–35% in the South East area of Melbourne: the highest two categories for boys in Victoria (1998 figures) (Kirby 2000, p.51). Early leaving among girls in both of these areas was reported to be 21–30%, the highest category for girls in Victoria. The Kirby review also concluded that 'within Melbourne, the regions where early leaving is generally high are also in general those in which student achievement is also relatively weak' (p.50). Interviewees reported that the institute was experiencing declining numbers of young men entering apprenticeships and had identified the need to develop strategies to attract young men to enter TAFE.

It is clear from these descriptions that there were complex equity demands within some campus populations and significant variations between campuses. There was, however, a common need to focus on supporting disadvantaged youth and the institute was developing and evaluating relevant strategies.

Chisholm Institute used a variety of data sources to identify needs for strategies to address equity. Sources included:

- the Office of Post Compulsory Education and Training
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)
- IBIS database[1]
- state government infrastructure reports
- local government networks
- local consultative committees and agencies
- National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) data collections
- government commissioned reports such as the Kirby review
- consultations by institute managers with the community.

In addition, the institute uses links with schools through VET in Schools programs to gain information about school leavers, and further education links with local Neighbourhood Houses to gain information about potential demand from people studying in language and literacy programs, women returning to study and people with a disability.

This array of data sources provided Chisholm Institute staff with local knowledge from different perspectives. However, a key challenge for Chisholm, with its many campuses and diverse learners, was the development and management of strategies to effectively meet both common and diverse local needs.

Strategy 4: Rethinking outcomes

What student outcomes were valued at Chisholm? A senior manager reported that, while the institute needed to be conscious of the 'agenda of outcomes' at the end of the program, that is, successful completion of the program and employment, there was recognition that other outcomes were also successful. Examples of these included people:

- leaving the program prior to completion to take up employment
- following pathways into further study, not necessarily having completed the program
- discovering that a course of study was not the right path for an individual and leaving to pursue what had been identified as the preferred direction
- gaining confidence in own capacity
- acquiring competence in skills not necessarily measured by a result
- getting 'in touch with each other and realising that they are not alone in the world'
- from a non-English speaking background gaining recognition for their overseas qualifications through English language training.

[1] IBIS is a collection of databases that are available online to subscribers (most libraries subscribe): Current Contents, which references journals in many subjects; ERIC, which specialises in education and related topics; PsycINFO, on psychology; and the W. H. Wilson indexes, which includes nine indices: Reader's Guide Abstracts (popular magazines), and indices in art, literature, social sciences, humanities, business periodicals, general science, biology and agriculture, and applied science and technology.

The fact that these additional outcomes were not recognised as successful at a system level was seen to be a significant issue: 'That's not the way we are funded so it creates great dilemmas for us'. In parallel with these difficulties of formally recognising 'informal' outcomes was the issue of recognising prior learning through informal means. While it was reported that recognition of prior learning (RPL) practice was common, it was acknowledged that it was more likely to be formal recognition of other training (that is, credit transfer) and less likely to be 'real RPL'. This was because of funding issues: 'We are not funded to do unofficial "life experience" assessment as opposed to work experience through workplace assessment. The trickiest area is recognising life skills'. This has important implications for disadvantaged learners who may not be employed and whose skill acquisition may have been through informal and disconnected ways.

The institute had negotiated pathways arrangements with Monash and Deakin Universities on a 'course to course' basis. However, there was concern that these arrangements were not always 'visible' for people enrolled in the courses. At the time of interview, there was an audit process underway to identify these arrangements so that a handbook for students could be prepared.

From a support worker's point of view, the outcomes most valued were for the learners to '… adequately access the next course and feel capable of achieving … pushing the boundaries of what can be achieved and motivation levels, is a positive outcome and more importantly, a life outcome'.

The usual approach to identification of support needs was through a planning and review process. It began with translation of policy directions into action plans. Subsequently, the Quality and Planning Unit established cross-referencing between the corporate and action plans.

Strategy 5: Targeting particular groups

Although there was an orientation towards managing diversity rather than targeting particular equity groups, there were staff employed at Chisholm Institute to manage programs for people with a disability and Koori students. These included an integration disability worker, a Koori liaison officer, and at the time of interview, a vacant position of Koori cluster manager. Chisholm also offered preparatory programs of various kinds and had a multicultural unit.

There was a tension between local strategies targeted at specific groups, and more broadly based ones. Some strategies work well because they are local, and if they do not work, there is an opportunity to examine why not. While integration into an overall matrix was seen to be important, there were disadvantages in that initiatives might not be 'held to be any one person's responsibility … no one to sponsor and push'. This resulted in a lack of clear intent, lack of awareness by staff of what needed to be done and therefore reluctance to become involved. Hence a loss of focus led to 'dispersed' energy. Additional problems identified were lack of resources, both human and financial, poor management follow-through and ineffective communication processes.

For one support worker, the key for an organisation in determining strategies was to be:

> … professional about what you do … there has to be a responsibility to the student at every level: coordination, management and institute level … The onus is on every player who has some involvement with the student. There needs to be an awareness of the circumstances of each student … as well as understanding … the role of education in that person's life.

Strategy 6: Employment focus

The institute places significant emphasis on 'direct and indirect input in relation to employment'. There was a belief that the community valued employment highly as an outcome even though the funding body did not. The institute's research supported the view that students selected courses '… not for the learning, but for employment, asking, what can I get to help me get a job'.

The employment support team had developed a recruitment database with the capacity to log a job opportunity provided by an employer, maintain a student register, and the facility to short-list prospective job applicants according to their prior experience and qualifications, interests and other attributes. Once selected, the program generates a letter to the students, prompting their application.

Student awareness of employment services was generated at enrolment. While the students were queued up, waiting to enrol, employment support officers distributed training needs analysis forms. These surveyed the student about their resume, work experience and readiness, as well as prospective use of the employment service. The aim was to both generate a picture of the student's needs and present a profile of the employment support service. In addition, workshops on job-seeking skills were provided, and secondary school students were offered work placement opportunities at Chisholm in recognition of its position as the area's largest employer. The institute's contact with secondary students is substantial as it worked with about 70 schools and 1300 secondary students enrolled in 16 programs. Local Victorian Certificate of Education students received substantial careers counselling, initially on a one-to-one basis.

A youth worker was involved in a six-month youth support project which examined the 'experiences of young adults in TAFE to try to assist them as they move their way through to looking at issues of motivation and support structures that exist or need to exist'. Chisholm Institute was one of six TAFE institutes involved in a pilot program funded by the Department of Employment, Education and Training. Part of the project involved finding out how the institute documented information about disadvantaged students and what statistics were gathered.

This project centred on work with a sample of 40–50 students, across two campuses, Frankston and Dandenong. The students were studying in courses as diverse as automotive, office administration, literacy and Victorian Certificate of Education (Year 12). Support was provided to both students and staff in the belief that, by supporting staff, 'you were also supporting the students by creating a more positive working environment, responding to needs'.

Strategy 7: Networking with local agencies

An additional outcome of the above project was the creation of networks between the institute and relevant local agencies.

Initiatives developed as part of this program to support young people included the following:

- ✧ breakfast programs for the students
- ✧ communication bulletin boards via the internet
- ✧ discussion groups for staff and students, in person and via forums set up for specific topics
- ✧ exploration of curriculum and delivery issues with students and staff
- ✧ research into motivation issues with students and factors impacting on their life and capacity to participate students, for example, poverty

- development of booklets to encourage a culture of examining the appropriateness of the course to the student's life 'right now'
- self-awareness, goal-setting and action planning activities for students
- establishing and promoting across the institute, a young person on the library help desk
- setting up library areas where students could do their homework in a relaxed environment.

One support worker talked about the importance of developing strong networks with local agencies; for example, with drug and alcohol agencies in the region. These services have been used to provide professional development for staff around issues of drug use and how to tackle behaviour associated with drug use. Staff awareness of the availability of drugs at the local market, and student drug use have helped to address the differences between social experiences of staff and younger students. This staff member stressed the importance of staff being aware of how much issues of disadvantage impacted on a student's full participation in an educational program, down to the level of family relationships and homework environment. The institute has also used the services of the Ardoch Youth Foundation which helped to set up support services in secondary schools. This involved an holistic approach to support for young adults in the education system. Networking with local agencies resulted in ideas for support activities such as the Dandenong Psychiatric Centre's 'Taste of TAFE' proposal to promote training options for centre participants.

During 2000, there were between 12 and 15 anti-discrimination contact officers with specific aims established across all Chisholm campuses. Other initiatives planned included a diversity award for staff which both teaching and non-teaching teams could enter, and supportive discussions with teachers to assist them to better explain diversity to students. A 'tips for teachers' information sheet with a special focus on students with disabilities had been prepared by Student Support Services.

Strategy 8: Promoting student support services

Student Support Services staff reported that bringing together three separate, established systems together without losing the best that each had to offer had been a challenge. The mid-year 2000 report of Chisholm's Student Support Services revealed student access to services by type, as shown in table 3.

Table 3: Student access to services by type

Counselling service type	Number of appointments	Proportion of all appointments
Personal	1497	38
Career	1062	27
Health	683	18
Disabilities	414	11
Advocacy/discrimination	237	6
Total	**3893**	**10**

The number of students accessing these services in the first half of 2000 had grown by 40% from 1999, reflecting the greater staff and student awareness of what services were available.

The institute's survey of students during 2000 (sample size 76) revealed that the majority of students (37%) accessed the service through staff referral. An additional 23% indicated orientation activities as their source of information. Word of mouth from other students was used by 20%, while brochures and posters were only indicated as a source by 14% (Chisholm Institute of TAFE 2000). The survey indicated that those who had used the service had either been referred by staff or heard about it from other students. Outside these sources, most had no idea where the service was located, although they had been given brochures, posters were

visible around the campus and they had been told about Student Support Services during orientation sessions. The use of print-based information is problematic for disadvantaged learners, especially those with poor previous experiences of schooling and poor literacy skills. They were more likely to place any written material given to them in the bin, without looking at it.

Ease of location of support services varied from campus to campus. For example, all of those attending the Frankston campus services reported that the office was easy to find, while 39% of those who used the Moorabbin campus services found the location moderately difficult to find. Some of students interviewed in a focus group talked about the importance of the location being easily identifiable and accessible, not only in practical terms but also in psychological terms. For example, walking into the building which housed the senior management staff of the institute in order to access support services was seen by some young adult learners to be a difficult task. The benefits to be gained through doing so were outweighed by the reluctance to enter a 'management' space where these students felt they didn't belong. Location of services for disadvantaged students needs to take into account the psychological barriers which arise for some students as a result of long-term unpleasant school experiences.

Strategy 9: Achieving a balance between institute-wide policy and practitioner responsibility

One staff member located equity in the context of the institute's use of taxpayer's money to offer courses for particular groups of students. For them, it was most important that the money was 'used properly, appropriately so that those who need to use it (to provide teaching programs) have the opportunity to use it in the best way to allow them to take the step they want to take'. The knowledge of how best to use resources to support equitable participation and outcomes was located with practitioners. However, with limited funds, it was the role of policy-makers to determine where the commitment of resources should be focused. 'We can't be all things to all people, we do need to revisit what it is that we do, and decide what is the TAFE institute's role in equity'. This staff member pointed to the need for the institute to engage in more discussion with other providers, such as adult community education providers, to collaboratively ensure that community needs were met by the providers best placed to do so effectively. While it was maintained that Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group had a 'strong brief' and the 'support of the CEO and general manager', one interviewee also emphasised that the institute and Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group were still young. 'We're at the stage of planning to see what our targets need to be.' An important question identified by many interviewees was how the disparate culture of the organisation, post-amalgamation, might be changed to establish a congruent orientation towards equity and effective implementation of planned strategies. One Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group committee member commented:

> My concern that I raise at this committee is I just don't know about how we're going about things, if we are changing practice? … We can write things into our operational plan, but I don't know that we are getting people to change the way they think/practise … I don't know that they have the skills because we have never had to. It is so ingrained in some of us. We do things the way we've been doing them for so long and to think about it in any other way is just a vile concept.

The difficulty of communicating with staff across different teaching areas and nine campuses spread over a large geographical area was a prime concern. While the process of disseminating information about the implementation of equity strategies was underway, there was uncertainty about the degree of support and resultant action that could be expected from practitioners across the institute. As one Managing and Valuing Diversity Advisory Group committee member said:

> There is a strong need for a review process. I am working with a person in marketing to rewrite the implementation plan to communicate all this to the institute and people …

> There are people dedicated to making it work so I think that we just need to make sure that the communication happens. … [but] I don't think that there is a strong sense that people are willing to do it … Some don't know how to do it. But we can learn to talk about it.

Within a climate of uncertainty and lack of communication and knowledge about needs, available services and procedures between managers, teachers and student support staff, the onus falls on the individual practitioner to make decisions about whose needs are met and to what extent. One student support worker said:

> We [the practitioners] make a value judgment about whether we want to deal with and address and resolve [the problem for the client] or whether it's just about ticking off the task and moving on … At the end of the day, individuals have got a lot of capacity to either deliver or not deliver. I probably don't have an overall view that says, 'Here are the perimeters to deal with people, these are the ways the perimeters move for people who don't fit in those perimeters'. We don't have that profile.

This statement very clearly shows the need for clear guidelines, networking and debriefing opportunities for practitioners. Another student support worker also identified the importance of ensuring that there was effective communication between teaching and support staff. This example referred to the student employment service, located at a particular campus.

> There is a dilemma for us because with all those students on all those campuses, all those potential cases, how does one deal with that unless the whole institute picks up some of that responsibility? That's not saying there are not a lot of teachers who would be pulling that very same function, grabbing a cup of coffee and saying [to a student], we'll go and talk about it … I do think that role is performed by more than just us … but it's about knowing whether that service is being accessed by those who most need it.

In addition to issues of central coordination of support functions, practitioners raised the difficulties of dealing with diverse needs while constrained by 'production processes', limited resources and time. In particular, one practitioner said that it was 'very difficult to monitor and support educationally disadvantaged [students] particularly young people … without a case-management approach and the resources to support a case-management approach'. Without the infrastructure to support such an approach, practitioners faced the dilemma of recognising that the disadvantage experienced by their clients was very complex, but the more formulaic response necessitated by their limited resources, was unsatisfactory. As one student support worker put it:

> Educational disadvantage is only one element … so there is not one model that we can bring them in, stamp them on their way down a conveyor belt and shove them out the end … the disadvantaged require and seek additional resource support. Whether that is in terms of a person's time or other documentation or additional workshops, or one to one instead of group-setting stuff … that all requires and has a cost in terms of what other things aren't going to be done. The reality is no matter what the disadvantage is: social, physical, educational, the 'one size fits all' approach isn't the solution.

The perception was that, faced with these dilemmas, the effectiveness of the student support effort depends on the 'skill and assessment that the practitioner makes at the time … and whether they have the capacity to make that assessment and provide the service, without themselves feeling frustrated, tired and restricted'.

Another issue raised by interviewees was the difficulty of developing a common culture regarding equity and diversity throughout the institute. The factors arising from the amalgamation, and new campuses separated by significant distances were exacerbated by the high proportion of sessional staff, employed because they had relevant industry expertise and for financial reasons, because they offered a cheaper option. These teachers were reported to '… come in usually only to deliver particular hours that they are paid for … [and] often have to be recruited hastily'. While some have been with the organisation for many years, others are

relatively new. Because of the amalgamation, they have not all been through the same induction processes. Many do not attend staff meetings. There was reported to be, as a result of these factors, a large proportion of teaching staff:

> … who do not know the institute policies and procedures related to student grievances, who are unaware of the services provided by the student counsellors, cultural practices and expectations, who are not easy to manage in terms of their assessment practices and their communication.

For students, access to sessional teachers outside class time to discuss progress or ask for additional support and guidance was much more problematic, because these staff were not paid to remain on campus after their scheduled teaching time. These teachers also had limited access to staff development, partly because of their sessional status and also because of the additional work commitments they may have had with other organisations. In the absence of payment for their time, they were also more likely to be disinclined to attend staff development sessions. However, one staff member reported that this reluctance to participate in staff development was not limited to sessional staff. They reported that there were:

> … difficulties in providing professional development at a time that suits the teaching personnel … they don't want to do a lot … so what happens, by default, is that the bulk of funds, resources go to management development and/or to the admin staff. Which leaves this [teaching] sub-culture out of the activity.

At the time of interview, a Chisholm Institute staff member had prepared, at the request of the chief executive officer, a confidential report addressing these issues. Additional initiatives had also been recommended, including development of an employee assistance program and a code of conduct.

Another issue raised was the move from traditional forms of teaching towards more delivery through self-paced, technology-based forms. While the institute was embracing the national VET transitions to training packages and the associated 'transformation in the practices of teaching staff', there was expressed awareness of 'the limitations of [these practices] for certain disadvantaged groups'. It was acknowledged that there are different levels of access to and facility with the necessary technologies and that it was necessary to maintain student-focused classroom approaches. These were valued as ways of providing learners with mutual social support as well as facilitating more effective learning outcomes.

Interviewees identified that an important success factor was the capacity to observe, reflect and refine strategies. In some cases, the timing might be wrong. Talking with students and exploring their ideas might provide a more effective schedule. A strategy might meet the needs of only part of the target group. An appropriate response might be to maintain this focus and to build other opportunities around it rather than perceiving it to be a failure because it was not universally successful. A small activity might progressively draw in more students and contributors from other parts of the institution and eventually develop into a more broadly based program. The importance of using trial and error was emphasised.

Effective equity strategies depend on individual staff responsiveness as well as on institution-wide policy directions and processes, especially in the context of diverse local needs. However, a coherent and multi-level response to individual needs requires more than a commitment to delivery of vocational education and training. As one staff member observed:

> … one of the difficulties is getting educational institutions to see themselves in that sort of light, moving from specifically vocational education through to that whole-person approach to education.

Summary

As revealed in the above case studies, equity is understood and addressed in very different ways in the two institutes. At South Western Sydney Institute equity is embedded into all aspects of policy, organisational structure and program delivery. While often 'embedding', and thus 'mainstreaming', equity, runs the risk of losing its visibility, this has not been the case at South Western Sydney Institute. Indeed the approach to addressing the needs of the disadvantaged clients in the region is multifold—there is organisational commitment to equity throughout its policies and structures and there are multiple links and responses to industry and community needs, all of which are understand as diverse and complex.

Chisholm Institute has taken a different approach. At an institutional level, equity operates within a different philosophy—a managing diversity philosophy which attempts to take a more positive view of disadvantage; that is, one that understands difference as a strength. This approach sits alongside college-level equity strategies.

These different approaches are symptomatic of state policy variations and the point in history of the amalgamation of the institute.

6 Conclusions

Introduction

This research has attempted to improve understandings of the way TAFE institutions can better manage equity provision. With this as the goal, the researchers examined 'equity' from a number of different points of view. The initial examination of VET equity involved a literature review which concluded with an account of three perspectives—that of the clients, providers and regions. This broad contextual and theoretical picture was followed by an attempt to explore the 'realities' of equity patterns and practices in two regions. This exploration used a case study approach with two TAFE institutes—one in New South Wales and the second in Victoria. These case studies involved the identification of 'institute equity profiles' using regional analysis tools which identified the range and composition of equity client groups. Interviews with key personnel in each of the TAFE institutes were also undertaken. These interviews focused on an analysis of the equity strategies employed in each. Although this research used only two case studies, the information gleaned nevertheless adds to the body of research on equity since their approaches are clearly different.

Drawing on the literature review and the case studies, this final chapter suggests a number of ways of increasing the effectiveness of equity strategies for disadvantaged TAFE clients. The first is through the identification of key principles which could be used to frame equity research and practices. These principles take account of the client, the provider and the regional perspectives as identified in chapter 3, as well as the account of provider equity strategies in chapter 5. These principles have been written at a level of generality which can accommodate considerable variation in the characteristics of the providers, of the disadvantaged groups, as well as of the availability of human and material resources.

In support of the central role TAFE providers have in effective equity provision, this chapter then describes some analytical tools which can assist at a more practical level in the identification and implementation of provider equity strategies.

Key principles for framing TAFE equity practices

The research suggests three key principles which can assist in the framing of TAFE equity practices:

- ✧ Equity needs to be a central organising feature of TAFE provision.
- ✧ Management-level leadership needs to make equity concerns and practices integral to the work of the institute.
- ✧ Equity provision needs to be embedded in the local community.

Equity needs to be a central organising feature of TAFE provision

As implied by the case studies, TAFE equity practices work best when equity is understood as central to the business of the institute. National and state policies both guide and limit provider strategic programs and initiatives which are directed towards equity objectives. While these define the broad guidelines for employers, providers and government bodies, institute policies are also needed to work with the complexity of regional patterns, options and pathways in order to guide the development and provision of equity strategies for local disadvantaged groups.

Equitable outcomes are highly dependent on local providers identifying and responding to disadvantaged clients and their specific characteristics. This requires a significant degree of organisational flexibility and dynamic responsiveness. In other words, achievement of outcomes by disadvantaged people occurs through a complex set of interactions among specific client characteristics, provider equity strategies and locality factors. And working with these complexities requires equity to be positioned in a central location.

Whether equity is core business and therefore integral to all provision, or whether equity is a separate policy, it needs to be kept alive at management, program and teacher levels. In order to do so, policy and structural support are needed for innovation and individual creative approaches. Consideration needs to be given in relation to how innovative practices can be captured and disseminated to inspire wider take-up. Downward spirit of leadership and outward spirit of innovation are required to create an ethos where innovation, active exploration and risk-taking with equity strategies are prompted, supported, captured, valued and shared. Equity needs to be kept on the agenda and institutional support is required to maintain energy for planning, implementing and monitoring equity outcomes.

Without an equity approach and without appropriate resourcing, equity strategies are under threat. While there will always be individual practitioners who develop and use equity practices, the impact on the community is limited without an institute-wide approach to equity. As indicated earlier, equity outcomes are achieved 'on the ground', and only if the local provider takes responsibility for the participation of disadvantaged groups and their achievement of satisfactory outcomes.

Equity strategy cannot be static, nor a case of a problem 'being solved' and dismissed. Equity is most likely to be achieved when the organisational rhetoric is accompanied by flexibility within an organisation which enables an understanding of the factors and mechanisms which compound disadvantage. Flexibility also enables a proactive approach to identifying and meeting target group need. It is vital that an institute or other provider initiates a 'cycle of renewal' to regularly re-invigorate the equity focus.

Management-level leadership needs to make equity concerns and practices integral to the work of the institute

The importance of management-level leadership in making equity concerns and practices integral to the work of the institute cannot be overstated. The case studies pointed to the crucial role of an institute leadership which engages with the complexities of 'keeping equity alive' and with the structural and resource challenges that this position presents.

Leadership in the area of equity is critical when structural changes (such as amalgamations) are made and when colleges and staff undergo periods of disunity. In these circumstances competition and conflict over resources can disable the implementation of equity plans. However, this need not be the case. In the South Western Sydney Institute, equity was used as a unifying principle at the time of the amalgamation of the individual colleges. This suggests that, through effective management, equity has the potential to be a unifying device. In this

instance the management of equity involved many organisational interventions and included inserting equity considerations into key policy documents across all areas of responsibility and accountability.

The case studies have demonstrated that it is important for institute management to develop plans which distinguish between equity approaches appropriate at the centralised and those at the local college/school level. At both levels, management should consider developing structural ways to incorporate 'cycles of renewal' within the institute. This is necessary in order to move beyond, on the one hand, one-off 'pilot programs' and on the hand, the 'institutionaling' of successful programs. In terms of programs which have proved to be effective, it is advisable to maintain innovation—partly because the level of enthusiasm and ownership, sensitivity to needs and openness to doing things differently is higher in new projects, and also because there is a risk that an equity strategy which successfully addressed a need in one year could well be inappropriate or irrelevant in subsequent years.

When target groups are identified, care needs to be taken in making decisions relating to priorities and the allocation of resources. This means understanding not only the multiplicity of disadvantage when identifying target groups, but also understanding factors which may advantage some individuals, such as those with existing qualifications or in employment.

Furthermore, other important aspects of supporting equity within institutes are concerned with:

- how the institution develops an orientation to equity within staff, including casual and session workers
- how staff members see their identities as teachers and as equity workers (although no data relating to teachers are presented in this report, this is nevertheless, a valid comment.)
- how the institution identifies, captures and disseminates good practice
- how the organisation rewards good practice
- how the organisation plans for and ensures sustainable good-practice programs and deals with the impact of burnout, short-term resourcing, staff movement within and from the institution.

Equity provision needs to be embedded in the local community

The case studies have demonstrated (South West Sydney Institute in particular) that, in accordance with community expectations regarding the role of education, a key role of TAFE providers is to assist in the development of individual pathways for people as they move through various defined stages/events of their lives. These events can involve informal and formal learning experiences, social activities and paid and unpaid work. To enable them to provide effective and timely assistance towards the construction of these pathways, providers need to see themselves not as just one of the stops in the journey, but as an integral and key component in community life. This view involves understanding participation in TAFE as a context which comprises both the institution and community. This multi-dimensional context involves many relationships between provider and the local community, between provider and the clients, as well as between the local community and the clients.

The case studies highlight the importance of gaining knowledge of the networks within the community, making external links and establishing partnerships with local agencies and employers. This information about the community helps to support access pathways—for access (pathways into) and outcomes (pathways to further study and employment) purposes.

Provider strategies are effective when they draw on knowledge of the socio-economic profile of the area, the nature of industry, employment opportunities, and the characteristics of specific disadvantaged clienteles. Furthermore, if providers understand their role as community

agents and facilitators, then the development of more effective pathways between local providers, employers and/or potential employers becomes possible.

Both of the case studies have shown that the nature and degree of disadvantage is often unevenly spread throughout an institute's catchment area. In these instances, the role of the provider is more complex in that they have to 'customise' TAFE for disadvantaged clienteles within their region. Great socio-economic variations within institute catchment areas can benefit from the use of local equity analysis tools. These can be used to identify the nature and the specific location of the disadvantage and the extent to which disadvantaged groups participate in TAFE.

Identifying and implementing regional provider equity strategies

The principles described above highlight the importance of understanding the contextual nature of equity practice. They draw attention to the wide variation of disadvantage in equity target groups and the complex interactions between specific client differences, provider equity strategies and local factors.

This section examines some analytical tools which can, in a practical sense, help providers to develop an institutional systemic response which targets disadvantaged groups and which can produce effective equity outcomes for these groups. These tools can help to put into practice the principles and the various provider approaches described above. These tools are intended to complement the postcode participation analysis (described in detail in appendix 3) where the purpose was to define and evaluate the target equity groups based on an understanding of the nature of disadvantage at a local level. These tools offer a way of identifying gaps and duplication in the provision of support in order to more effectively inform policy and resource allocation directions.

Figure 3 is one such analytical tool. It is a two-dimensional matrix designed to assist providers to map and categorise equity strategies. This matrix can be used to analyse existing equity provision as well as provide a visual 'map' for planning equity directions. It enables organisations to make decisions about:

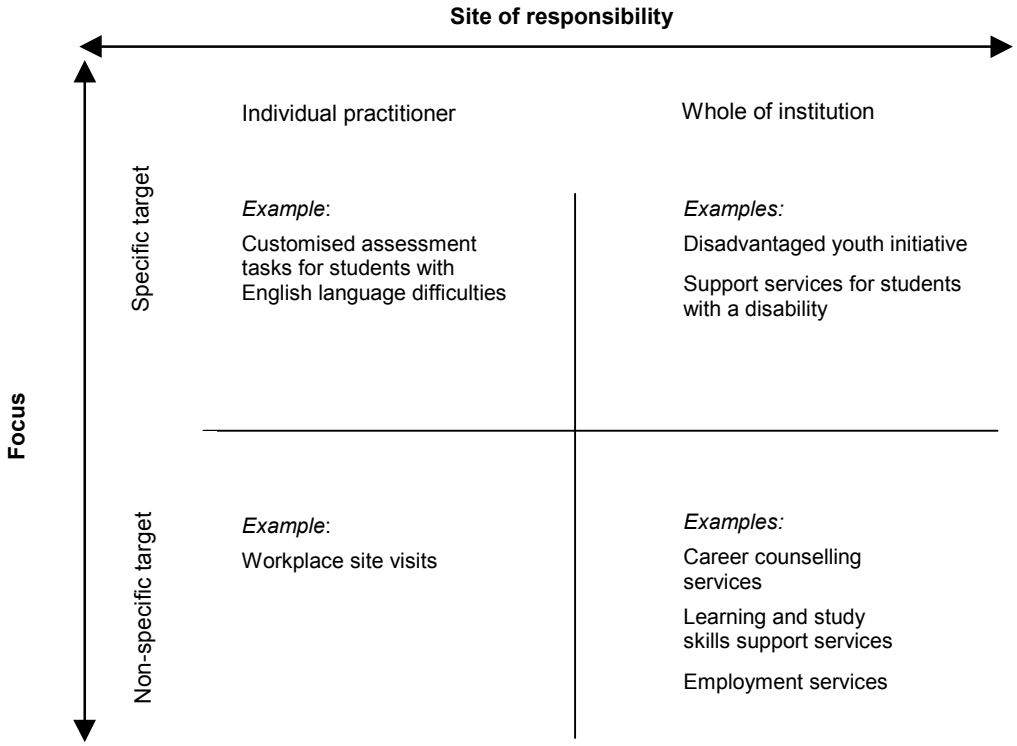
- the site of responsibility for the generation or implementation of a strategy
- the specificity of the strategy focus; that is, either a specific target group or the student population at large.

The horizontal dimension, *site of responsibility*, indicates a strategy to address equity issues and is generated and implemented at the *individual practitioner* level or at the *whole-of-institution* level. The vertical dimension, *focus*, indicates the degree to which a strategy is aimed at specific target groups or at the provider's whole prospective or enrolled student population.

Thus, learning and study skills support services offered centrally by the provider for all learners are located in the lower right quadrant, as are employment or career counselling services. However, strategies to support specific groups of learners by the individual practitioner, for example, customised assessment tasks for students with English language difficulties, would be located diagonally opposite, in the upper, left quadrant.

Strategies developed at the institutional level to address specific learners or prospective students, for example, a provider-wide initiative to increase access for disadvantaged youth in the regional catchment area, is mapped into the upper right quadrant. A strategy such as workplace visits, embedded into the delivery strategy by an individual practitioner to enhance the employment outcomes of all students is mapped onto the lower left quadrant.

Figure 3: Mapping provider strategies



While the examples given in figure 3 show strategies generated and implemented at the opposite ends of the two dimensions, these dimensions can be considered most usefully as continua. Some strategies would be developed and implemented by teaching teams, departments and campuses to meet the needs of course clients and localities.

While the two-dimensional matrix facilitates the mapping of provider equity strategies and indicates the site of responsibility and focus, within these there are aspects of provision which are integral to the effectiveness of equity management and practice. The following additional factors can assist with an analysis of organisational influences affecting the allocation of resources used to plan and implement equity strategies.

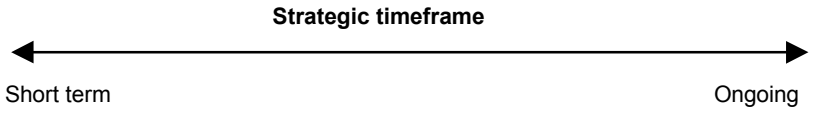
These interrelated aspects which have been identified from the case studies as common to both can be used as an organising framework for the application of equity strategies. The various aspects are:

- ✧ strategic timeframe
- ✧ funding stability
- ✧ cultural congruence
- ✧ responsiveness
- ✧ renewal and perpetuation of good practice
- ✧ embeddedness.

Strategic timeframe

This dimension facilitates analysis of the planning processes related to equity. Commitment to strategies can be on a long-term basis or be implemented for short periods to address specific needs. This dimension interacts with the *responsiveness* dimension. While short-term planning horizons might be seen to be 'short-sighted', they may facilitate responsiveness.

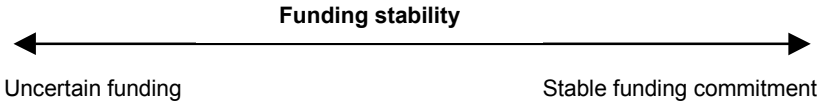
Figure 4: Strategic timeframe



Funding stability

The sustainability of equity strategies depends on *funding stability*. Stable funding promotes development and refinement of processes and facilitates dissemination of good practice within the provider. It provides support for the use of more innovative or higher-risk strategies.

Figure 5: Funding stability

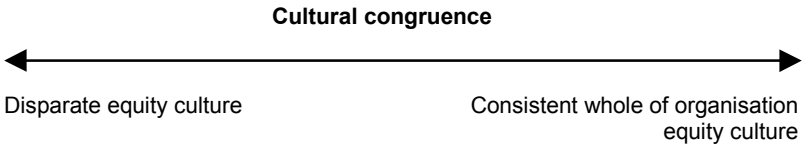


Cultural congruence

The *cultural congruence* dimension illustrates the continuum between a culture of equity which is consistent across the whole of the organisation, through to a disparate equity culture.

It also relates to the strength or fragility of the equity culture. A strong equity culture within a small teaching unit can be fragile in organisational terms if it is vulnerable to dissipation through loss of individual staff. Strategies developed within a disparate organisational equity culture are more vulnerable in terms of funding and organisational support. By contrast, strategies embedded within and congruent with a strong whole-of-organisation equity culture are more likely to be assured of stable funding and support. A shared culture promotes dissemination of good practice, and hence awareness of equity strategies is likely to be more widespread amongst staff and referrals more frequent.

Figure 6: Cultural congruence

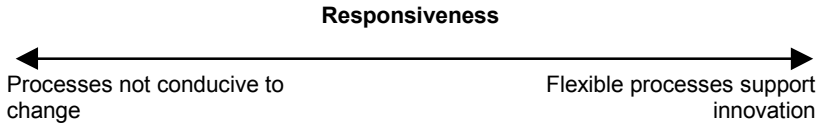


Responsiveness

The dimension, *responsiveness,* refers to the degree of readiness and flexibility with which the organisation responds to changing and emerging equity needs.

This dimension charts the degree to which processes are open to change, are oriented to identify changing and emerging needs, and facilitate innovation and creativity. Examples of such structures include cross-institution equity committees, an equity-focused funding round or regime, and an equity unit and/or manager.

Figure 7: Responsiveness

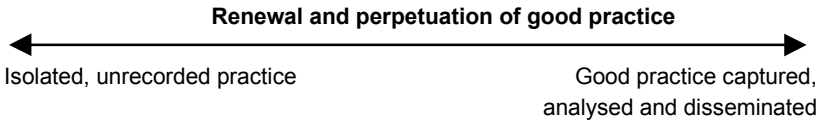


Renewal and perpetuation of good practice

If equity strategies are to be integrated with the provider's programs in an enduring way, then good practice needs to be captured and disseminated. Figure 8 shows the *renewal and perpetuation of good practice* dimension.

Good practice in isolation is vulnerable to staff burnout and departure or transfer unless it is identified, documented and shared. The extent to which good practice is sustainable depends on the capacity of the organisation to acknowledge it and facilitate cross-fertilisation.

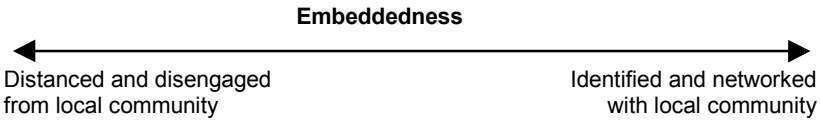
Figure 8: Renewal and perpetuation of good practice



Embeddedness

The degree to which a provider identifies with and establishes networks across the local community will influence its capacity to effectively respond to community needs. Figure 9 illustrates the *embeddedness* dimension.

Figure 9: Embeddedness



Embeddedness is influenced by factors such as whether the majority of staff are local residents or commuters from distant locations, whether local campuses are positioned to respond independently to their community needs or whether amalgamations of small campuses have removed that capacity through centralised processes. Embeddedness can also be influenced by how individual staff or units understand their role; for example, to what extent involvement and consultation with the community is seen to be important and whether such activities are supported by the institute.

Conclusion

There are a number of significant findings which have emerged from this research. The following points summarise the major issues.

- *Complexity*: of utmost importance is that local equity policies and strategies reflect the complexities of socio-economic disadvantage. This means that even highly specified target groups will be heterogeneous in nature and that some individuals and groups will

experience multiple disadvantage. Furthermore, a combination of low skills, unemployment, low income, low literacy, gender, disability and Indigenous and ethnicity factors, as well as institutional and systemic barriers, influence both whether disadvantaged individuals participate, and their chances of success. It may be best to conceptualise equity target groups as a group of people who share a particular situation of socio-economic disadvantage, such as older unemployed women whose first language is not English or young Indigenous school leavers.

- *Resources:* in order for provider equity strategies to be effective, they must reach the appropriate disadvantaged individuals and be undertaken by committed and flexible staff who are led and supported by a focused management which attracts and directs adequate resources. Each of these elements is crucial: identification of potential students; committed and flexible staff; leadership by equity-focused management; and adequate resourcing. Although appropriate resourcing is vital, it is, to a large extent, a 'given' and outside the influence of an institute. However, utilisation of available resources is an area offering a significant amount of discretion. It is also important to remember that many strategies arise, not because there are resources, but because an individual staff member perceives a need and responds in a new and creative way. A new strategy may be entirely resource-neutral, depending instead on the staff member's motivation and view of their role. On the other hand, it is also important to acknowledge that most equity strategies require a steady source of funding to be maintained in the longer term. The recognition of strategies through provision of resources is also a powerful motivator of creativity.
- *Dynamic:* equity is an area of practice that must be continually reinvented within the organisation. It should not be allowed to languish in the care of a committee or be confined to documents. Equity strategies are dependent on the enthusiasm and commitment of practitioners, including institute policy-makers and teachers. Nurturing this dynamic element is part of a systemic approach.
- *System-wide approach:* the complexities surrounding these findings indicate a strong recommendation, that is, that a systemic approach be adopted to the development and implementation of equity strategies. Equity provision needs to be understood in relation to the way equity is positioned, structured, organised and 'carried' within an institute.

This report has drawn attention to some additional analytical tools for identifying the nature of disadvantaged groups as well as some management tools for identifying gaps and duplication in provision. The report has also attempted to identify some of the key principles which need to underpin equity strategies.

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Appendix 1: Interview sampling and schedule

Interview sampling

Level of consistency: Institute respondents

Level of coherence: Equity focus	Management	Teaching staff	Equity officers	Students
Awareness of equity and equity strategies				
Knowledge of regional factors				
External interaction				
Policy				
Strategies				
Resourcing				
Client outcomes				
Pathways				
Evaluation and improvement				

Interview schedule

Equity focus	Institute respondents			
	Management	**Teaching staff**	**Equity/access officers**	**Students**
Awareness/ understanding of equity and equity strategies	✧ What is your understanding of the impact of educational disadvantage in the region? ✧ What particular equity groups are being targeted by the Institute and what is the nature of their disadvantage? ✧ Are there other forms of educational disadvantage not being addressed?			
Knowledge of regional factors & interaction with regional stakeholders	✧ What are the key regional factors that influence equity? ✧ How is regional information acquired? ✧ Does the institute interact or collaborate with other local providers in the interests of improving equity?			
Policy development	✧ What processes are used within the institution for development of access and equity policy? ✧ How much of policy is developed locally? ✧ How is policy development resourced? ✧ Are there incentives for Institutes to develop equity strategies?	✧ To what extent does teaching staff provide input to development of policy and implementation strategies?	✧ To what extent do you and your colleagues have an input to that policy? ✧ How does the institution respond to evidence of changing needs?	✧ Is student input made to development of policy? ✧ If yes, how does this work? ✧ If no, is there a perceived need for such input?
Implementation strategies .	✧ How are support needs identified? ✧ What Institute strategies have been developed for addressing equity issues? ✧ Have these strategies been successful? ✧ If yes, why do you think they have worked? If no, why not? ✧ How are these strategies evaluated, updated or refined?	✧ How do you identify students at risk of dropping out? ✧ What support can you offer them? ✧ How important is customisation of programs, curriculum and assessment? ✧ What is the role for professional development?	✧ How are students directed to you for support? ✧ What support do you offer students at risk of dropping out? ✧ What role is the role for professional development?	✧ Is student input made to development of strategies? ✧ What support is available from the institute for students encountering difficulties? ✧ How is support accessed? ✧ How widespread is student awareness of available support?

Equity focus	Institute respondents			
	Management	**Teaching staff**	**Equity/access officers**	**Students**
Resourcing	✧ What procedures are used to address the resourcing issues?	✧ What have been the resourcing demands of equity strategies? ✧ How important is adequate resourcing for the success of the strategy?	✧ What have been the resourcing demands of equity strategies? ✧ How important is adequate resourcing for success? ✧ What procedures are used to address resourcing issues?	✧ Are there adequate institute resources to effectively provide for student support needs?
Client outcomes	✧ What client outcomes are valued? ✧ What specific support strategies are implemented to enhance disadvantaged student outcomes? ✧ To what extent, if any, is there external community input eg. from employers, agencies …?			✧ What outcomes do students value? ✧ What support is available for improving outcomes?
Pathways	✧ Is there a practice of building pathways from informal or community activities to enrolling in TAFE? ✧ RPL practice? ✧ Are there facilitated pathways from TAFE to employment or further study? ✧ Examples of student experiences of successful and unsuccessful transitions? If successful, what was key? If not successful what improvements would have helped?			✧ What flexibility exists for student entry from informal learning or community-based activities? ✧ Are there facilitated pathways from TAFE to employment or further study? ✧ RPL practice?
Evaluation and improvement	✧ Through what processes are the Institute's equity strategies evaluated and improved?			✧ Do students make input to evaluation and improvement of equity strategies?

Appendix 2: Australian Bureau of Statistics Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)

Table 4: Australian Bureau of Statistics Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)

Index	Description
Relative socio-economic disadvantage	A general index. Derived from attributes such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment and jobs in low-skilled occupations
Urban advantage	A general indicator of 'relative socio-economic well-being' including high-income, tertiary education and skilled occupations, applied only to urban areas
Rural disadvantage	A general indicator of 'relative socio-economic well-being' including high-income, tertiary education and skilled occupations, applied only to rural areas
Economic resources	A specific index which is intended to 'reflect the profile of economic resources of families within the area'. Includes income, renting and home ownership, and housing and car ownership
Education and occupation	A specific index 'designed to reflect the educational and occupational structure of communities. Includes indicators of both qualification and participation

Appendix 3: Development of institute equity profiles

Introduction

This appendix describes in detail the development of the institute equity profiles—that of South Western Sydney Institute and Chisholm Institute in eastern Melbourne.

South Western Sydney Institute

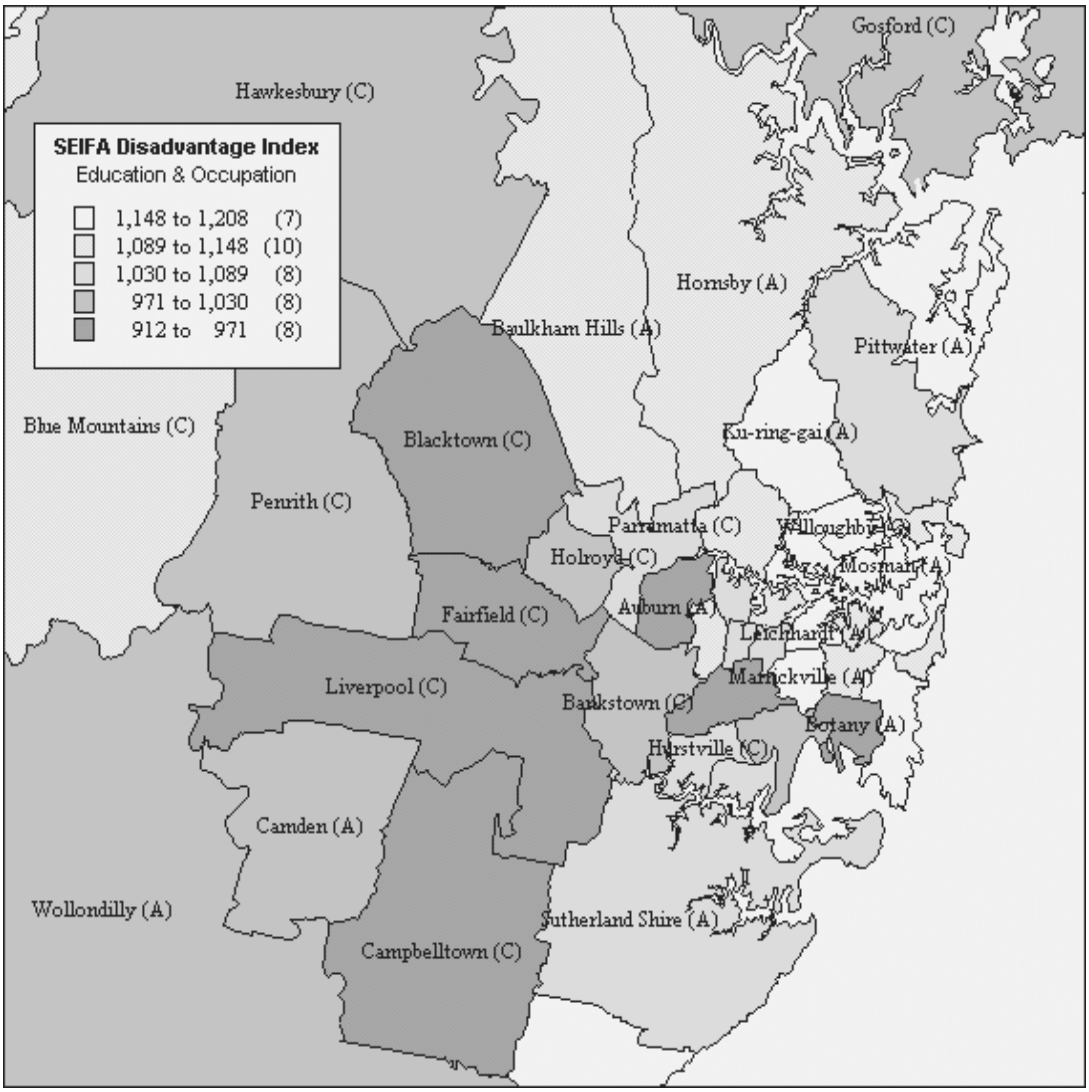
The South Western Sydney Institute describes itself as servicing one of the fastest growing, most populous, young and ethnically diverse areas of greater Sydney. The region has one of the largest concentrations of Indigenous Australians in the state, and many ethnic communities.

The south-western Sydney region is defined for TAFE purposes in terms of local government areas, but it can be described in terms of boundaries at different levels. Within greater Sydney, it comprises the three statistical sub-divisions and their constituent local government areas (see figure 10). These are Central Western Sydney (Parramatta and Holroyd), Fairfield-Liverpool (Fairfield and Liverpool) and Outer South Western Sydney (Camden, Campbelltown and Wollondilly). In terms of area and population density, the region extends from the older inner city suburbs around Parramatta through the extensive suburban developments around Fairfield and Liverpool to the newer suburban estates surrounding the cities of Camden and Campbelltown. The latter districts are still largely rural in character, with much of Wollondilly Shire comprised of rural holdings, water catchment and national park. The region is traversed by the main south-western transport corridor to Canberra and Melbourne.

Recent TAFE NSW planning documents summarise the nature of the region and its enrolments in the following terms:

> The demographic, economic and industrial profile of the south-west Sydney region has not changed significantly over the past ten years. The population of the region continues to be, on average, more disadvantaged economically, socially and educationally than other regions. A large proportion of the population comes from non-English speaking backgrounds, and many are not yet proficient in English. There also continues to be a higher level of unemployment, especially youth unemployment, than in other parts of the Sydney metropolitan area. Consequently, the South Western Sydney Institute has a social responsibility to provide for the special needs of this largely disadvantaged population.
>
> Being also the major manufacturing region for Sydney, the general nationwide decline in manufacturing industries more acutely affects this region in terms of falling employment opportunities in a number of local industries. The corresponding decline in demand for training in industries such as fitting and machining and metals manufacturing has impacted on this Institute. It has been necessary to consolidate provision and in some locations reduce the number of teaching staff in this sector. The Institute has also needed to change the usage of facilities, which had been previously specially designed for training in these industries.
>
> (South Western Sydney Institute Education and Training Profile 2000–2001)

Figure 10: Disadvantage in Sydney urban regions (local government areas)



How 'disadvantage' is defined here is not discussed. By no means are areas of the region disadvantaged equally or in similar ways. Table 5 shows the values of the ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA indexes) for the local government areas making up the region. Table 4 in appendix 1 provides a description of each of the indices. A thorough outline of the process and rationale for the use of SEIFA indices in the development of postcode analysis of disadvantage is described in this section. However, to summarise, the steps in the process are as follows:

- ✧ Firstly, ranking of disadvantage in this area compared with other parts of Sydney is examined in order to get an overall view of relative disadvantage.
- ✧ Secondly, each postcode in the south-western Sydney area is examined and then ranked from high to low (level of advantage) using the SEIFA indices. This gives a locality-level unit of analysis which enables a finer-grained identification of disadvantaged areas.
- ✧ Thirdly, the postcodes are ranked according to their participation in TAFE using AVETMISS data.

✧ Finally, through examination of the tables produced in the second and third steps, it is possible to produce an analysis of the levels of participation in TAFE at a postcode level of people who are disadvantaged.

In the Sydney analysis, socio-economic disadvantage is greatest in Fairfield and Liverpool, although Outer Western Sydney is both 'advantaged' because of the rich rural holdings particularly around Camden and Campbelltown yet disadvantaged in terms of the characteristics of some populations living in these districts. (Higher values denote relative advantage.)

As the ABS indexes suggest, disadvantage may be measured in different ways (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1998). The construction of these indexes from census data takes into account fundamental differences between urban and rural areas (indexes of urban and rural advantage) and they also distinguish two dimensions of disadvantage: Economic Resource (ERS) and Education and Occupation (EDO). The Index of Economic Resource reflects levels of income and housing, while the Index of Education and Occupation reflects such factors as age of school leaving and the qualifications of the population and its occupational makeup. (For a discussion of the meaning of these indexes and their application to VET policy the reader is referred to McIntyre 2000b, 2000c.)

This distinction between 'economic' and 'educational' criteria of disadvantage is important for the analysis of TAFE participation, since traditional TAFE clienteles such as tradespersons may have a high standard of living (in terms of household income and type of housing), yet relatively low levels of educational qualification. In assessing the degree of socio-economic disadvantage of TAFE clients of South Western Sydney Institute living in the region's postcodes, it will be important to take both dimensions into account.

Table 5: SEIFA indexes of disadvantage for Sydney statistical sub-divisions (1996 census)

Statistical sub-division	Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA)				
	Disadvantage	Urban advantage	Rural advantage	Economic resources	Education & occupation
Inner Sydney	1000	1002	0	979	1082
Eastern suburbs	1078	1070	0	1059	1131
St George-Sutherland	1056	1045	1213	1090	1049
Canterbury-Bankstown	960	947	0	982	968
Fairfield-Liverpool	925	929	1010	983	927
Outer South Western Sydney	987	949	1108	1026	972
Inner Western Sydney	1044	1040	0	1046	1081
Central Western Sydney	984	969	0	992	1000
Outer Western Sydney	1030	987	1103	1047	1010
Blacktown-Baulkham Hills	1019	1015	1115	1071	1009
Lower Northern Sydney	1115	1126	0	1111	1158
Hornsby-Ku-ring-gai	1146	1199	1162	1192	1167
Northern Beaches	1100	1091	1228	1130	1092
Gosford-Wyong	983	970	1106	997	973

Note: Highlighted sub-divisions incorporate areas within the SWSIT catchment.

In order to read table 5 it is important to know that the higher the value, the higher the level of advantage. Thus the table shows that Fairfield-Liverpool has among the lowest values on both the 'economic' and 'educational' indexes in the state, and that these low values therefore signify disadvantage. Central Western Sydney has higher values for these same indices and this possibly reflect the gentrification of the older working class suburbs around Parramatta, while Outer Western Sydney has a socio-economic diversity reflected in high values of rural advantage together with low urban advantage, while it has higher levels of economic resource

(reflecting a complex of factors) than it does education and occupation. Thus, there are areas that have average household income levels, but low levels of formal qualification.

This marked socio-economic diversity needs to be noted together with the known cultural diversity, and suggests that caution regarding the generalisations about the nature of disadvantage in the region, including statements that the *region* is disadvantaged when it is more accurate and educationally helpful to speak of *localities* in this way. For this reason, it is important to consider a finer-grained analysis of socio-economic character alongside an analysis of participation in the TAFE institute. The following development of the profile will refer to postcodes for this reason.

Institute catchment

It was noted earlier that the concept of a 'provider catchment' continues to be an essential concept for effective equity planning at the regional level. One question to be answered is the nature of participation within the region and how far it is possible to speak of regional patterns of participation. For example, do many local residents participate locally at the institute's campuses within the region?

The catchment of the institute can be established by counting the number of TAFE clients attending the institute in 1999 by their home postcode. (Data supplied by TAFE NSW did not allow comparisons with all clients attending TAFE, but see McIntyre 1998.) Table 7 shows the main postcodes which make up the catchment, and their levels of disadvantage (as measured by the Education and Occupation and Economic Resource indexes). Table 6 summarises some selected social indicators derived from the 1996 census that assist in interpreting these 'economic' and 'educational' criteria of disadvantage.

Table 6: Selected social indicators referring to disadvantage

Label	Description
Quals	The proportion of the population aged 15 and over holding a post-school qualification
Occu 789	The proportion of the labour force in three occupational groups traditionally associated with 'blue collar' work
HHI<16K	The proportion of households earning less than $16 000 per annum, a measure of low household income and 'economic' disadvantage
ATSI	The proportion of the population who identified as Indigenous Australians
LOTE	The proportion of the population aged over five years that spoke a language other than English at home

In addition, participation by postcode is assessed by two measures: the participation rate (Part Rate), or the number of TAFE clients from a postcode taken as a percentage of the population aged 15 and over enumerated in the postcode at the 1996 census, and postcodes 'share' (%) of the total South Western Sydney Institute enrolment. Such measures suggest to what extent the TAFE institute's clients are concentrated in particular local postcodes.

Table 7 shows that some 35 postcodes account for over 90% of the total enrolments at South Western Sydney Institute, a fairly remarkable concentration of clients in the region. (It needs to be noted that there are residents from the region who attend TAFE outside the region, just as there are participants living in other regions who attend South Western Sydney Institute, for example, Penrith, Mt Druitt and Blacktown are in Western Sydney region, adjacent to south-western Sydney.) There appears to be a trend for the catchment to extend north-south and to follow the south-west transport corridor.)

Table 7: Socio-economic profile of South Western Sydney Institute postcodes[1]

Postcode		n	% of SWS	Part rate	SEIFA ERS	SEIFA EDO	Quals	Occu 789	HHI<16K	ATSI	LOTE
2559	Blairmount	246	0.6	9.7	762	812	26.4	48.1	25.1	5.0	27.5
2166	Cabramatta	2 782	6.6	6.8	910	870	29.1	44.2	21.8	0.6	72.0
2163	Villawood	368	0.9	3.5	855	878	30.7	41.4	30.5	0.9	54.9
2770	Mt Druitt *	255	0.6	0.6	920	880	31.1	42.1	18.9	4.7	24.2
2564	MacquarieFds	945	2.2	10.4	912	897	34.6	36.2	17.2	3.4	23.6
2168	Miller	2 357	5.6	10.0	967	903	33.0	38.2	19.6	2.4	43.2
2165	Fairfield	2 146	5.1	8.7	945	904	34.5	40.3	19.2	0.6	63.8
2177	Bonnyrigg	964	2.3	9.5	976	915	31.6	39.5	13.4	1.7	70.9
2164	Smithfield	1 253	3.0	7.4	1 021	933	34.4	35.6	15.0	0.7	46.7
2144	Auburn	1 317	3.1	6.9	929	938	38.0	38.5	19.3	0.6	69.0
2161	Guildford	990	2.3	5.1	971	945	36.8	33.1	21.5	1.0	40.8
2173	Holsworthy	323	0.8	1.3	958	952	37.6	34.6	20.0	0.4	61.0
2162	Chester Hill	282	0.7	3.0	974	953	37.0	31.1	21.8	0.6	39.6
2170	Liverpool	4 342	10.3	7.7	988	954	38.9	30.8	17.8	1.4	39.0
2142	Granville	1 009	2.4	7.1	927	958	39.1	34.0	23.2	1.1	53.0
2141	Lidcombe *	562	1.3	3.3	972	958	39.3	36.8	19.9	1.1	57.6
2171	Badgery'sCk	1 271	3.0	8.6	074	959	37.6	28.6	11.1	0.9	36.2
2566	Minto	1 475	3.5	8.1	009	960	37.4	30.8	12.4	2.5	19.3
2160	Merrylands	1 312	3.1	6.4	968	960	38.3	32.4	21.6	0.7	45.2
2148	Blacktown *	420	1.0	1.0	1 011	965	39.1	32.3	16.4	1.2	29.7
2560	Campbelltown	3 803	9.0	7.9	1 017	966	38.3	30.1	14.1	2.3	14.0
2176	Bossley Park	2 679	6.4	8.2	1 060	969	36.3	33.7	8.9	0.5	63.6
2558	Eagle Vale	485	1.1	6.4	1 078	989	39.8	29.9	6.5	1.2	19.7
2565	Ingleburn	844	2.0	7.5	1 018	994	40.4	27.2	14.2	1.2	16.5
2567	Narellan	673	1.6	8.1	1 099	994	41.0	27.0	6.2	1.6	6.5
2750	Penrith *	237	0.6	0.7	1 046	994	40.4	28.7	15.2	1.6	8.3
2167	Glenfield	334	0.8	6.0	1 031	1 002	45.0	27.6	13.8	1.3	21.0
2200	Bankstown *	324	0.7	1.1	1 044	1 002	41.9	26.4	17.4	0.9	19.9

Postcode		n	% of SWS	Part rate	SEIFA ERS	SEIFA EDO	Quals	Occu 789	HHI<16K	ATSI	LOTE
2145	W'tworthville	1 422	3.4	3.2	1 011	1 005	41.9	27.6	17.5	0.8	30.3
2147	Seven Hills*	287	0.7	6.2	1 059	1 015	46.4	25.3	16.4	1.4	6.1
2570	Camden	877	2.1	5.6	1 091	1 032	45.9	23.5	14.2	0.9	3.7
2150	Parramatta	933	2.2	5.5	896	1 039	51.4	26.7	17.5	0.9	49.2
2571	Picton	316	0.8	6.1	1 103	1 062	47.7	18.3	3.7	1.3	16.4
2153	Baulk'Hills*	334	0.8	0.9	1 190	1 096	49.9	18.2	8.3	0.2	17.0
2151	Nth Parramatta	337	0.8	2.8	1 090	1 097	48.8	19.5	14.1	0.6	23.3
		38 504	91.4								

Notes:

1 Postcodes ranked by SEIFA Index of Education and Occupation (SEIFA EDO). SEIFA ERS and EDO refer to the ABS SEIFA indexes of disadvantage that distinguish, respectively, economic and educational-occupational aspects of disadvantage.

* These suburbs, although not part of the South Western Sydney Institute, contribute students enrolled in institute courses. Reasons for out-of-area enrolment may include proximity (for example, Lidcombe to Granville College), convenient transport (for example, a convenient trip from Penrith to Liverpool) and availability of desired course.

Table 7 sets out the main south-western Sydney postcodes according to their degree of disadvantage as measured by the SEIFA Index of Education and Occupation (SEIFA EDO), so it is possible to see at a glance the relative level of participation in these postcodes and to compare their participation characteristics. Table 8, by comparison, displays the TAFE client data for these postcodes by ranking them by the gross number of VET clients in the postcode.

Some comments can be made from these data about the features of this catchment:

- The most disadvantaged postcodes in the region are Blairmount, Cabramatta, Villawood, Macquarie Fields, Miller, Fairfield, Bonnyrigg, Smithfield, Auburn, Guildford, Holsworthy, Chester Hill, Liverpool and Granville, in that order.
- The postcodes with the largest share of the total enrolment ('% of SWS') are Liverpool, Campbelltown, Cabramatta, Bossley Park, Miller, Fairfield, Minto, Wentworthville, Auburn and Merrylands. To a degree, this reflects the fact that these postcodes have the greatest numbers of residents, for example, Liverpool. These postcodes are the 'heartland' of the institute's provision.
- The highest local participation rates were in Macquarie Fields (10.4%), Miller (10.0%) (both suburbs have younger average populations), Blairmount (near Campbelltown, 9.7%), Bonnyrigg (9.5%), Fairfield (8.7%), Badgery's Creek (8.6%), Bossley Park (8.2%), Minto (8.1%), Narellan (near Camden, 8.1%), Campbelltown (7.9%), Liverpool (7.7%), Ingleburn (7.5%), Smithfield (7.4%) and Granville (7.1%). To some extent, high local participation, which is relative to the size of the postcode's population, reflects the presence of local campuses, for example, at Miller, Campbelltown, Liverpool and Granville.
- By contrast, some postcodes outside the regional catchment, although disadvantaged, have notably low South Western Sydney Institute participation rates; for example, Mt Druitt (0.6% 'share' of SW and 0.6% participation rate) and Penrith (0.6% and 0.7%, Blacktown 1.0% and 1.0%). This may be interpreted as further evidence of the strength of local participation in the main postcodes of the adjacent Western Sydney Institute catchment.
- Participation rates are quite high in the most disadvantaged postcodes in the south-western Sydney region, which are indicated by their low values on the SEIFA Economic Resource Index (ERS) and Education and Occupation Index (EDO). Thus Fairfield had some 2146 participants in South Western Sydney Institutecourses, or some 8.7% of its 1996 enumerated adult population.
- The great variations in socio-economic disadvantage across the main postcodes are seen in the level of qualifications and the size of the 'blue collar' occupational group in these postcodes ('Quals' and 'Occu 789'). These indicators reflect the elements of the SEIFA EDO index. Thus Cabramatta has nearly half of its labour force in the major occupational groups 7, 8 and 9 (including plant operators and labourers) while less than a third hold formal post-school qualifications. The picture is almost reversed for the more advantaged areas such as Baulkham Hills which has higher levels of qualification and notably fewer residents in lower occupational groups (although it should be noted that Baulkham Hills is on the margin of South Western Sydney Institute catchment).
- There are significant populations of Indigenous Australians in some postcodes—Blairmount (5% in this most disadvantaged locality), and Mt Druitt, Macquarie Fields, Minto and Campbelltown have more than 2% of their 1996 residents identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Most of the postcodes have high proportions of people speaking a language other than English at home—nearly three-quarters of Cabramatta and Bonnyrigg residents, and over 50% in other postcodes (Villawood, Fairfield, Auburn, Holsworthy, Lidcombe), compared with the national figure of less than a quarter.

The regional picture, dissected by postcode, thus shows a great degree of variation in both participation and the concentration of disadvantaged residents.

VET participation and client profiles

The nature of VET participation may now be mapped to the regional picture. Table 8 shows the main south-western Sydney postcodes ranked, according to the magnitude of their VET clients, rather than their level of disadvantage shown in table 7.

In this table, the analysis is particularly interested in the educational and employment levels of VET clients as reflecting their socio-economic disadvantage. Table 8 shows that:

- ✧ South-western Sydney's most disadvantaged postcodes (for example, Liverpool and Cabramatta) have large numbers of residents who are institute clients, and high local participation rates.
- ✧ The proportion of clients who are female does not vary as greatly as other characteristics, but is lowest in some postcodes outside the region (for example, Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Penrith, Baulkham Hills, suggesting that when residents from outside the catchment participate, they are likely to be men rather than women, due perhaps to course factors but more possibly due to transport factors.
- ✧ There are differences in the youthfulness of the clients from different postcodes although there are generally large numbers of clients aged 25 and under—often around 50% of clients—reflecting the youthful demographic of the region, as well as significant 'draw' of youth into certain courses, such as apprenticeship.
- ✧ The proportion of clients with Year 10 or less ('low school') is a significant measure of educational disadvantage in clients. Some 50% of clients from Campbelltown and adjacent postcodes fall in this category, with other postcodes rarely less than 30%. Many institute clients are clearly from less educationally advantaged backgrounds.
- ✧ The proportion of institute clients who are employed appears to closely reflect levels of disadvantage by postcodes, suggesting that those residents disadvantaged in the labour market are accessing courses: 34% of clients from Cabramatta, 38% from Minto, 40% from Auburn, 38% from Bonnyrigg, 39% from Macquarie Fields, 22% from Blairmount. Interestingly, institute clients from outside the region tend to have higher levels of employment, for example, Mt Druitt, 75%, although this is a disadvantaged postcode, Penrith 79% and so on.
- ✧ In those postcodes with large proportions of Indigenous or language other than English residents, institute participation is comparable to the demographic. For example, Blairmount has over 5% of residents who are Indigenous (table 7), compared to 8% of its TAFE institute clients; Macquarie Fields, 3.4% compared to 4.2% of clients; and Miller, 3.4% compared with 4.1%.
- ✧ Finally, as demonstrated in earlier studies, the very large populations of speakers of language other than English (and those born in mainly non-English speaking countries) in these postcodes are very well represented as institute clients from the same area. For example, Cabramatta has nearly 87% of its clients speaking language other than English at home; Fairfield, 84%; Auburn, 87% and Lidcombe, 83%. These are remarkable levels of participation by any measure.

Looking across these postcodes, the range of values for the different VET client characteristics is large. There is marked regional variation which tends to follow the distribution of disadvantage along regional lines. It would be very difficult to conclude much about the differentiation of VET clienteles if the main catchment postcodes appeared to have similar profiles—yet the pattern is one of great heterogeneity. There is some evidence for 'out of region' residents to have a more advantaged profile in their educational, economic and socio-cultural backgrounds, even though their numbers are not large.

The evidence presented suggests that that South Western Sydney Institute draws deeply on the socio-economically disadvantaged and ethnically diverse populations of the regions for its client base.

Table 8: South Western Sydney Institute—VET client indicators and main catchment postcodes

Postcode		n	% of SWS	Part rate	Female	Young people	Low school	Employed	LOTE	ATSI
2170	Liverpool	4342	10.3	7.7	55.2	40.0	38.9	46.8	63.6	2.0
2560	Campbelltown	3803	9.0	7.9	49.4	52.8	52.4	56.4	27.2	3.7
2166	Cabramatta	2782	6.6	6.8	56.1	41.3	43.5	33.8	87.1	1.0
2176	Bossley Park	2679	6.4	8.2	53.2	53.2	42.0	49.4	74.7	0.8
2168	Miller	2357	5.6	10.0	54.8	47.3	47.1	41.6	60.6	4.1
2165	Fairfield	2146	5.1	8.7	56.4	37.8	36.8	37.9	84.5	0.8
2566	Minto	1475	3.5	8.1	49.5	51.0	52.0	54.5	32.7	4.4
2145	Wentworthville	1422	3.4	3.2	44.9	45.9	39.7	61.5	50.7	1.2
2144	Auburn	1317	3.1	6.9	49.6	35.8	31.6	40.5	87.0	0.0
2160	Merrylands	1312	3.1	6.4	51.3	42.6	36.7	51.0	70.0	0.8
2171	Badgerys Creek	1271	3.0	8.6	45.5	55.2	45.8	65.6	46.1	1.5
2164	Smithfield	1253	3.0	7.4	47.6	64.2	47.8	56.8	66.0	0.7
2142	Granville	1009	2.4	7.1	52.1	40.2	35.6	46.8	76.0	1.2
2161	Guildford	990	2.3	5.1	48.2	47.6	42.2	57.0	67.1	1.3
2177	Bonnyrigg	964	2.3	9.5	56.4	51.1	39.2	37.6	78.6	2.4
2564	Macquarie Fields	945	2.2	10.4	54.3	47.7	52.4	38.9	39.3	4.2
2150	Parramatta	933	2.2	5.5	56.6	21.5	26.1	39.2	81.7	1.0
2570	Camden	877	2.1	5.6	40.4	57.6	51.5	74.3	4.3	1.3
2565	Ingleburn	844	2.0	7.5	51.3	47.5	48.6	56.2	27.1	1.9
2567	Narellan	673	1.6	8.1	50.1	45.9	51.2	68.5	13.2	1.2
2141	Lidcombe *	562	1.3	3.3	48.9	36.1	42.5	42.7	82.5	1.8
2558	Eagle Vale	485	1.1	6.4	47.0	49.3	51.6	63.4	32.4	3.4
2148	Blacktown *	420	1.0	1.0	31.2	46.9	46.0	74.8	37.1	2.3
2163	Villawood	368	0.9	3.5	49.7	44.3	41.4	40.8	76.3	2.2
2151	North Parramatta	337	0.8	2.8	49.0	34.7	30.2	53.0	62.8	0.0
2153	Baulkham Hills *	334	0.8	0.9	24.3	59.0	41.0	85.9	23.6	0.0
2167	Glenfield	334	0.8	6.0	58.7	38.9	53.6	51.3	34.0	1.9

Postcode		n	% of SWS	Part rate	Female	Young people	Low school	Employed	LOTE	ATSI
2200	Bankstown *	324	0.8	1.3	42.9	34.3	33.6	76.6	67.3	0.0
2173	Holsworthy	323	0.8	6.1	55.4	35.9	40.0	64.2	35.4	0.0
2571	Picton	316	0.7	6.2	60.1	43.4	58.7	65.1	4.6	9.1
2147	Seven Hills *	287	0.7	1.1	27.9	50.9	51.2	79.5	23.8	0.0
2162	Chester Hill	282	0.7	3.0	45.0	41.1	36.6	65.4	54.9	0.0
2770	Mount Druitt *	255	0.6	0.6	27.5	42.7	49.3	74.7	33.8	3.8
2559	Blairmount	246	0.6	9.7	61.0	55.7	58.1	22.3	49.8	8.4
2750	Penrith *	237	0.6	0.7	30.4	45.6	50.3	79.4	12.9	6.0

Note: * These suburbs are outside South Western Sydney Institute catchment, although they are in bordering areas.

Chisholm Institute of TAFE

The development of a profile for Chisholm differed from the approach taken to South Western Sydney Institute due to differences in the data made available to the project. The Victorian analysis worked with unit record data rather than aggregated tables for the institute.

South-eastern Melbourne

Table 9 shows the values of the SEIFA disadvantage indexes for greater Melbourne, by statistical sub-division (broadly representing its sub-regions). Figure 11 illustrates these trends on a map of local government areas, which, in Victoria, are quite extensive due to amalgamations in the mid-1990s.

Table 9: Disadvantage index values for Melbourne regions

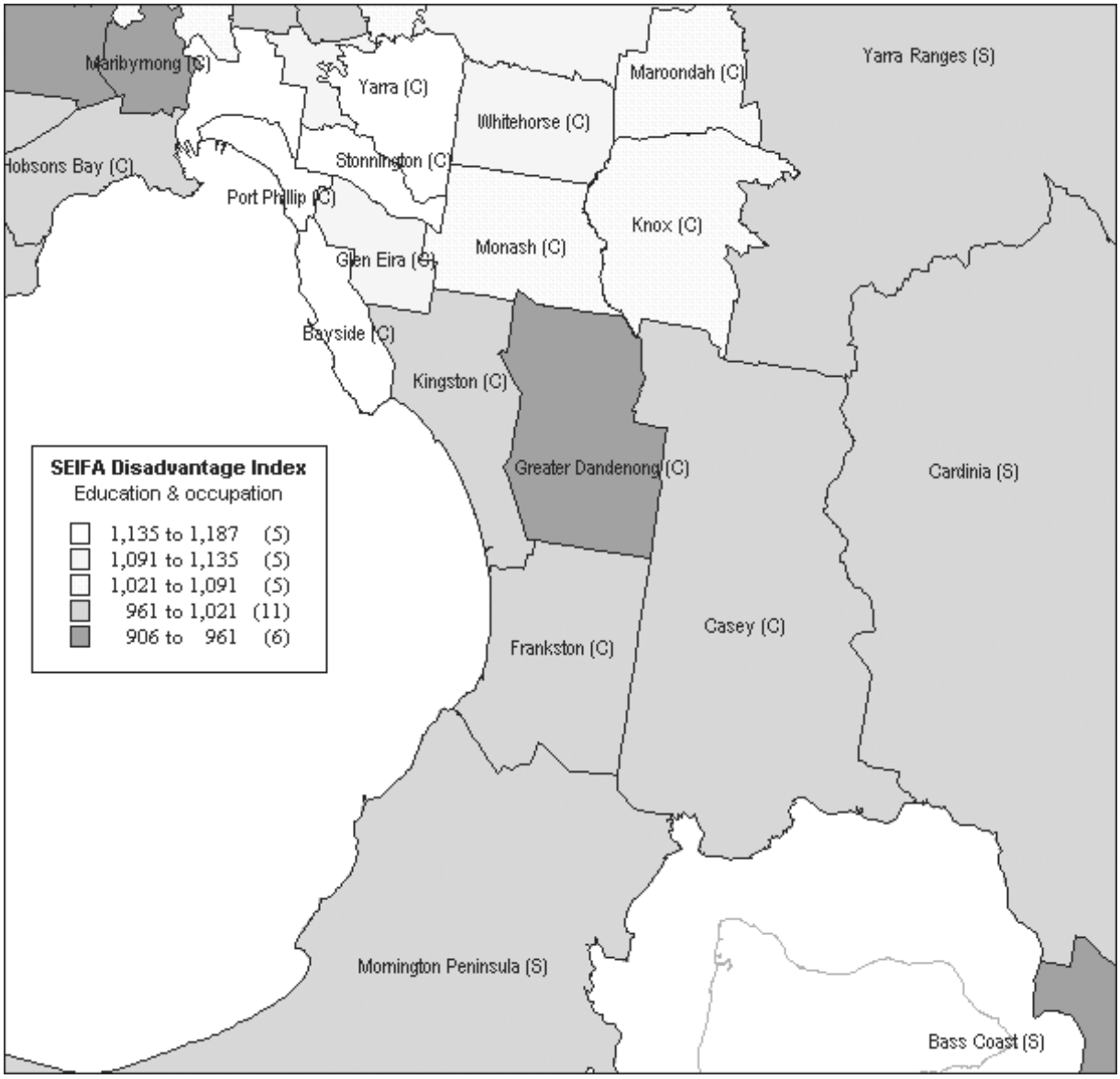
Statistical sub-division	Disadvantage	Urban advantage	Rural advantage	Economic resources	Education & occupation
Inner Melbourne	1031	1052	0	976	1138
Western Melbourne	962	969	1035	993	967
Melton-Wyndham	1019	960	1040	1037	976
Moreland City	958	969	0	966	991
Northern Middle Melbourne	999	1005	0	1004	1022
Hume City	976	943	1092	1022	942
Northern Outer Melbourne	1033	998	1170	1063	996
Eastern Middle Melbourne	1073	1093	1193	1085	1083
Eastern Outer Melbourne	1058	1025	1156	1069	1030
Yarra Ranges Shire Part A	1047	1002	1107	1048	1011
Southern Melbourne	1069	1068	0	1058	1086
Greater Dandenong City	921	922	945	965	907
South Eastern Outer Melbourne	1019	957	1063	1041	966
Frankston City	1005	968	1124	1017	978
Mornington Peninsula Shire	1011	995	1125	1017	992
Hopkins	1006	971	961	969	974
Glenelg	994	958	975	966	961

The Chisholm Institute serves a huge area of south-eastern Melbourne, from the Richmond campus in the inner city, through the south-eastern suburbs following the south-eastern freeway to the Mornington Peninsula. It includes the outer metropolitan campus at Rosebud and a rural campus at Wonthaggi on the Bass Coast, well to the south-east.

Chisholm is a consolidation of several former TAFE institutes which were themselves created from smaller TAFE colleges in the 1980s and 1990s—Casey Institute, centred on Dandenong and Moorabin, Frankston based in the City of Frankston and the Peninsula College covering the Mornington Peninsula. This amalgamation brought together TAFE entities that had developed in different ways to serve the needs of their districts. Thus, there may be distinct catchments within Chisholm's south-eastern region.

This region is socially and economically diverse. It includes the more advantaged areas of Richmond and the bayside suburbs running down to Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula. Fine-grained analysis shows that there are pockets of relative poverty as well as affluence in these areas. There are, for example, in some retirement areas, populations with low economic resources as well as low education levels. Looking across the table of disadvantaged values for the Melbourne sub-regions (table 9), it can be seen that Dandenong is the locality with the greatest disadvantaged across several of the indexes. Greater Dandenong City has the highest urban disadvantage, the lowest economic resources and the lowest educational levels of any sub-region (922, 965 and 907).

Figure 11: Disadvantage in Melbourne urban regions (local government areas)



Institute catchment

The main postcodes served by the institute are shown in table 10, by those campuses with the largest number of individual clients. (The totals in this table are larger than in following tables because some individuals attended more than one campus. As a rule, individual students, not enrolments are counted).

Table 10: Chisholm students, main campuses by main postcodes served 1999

Postcode		Berwick	Bonbeach	Dandenong	Frankston	Moorabbin	Noble Park	Workplace	Total	Total as %
3199	Frankston	37	206	291	1 862	264	14	245	**3 010**	**5.8**
3175	Dandenong	159	20	1534	133	224	120	251	**2 495**	**4.8**
3977	Cranbourne	124	58	485	398	95	45	186	**1 557**	**3.0**
3174	Noble Park	53	15	620	87	233	101	223	**1 356**	**2.6**
3805	Narre Warren	183	18	540	121	96	42	173	**1 219**	**2.4**
3802	Endeavour Hills	85	10	607	63	102	46	146	**1 081**	**2.1**
3806	Berwick	198	9	405	91	57	36	96	**930**	**1.8**
3195	Mordialloc	10	49	156	205	406	6	83	**923**	**1.8**
3910	Langwarrin	16	42	133	528	59	8	94	**911**	**1.8**
3196	Bonbeach	10	76	103	344	246	8	81	**884**	**1.7**
3976	Hampton Park	76	10	409	97	62	37	125	**859**	**1.7**
3198	Seaford	10	60	88	487	80	6	78	**830**	**1.6**
3172	Springvale	19	12	217	86	297	34	141	**811**	**1.6**
3931	Mornington	3	56	73	477	57	7	63	**793**	**1.5**
3930	Mt Eliza	11	49	70	499	76	4	51	**789**	**1.5**
3173	Keysborough	37	13	327	49	161	48	100	**742**	**1.4**
3912	Somerville	18	51	94	401	39	12	65	**707**	**1.4**
3189	Moorabbin	3	10	60	51	497	3	56	**680**	**1.3**
3192	Cheltenham	5	11	67	69	439	9	66	**668**	**1.3**
3168	Clayton	8	2	121	21	186	10	302	**651**	**1.3**
3171	Sandown Park	24	3	265	29	133	70	120	**648**	**1.3**
3169	Clayton South	10	5	118	20	317	19	140	**634**	**1.2**
3201	Carrum Downs	17	33	121	282	51	11	88	**625**	**1.2**
3194	Mentone	6	15	71	68	339	5	59	**565**	**1.1**
3165	Bentleigh	2	10	49	31	405	0	67	**564**	**1.1**
3178	Rowville	35	2	298	33	48	21	86	**530**	**1.0**
3204	Ormond	3	11	54	34	344	5	72	**523**	**1.0**
3197	Carrum	8	52	71	228	90	7	44	**510**	**1.0**
3170	Mulgrave	29	1	208	33	104	22	100	**500**	**1.0**
Total		**1 953**	**1 442**	**11 479**	**10 505**	**10 246**	**1 035**	**13 002**	**51 805**	**100.0**
%		3.8	2.8	22.2	20.3	19.8	2.0	25.1	**100.0**	

The largest numbers were at Dandenong (11 479), Frankston (10 505) and Moorabbin (10 246)—more than 60% of the total institute students of 51 805. There were over 13 000 students, or a quarter of the total, registered in workplace programs. The smaller campus of Berwick (near Monash's Clayton campus) has some 1953 students or 4% of the total, and Bonbeach had 1442 (2.8%). The smallest campuses had fewer than 1000 students, Rosebud (869), Wonthaggi (601) and Cranbourne (673), not shown in table 10. The main campus totals include off-campus students.

There were 50 postcodes with over 200 students, in sum 33 127 or 68% of the total Chisholm enrolment including those living outside Melbourne. Table 10 shows the first 30 postcodes account for over 50% of the total students, the greatest numbers being found in the 'home' postcodes of the major campuses—Frankston and Dandenong had some 5500 students between them, or more than 10% of the total. The first 10 postcodes account for 26% of students. Although this reflects quite a marked concentration of participants from the south-eastern suburbs, as one might expect, further analysis showed that this participation is highly concentrated around the local campuses. For example, of those registered at Dandenong campus, nearly 20% live in Dandenong and Noble Park, 3174 and 3175. The first ten postcodes account for 50% of the 11 000 Dandenong students.

Table 11 shows the socio-economic profile of the main postcodes of the Chisholm catchment in terms of the disadvantage indexes and selected social indicators.

It is clear from table 11, which ranks the postcode by degree of disadvantage on the Index of Education and Occupation, that:

- ✧ The socio-economic differences within the total catchment are very marked, while at the same time, participation rates in TAFE are quite varied. There is no simple relationship with the socio-economic disadvantage of a postcode area.
- ✧ A postcode such as Hallam may not have a large share of the total Chisholm enrolments, because it is a small postcode with fewer residents than others (and the outlying newer suburbs are more populous) but it may have a high participation rate.
- ✧ The ten most disadvantaged postcodes have quite healthy TAFE participation rates with those of 3175 Dandenong (6.9%) and 3174 Noble Park (5.5%) the highest. It is very likely that these higher rates are due to the presence of the Dandenong campus.
- ✧ The ten most advantaged suburbs such as Beaumaris, Mornington and Glen Waverley have more variable rates, and this also may reflect the presence of campuses—Berwick (8.6) and Mornington (6.5) stand out, in this respect. This effect points to the need to check the 'disadvantage status' of VET clients from these areas—do they reflect the 'advantage' of these areas, or are they more disadvantaged?
- ✧ There are very large concentrations of people speaking a language other than English at home in some postcodes (although these linguistic communities are proportionally lower than those of south-western Sydney). For example, Sandown Park (66% speaking a language other than English) and Clayton South (61.3%).
- ✧ While levels of qualification increase steadily with decreasing 'education and occupational' disadvantage (reflecting the ordering of the postcodes by the EDO index), it can be seen that 'economic resources' are quite variable, as reflected in the variation in the proportion of residents having an annual household income of less than $16 000.
- ✧ There is a significant population of Indigenous people in Doveton (1.3) although generally the south-east has small numbers compared to other parts of Melbourne, and indeed to south-western Sydney.

Table 11: Socio-economic profile of Chisholm Institute postcodes (ranked by disadvantage)

Postcode		% all	Part rate	SEIFA ERS	SEIFA EDO	Quals	HHI <16K	ATSI	LOTE
3177	Doveton	0.7	4.8	923	850	31.4	25.1	1.3	31.0
3171	Sandown Park	1.3	4.1	935	873	30.1	21.8	0.2	66.0
3200	Seaford	0.7	5.1	949	874	32.7	21.3	0.6	8.1
3175	Dandenong	4.8	6.9	951	911	37.2	21.4	0.8	43.2
3174	Noble Park	2.6	5.5	954	912	35.4	20.8	0.4	45.0
3173	Keysborough	1.4	5.3	1035	925	32.4	14.7	0.2	40.8
3169	Clayton South	1.2	4.1	982	926	35.8	16.8	0.3	61.3
3977	Cranbourne	3.0	6.9	1017	929	33.9	12.8	0.3	7.9
3976	Hampton Park	1.7	6.8	1036	939	36.2	9.3	0.5	24.8
3810	Pakenham	0.9	5.5	1019	944	36.2	15.6	0.3	3.9
3201	Carrum Downs	1.2	7.0	1021	951	37.9	11.4	0.2	9.9
3803	Hallam	0.9	7.1	1053	951	38.3	11.3	0.4	33.5
3172	Springvale	1.6	7.0	989	955	37.5	22.4	0.5	7.2
3198	Seaford	1.6	4.6	1048	966	36.4	13.5	0.1	35.2
3936	Dromana	0.7	7.0	978	967	42.1	29.0	0.5	7.9
3196	Bonbeach	1.7	6.2	994	976	39.6	23.7	0.2	10.9
3930	Mt Eliza	1.5	6.5	987	979	40.7	23.7	0.4	4.4
3805	Narre Warren	2.4	7.1	1055	983	38.6	8.5	0.4	13.3
3197	Carrum	1.0	6.3	1022	989	40.7	22.3	0.5	10.2
3802	Endeavour Hills	2.1	6.0	1056	993	40.5	8.6	0.3	39.2
3912	Somerville	1.4	8.0	1065	994	40.5	11.3	0.3	3.8
3199	Frankston	5.8	7.6	1019	1003	40.7	20.9	0.3	7.2
3156	Ferntree Gully	0.7	1.6	1057	1005	41.1	12.6	0.3	10.0
3910	Langwarrin	1.8	8.1	1070	1006	40.1	9.1	0.3	4.6
3168	Clayton	1.3	4.3	946	1011	40.8	22.3	0.3	46.3
3170	Mulgrave	1.0	2.6	1081	1026	41.8	11.7	0.2	34.6
3166	Oakleigh	0.6	2.3	989	1027	42.9	20.0	0.3	36.9
3189	Moorabbin	1.3	6.0	1003	1033	43.4	22.3	0.3	24.2
3195	Mordialloc	1.8	5.2	1042	1037	43.7	17.9	0.3	13.8
3192	Cheltenham	1.3	4.2	1036	1041	44.2	19.2	0.1	17.9
3806	Berwick	1.8	8.6	1091	1043	42.8	12.6	0.2	6.3
3165	Bentleigh	1.1	3.9	1047	1045	44.9	17.7	0.1	25.5
3178	Rowville	1.0	3.4	1111	1050	43.7	6.5	0.1	22.1
3194	Mentone	1.1	4.7	1044	1067	45.9	21.5	0.1	15.2
3934	Mt Martha	0.8	6.8	1072	1073	49.0	14.4	0.2	3.3
3163	Glenhuntly	0.9	1.7	985	1088	49.6	23.4	0.2	27.4
3204	Ormond	1.0	3.9	1056	1108	50.1	17.1	0.2	20.5
3150	Glen Waverley	0.9	1.2	1137	1109	47.3	11.3	0.1	26.8
3931	Mornington	1.5	6.5	1153	1125	51.2	12.1	0.1	5.6
3193	Beaumaris	0.7	3.0	1154	1148	52.2	13.3	0.1	6.3

VET participation and client profiles

The socio-economic profile of Chisholm Institute VET clients can now be mapped on to this picture of Chisholm's catchment in the postcodes of south-eastern Melbourne.

Table 12 shows the main Chisholm postcodes ordered by disadvantage index, number of participants, the proportion completing Year 9 or 10, the proportion employed (employer, self-employed or employee) and the proportion of language other than English background. (In this table, 'non stated' figures are quite high at around 25% but comparable for the schooling and employment status items, and proportions are thus calculated on the known figures).

The 'low schooling' and 'employment status' of clients from the postcode can be compared with its disadvantage value. The following is clear:

- ✧ The range of values for both schooling and employment is very great across the postcodes. Those with low schooling range from 82.6% in Pakenham to as low as 30% in Beaumaris.
- ✧ By and large, the most disadvantaged postcodes have higher proportions of clients who attended only Year 9 and 10—above 70% in Doveton, Dandenong, Cranbourne and Hampton Park and Narre Warren and less than 33% in the more advantaged postcodes of Moorabbin, Cheltenham and Bentleigh, for example. This suggests that educationally disadvantaged clients are certainly attending from disadvantaged postcodes.
- ✧ Those employed in some capacity range from less than 60% in the more disadvantaged areas to nearly 90% in some more advantaged areas, although this indicator is quite variable.
- ✧ Regarding people with language background other than English participating in Chisholm, it is true to say that the majority of students are from a non-Enlgish speaking background. This holds for the most advantaged areas also.
- ✧ Participation by Indigenous Australians was negligible in this 1999 data—only 117 individuals recorded they were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. These students were thinly distributed over the postcodes. (The low participation may reflect the large non-stated number of 11 268).

The language other than English background figures are worth remarking upon, since they are both very high and in this respect similar to those of south-western Sydney. Some 34 274 individuals or 70.3% of the total Chisholm enrolment recorded they were from a non-English speaking background (spoke a language other than English at home). This appears too high. See table 12.

Local effects: Campuses and former institutes

This overall analysis of the institute tends to blur over possibly important differences between the selected campuses and former institutes which were amalgamated some years ago. These may draw on their localities to a greater or less degree, affecting their client profile.

Table 13 shows selected VET client characteristics related to disadvantage by the three former institutes, Barton, Casey and Peninsula. It is apparent that the disadvantaged nature of the catchment of Casey, based on Dandenong, is strongly reflected in the higher proportion of its students with Year 10 or less schooling. However, the proportion of employed students is comparable across the three areas. There are relatively fewer women enrolling at Casey than the other former institutes.

Table 12: Chisholm main postcodes (by students)—VET client socio-economic profile

Postcode		SEIFA EDO	n	Low school %	Not stated %	Employ %	Not stated %	NES %
3177	Doveton	850	359	79.8	22.8	59.2	27.0	71.6
3171	Sandown Park	873	601	67.0	25.3	55.7	30.1	84.5
3200	Seaford	874	346	54.8	15.0	55.8	15.0	85.0
3175	Dandenong	911	2335	79.8	27.9	56.8	31.3	76.5
3174	Noble Park	912	1295	68.5	28.2	64.0	32.0	75.4
3173	Keysborough	925	694	67.3	26.1	70.2	27.1	73.8
3169	Clayton South	926	609	40.2	27.8	65.0	32.8	76.4
3977	Cranbourne	929	1471	73.4	24.9	72.7	22.5	67.7
3976	Hampton Park	939	809	75.3	25.0	70.5	26.0	68.7
3810	Pakenham	944	458	82.6	30.8	76.8	28.4	54.8
3201	Carrum Downs	951	592	52.6	26.5	74.3	26.5	79.1
3803	Hallam	951	407	77.9	26.8	72.0	26.3	69.0
3172	Springvale	955	778	52.9	33.7	73.3	33.7	68.6
3198	Seaford	966	793	47.5	24.8	65.8	23.6	84.2
3936	Dromana	967	337	42.3	32.6	69.3	32.3	89.0
3196	Bonbeach	976	843	40.8	27.5	64.5	28.5	75.8
3930	Mt Eliza	979	746	34.0	31.1	72.4	29.5	87.7
3805	Narre Warren	983	1131	76.8	27.0	78.3	27.3	60.4
3197	Carrum	989	482	49.7	31.5	74.2	31.7	81.1
3802	Endeavour Hills	993	1011	74.1	27.8	70.9	26.9	73.3
3912	Somerville	994	665	49.1	25.3	76.5	27.7	82.7
3199	Frankston	1003	2854	44.2	25.2	66.3	25.4	86.0
3156	Ferntree Gully	1005	366	72.3	30.1	89.5	29.8	48.9
3910	Langwarrin	1006	872	49.7	26.1	75.1	25.0	83.4
3168	Clayton	1011	629	48.0	52.3	69.6	55.0	80.1
3170	Mulgrave	1026	475	62.2	31.6	79.2	29.1	63.8
3166	Oakleigh	1027	307	45.2	39.4	75.3	36.8	66.4
3189	Moorabbin	1033	664	31.0	35.8	57.6	39.6	67.6
3195	Mordialloc	1037	887	42.8	36.3	71.1	37.5	68.4
3192	Cheltenham	1041	644	30.0	36.3	67.8	35.9	62.1
3806	Berwick	1043	861	78.5	30.9	80.2	29.5	61.1
3165	Bentleigh	1045	552	31.2	37.3	68.6	39.5	62.5
3178	Rowville	1050	510	75.8	33.5	82.4	27.6	62.2
3194	Mentone	1067	551	33.5	38.8	71.9	41.2	69.1
3934	Mt Martha	1073	409	40.7	31.5	75.1	31.3	88.5
3163	Glenhuntly	1088	437	37.0	35.0	70.9	37.1	64.8
3204	Ormond	1108	503	35.2	44.1	68.5	43.1	67.8
3150	Glen Waverly	1109	450	56.5	38.7	86.5	37.6	64.0
3931	Mornington	1125	747	40.2	26.1	72.1	23.7	85.8
3193	Beaumaris	1148	361	31.1	47.4	66.7	48.5	61.8

Table 13: Former institutes—VET client socio-economic profile

Former institute	n	% all	Female	Employ	Low school	LOTE	ATSI	Dis-ability
Barton Institute	9 437	19.3	41.8	74.8	24.2	36.7	0.1	3.6
Casey Institute	29 143	59.7	39.8	77.6	85.3	70.7	0.3	1.6
Peninsula	10 206	20.9	47.6	71.0	40.7	100.0	0.4	8.1

Note: The language other than English figure for Peninsula Institute does not seem credible. No speakers of English only were recorded.

Table 14 shows the breakdown of enrolments (rather than students) on the same set of VET client characteristics by campus, including off-campus enrolments and several large workplace groups. (This table has several rows for the same campus in the original data for unknown reasons.)

It is clear that:

- ✧ There are significant differences in profile between the different campuses on all of these client characteristics, and by and large, these reflect the marked differences in the disadvantage of the campus catchment postcodes.
- ✧ Females are notably under-represented in the workplace training sites, and somewhat less well represented on the Dandenong and Frankston A and Moorabbin campuses.
- ✧ The greatest proportions of clients with low schooling are found at Berwick, Frankston B (but not Frankston A), Moorabbin, Noble Park and Wonthaggi. There are variations between Moorabbin A and B that are very marked.
- ✧ By no means does employment status mirror low schooling: again the pattern is quite varied. The highest levels of employed students are found at Frankston and Moorabbin and (it follows) the workplace sites.
- ✧ Very high proportions of people of language other than English background are found at Berwick, Bonbeach, Frankston and Moorabbin and one of the workplaces (Workplace 068).
- ✧ This table is interesting for what it tells about the socio-economic profile of clients enrolled in off-campus (OC) courses at Frankston, Moorabbin and Dandenong. They are more likely to be female, and to have higher levels of schooling at Moorabbin and Frankston although not at Dandenong.
- ✧ Frankston off-campus has a significant representation of Indigenous people (1.5%) and a large cohort of people with disabilities (12.1%).

These data suggest that there are relatively high proportions of disadvantaged clients enrolling at these campuses, although the picture is a varied one, with significant variations in both educational and employment and socio-cultural disadvantage across the campuses.

Table 14: Campuses of Chisholm Institute—VET client socio-economic profile

	n	% all	Female	Employ	Low school	NES	ATSI	Dis-ability
Berwick	1 953	3.8	60.9	60.5	88.5	70.0	0.5	2.6
Bonbeach	1 442	2.8	63.7	72.2	39.0	99.5	0.3	7.4
Cranbourne	673	1.3	67.0	47.8	94.7	65.5	0.0	7.0
Dandenong OC	312	0.6	62.8	72.9	99.3	66.7	0.0	3.5
Dandenong	11 167	21.6	42.5	70.9	91.4	65.2	0.7	2.5
Frankston OC	132	0.3	61.4	78.1	17.7	100.0	1.5	12.1
Frankston A	8 399	16.2	44.6	70.6	40.9	100.0	0.4	8.1
Frankston B	1 974	3.8	56.6	81.4	93.3	90.2	0.0	0.2
Moorabbin A	3 343	6.5	52.8	85.3	90.6	90.4	0.1	0.1
Moorabbin OC	16	0.0	68.8	75.0	31.3	25.0	0.0	6.3
Moorabbin B	6 887	13.3	46.3	65.1	20.4	37.1	0.1	3.8
Noble Park	1 035	2.0	11.8	70.3	91.6	76.0	0.3	3.2
Rosebud	869	1.7	71.5	62.7	37.0	97.4	1.0	7.1
Wonthaggi	601	1.2	67.7	69.7	81.0	15.8	0.2	6.2
Workplace	2 068	4.0	39.7	96.5	71.5	77.5	0.0	0.5
Workplace 010	8 016	15.5	18.9	97.5	73.4	66.1	0.1	0.4
Workplace 028	2 781	5.4	31.2	99.9	34.9	39.8	0.2	3.1
Workplace 068	137	0.3	16.8	84.8	35.6	100.0	0.0	13.1
Total	**51 805**	**100.0**	**42.1**	**74.7**	**57.0**	**70.5**	**0.3**	**3.3**

Note: Total is larger due to some individuals enrolling at more than one campus.

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