

## Who's missing out?: Access and equity in vocational education and training—Support document

GILLIAN CONSIDINE

IAN WATSON

RICHARD HALL

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# Appendix 1: Behind the label

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## New South Wales clothing industry outworkers

Since the mid-1980s outwork has become the dominant form of employment in the textile, clothing and footwear industry (Clayton & Mitchel 1999), but it is within women's fashion that outworkers are most prevalent (Department of Industrial Relations 1999). The New South Wales 'Industrial Relations (Ethical Clothing Trades) Bill 2001' defines an outworker as:

... any person (not being the occupier of a factory) who performs outside a factory any work in the clothing trades or the manufacture of clothing products, whether directly or indirectly, for the occupier of a factory or a trader who seels clothing by wholesale or retail.

(New South Wales Government 2001, p. 3)

Accurately measuring the number of people working as clothing outworkers in Australia is extremely difficult due to the hidden nature of much of the work (Clayton & Mitchel 1999). In the mid-to-late 1990s official estimates range from around 24 000 full-time outworker *jobs* to 50 000 full-time and part-time *workers* (Evatt Foundation 1998). It is, however, reasonable to assume that the extent of clothing outwork is significantly larger than official figures suggest. The majority of outworkers receive appallingly low cash payments for the work they perform, and anecdotal evidence has revealed that some employers mislead many outworkers by informing them that outworkers must receive social security benefits in order to work (Asian Women at Work & Vietnamese Women's Association of New South Wales 2001). Under these conditions, many outworkers do not declare their income from clothing production to the tax office or to Centrelink (Asian Women at Work & Vietnamese Women's Association of New South Wales 2001).

In Australia, outworkers are predominantly women with limited English language and literacy skills who primarily come from a range of East Asian countries (Clayton & Mitchel 1999), including Cambodia, Laos and Korea (Asian Women at Work & Vietnamese Women's Association of New South Wales 2001) but with the majority of outworker women coming from Vietnam and China (New South Wales Department for Women 2002).

Employment conditions for outworkers in Australia have been the subject of a number of state government and federal government inquiries (Department of Industrial Relations 1999). Outwork is an extremely insecure form of employment, with seasonal fluctuations greatly influencing both the continuity of work available and the pressure for rapid completion of the work that is available. Outworkers are typically paid piece-rates for their work and can earn as little as \$2 per hour and may work for up to 15 to 20 hours per day, giving them an income well below the poverty line despite the excessive hours worked (Asian Women at Work & Vietnamese Women's Association of New South Wales 2001; New South Wales Department for Women 2002). The vast majority of outworkers work from home in conditions that are not designed for industrial manufacturing, with ergonomics, lighting, temperature control, noise suppression and ventilation frequently inadequate. The excessive hours, work intensification and sub-standard working conditions of outworkers combine to create a rate of occupational injury, in particular skeletal/muscle injuries related to overuse, significantly greater than that found among factory-employed textile, clothing and footwear workers (Mayhew & Quinlan 1998).

Australian outworkers constitute a clear example of multiple disadvantage when it comes to access and equity in VET. From an individual perspective, outworkers fall into two of the five

government-targeted client groups who are consistently under-represented in the VET system: women and persons from non-English speaking backgrounds (ANTA 1996b). However, outworkers are also obviously significantly affected by changes that have occurred in the labour market over the last 20 years and that are still occurring today. Outworkers are systematically excluded from training opportunities as a result of their non-standard employment arrangements. Continual industry restructuring in the textile, clothing and footwear manufacturing industry also raises the very real prospect of many outworkers becoming structurally unemployed. The following case study highlights the extent of multiple disadvantage faced by outworkers, and clearly demonstrates that a one-size-fits-all client group approach to addressing access and equity in VET for these workers would fall short of addressing the training needs of these women.

## Behind the label

In 1996, a coalition of churches, unions and community groups brought to public awareness, through the Fair Wear campaign, the exploitative conditions under which Australian outworkers within the clothing industry were employed (Clayton & Mitchel 1999). This campaign coincided with growing global recognition and acknowledgement that government intervention was required to achieve improvements in the pay and working conditions of outworkers. In 1999, the New South Wales Government made a commitment to improve the employment conditions of outworkers.

Behind the Label is the multi-faceted New South Wales Government strategy aimed at addressing the exploitation of outworkers in the clothing industry. Managed by the New South Wales Department of Commerce through the Office of Industrial Relations, there are two overall aims of the strategy. The first is to ensure that outworkers in New South Wales have access to award pay and conditions within a safe and healthy work environment, whether that be as outworkers, or as the result of a change of occupation. The second is to foster an Australian clothing industry that competes successfully on the basis of design, technological innovation and productivity (Department of Industrial Relations 1999). In 2001, the Behind the Label strategy was launched with a budget of \$4 million over three years, and in February 2002, it gained legislative support with the *Industrial Relations (Ethical Clothing Trades) Act 2001*.

The initiatives established under the strategy were developed in consultation with unions, industry, community organisations and other government agencies, and include interrelated projects aimed to:

- ✧ raise community awareness of the exploitation of outworkers
- ✧ improve the provision of industrial information to outworkers through a bilingual team of Behind the Label workers
- ✧ develop community projects and networks that:
  - ◆ break down the isolation of outworkers
  - ◆ encourage outworker participation in training programs
  - ◆ act as an information portal for employment and community services
  - ◆ improve the opportunities for outworkers.
- ✧ provide information, seminars and assistance to employers to facilitate compliance with their industrial obligations
- ✧ encourage retailers and manufacturers in the clothing industry to abide by the Homeworkers Code of Practice and the Retailer's Ethical Clothing Code of Practice (New South Wales Office of Industrial Relations 2003).

The development of community projects that encourage outworkers to participate in training programs is one of the key initiatives of the Behind the Label strategy. Funding has been provided to expand existing education and training programs and, where necessary, to establish additional education programs to meet the specific needs of outworkers. As such, there are a range of training programs available that specifically address the barriers to training participation faced by outworkers. The specifics of the approach used in the training programs will be examined in the

following section containing the case study analysis of one of these programs. However, in general all the programs are:

- ✧ located in communities where outworkers live
- ✧ supported by bilingual community workers
- ✧ planned in consultation with outworkers
- ✧ specifically designed using bilingual materials and resources relevant to outworkers
- ✧ incorporate recognition of prior learning and skills.

The focus of this case study analysis is the recognition of prior learning program. However, it is important to place this program within the broader training initiative. Within the Behind the Label strategy, the training initiative has been developed to address the wide-ranging problems faced by outworkers, but it also considers the changing industrial landscape of the textile, clothing and footwear manufacturing industry in Australia. The Behind the Label training initiative therefore has two approaches to skill development. The first approach addresses the issues relevant to the outworkers themselves and includes:

- ✧ basic English language courses
- ✧ Workplace English Language and Literacy programs funded by the Department of Education, Science and Technology
- ✧ computer skill courses
- ✧ recognition of prior learning programs.

However, the changing industrial landscape in the textile, clothing and footwear manufacturing industry is one of the most significant challenges faced by this industry over the last two decades. At the forefront of the restructuring was the tariff reduction and subsequent exposure to international competition that began in the late 1970s and accelerated in the late 1980s. Over this period of time the textile, clothing and footwear manufacturing industry experienced significant reductions in production and employment. While much of the manufacturing within this industry went off-shore as a result of this industrial restructuring, some manufacturing, women's fashion in particular, remained in Australia, but moved from factory production to the much cheaper emerging home-based outworker model (Department of Industrial Relations 1999). Continued tariff reductions and the abolition of import quotas in the textile, clothing and footwear industry throughout the 1990s brought more extensive restructuring, and with further tariff reductions to be introduced in 2005, the future of the textile, clothing and footwear manufacturing industry in Australia, and that of outworkers within the industry, is in doubt (Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development 2000). Behind the Label recognises the increasingly limited employment options that will be available for outworkers and so is also seeking to retrain those who wish to develop skills and find employment in other occupations and/or industries. The second approach in the Behind the Label strategy specifically addresses these industry changes through the establishment of training programs that aim to reskill outworkers and train them for alternative careers.

However, the research conducted for this project showed that these two approaches to training and skill development among outworkers are complementary. Many outworkers enter into English language and skill recognition programs and then move into reskilling programs once they have gained confidence about their own learning ability.

## Vietnamese outworkers and the Skill Recognition Program

The focus of the case study analysis for the Behind the Label strategy was the recognition of prior learning, or Skill Recognition Program as it was known in the community.

## Vietnamese outworkers

Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds typically receive far less employment-related training than any other group of workers (Alcorso & Harrison 1993; Stephens & Bertone 1995). However, the Vietnamese women who took part in this study had in fact developed high-level machinist skills while working as outworkers. Although some of these women worked in clothing production in Vietnam, many had only ever worked on domestic machines and so had to reskill to work the industrial machines used in Australia. The majority of the Vietnamese outworkers, however, had no previous experience in sewing and machine work and only gained these skills after coming to Australia and being taught by friends or family members who were already working in the textile, clothing and footwear manufacturing industry. This finding is consistent with earlier research that has found that a lack of previous experience in garment making is very common among outworker women (for example, Asian Women at Work & Vietnamese Women's Association of New South Wales 2001). All of the outworkers who took part in this study had highly advanced skills and produced complex garments, including suit jackets, lined skirts and pants and evening and bridal gowns (some for well-known established fashion designers), yet lacked any formal qualification.

## The Skills Recognition Program

The Skills Recognition Program was one of the first programs piloted in 1999 as part of the Behind the Label strategy. It was specifically designed to achieve two outcomes. Firstly, the program aimed to acknowledge, assess and accredit the complex practical skills outworkers had already developed. Secondly, as a result of the assessment of existing skills and knowledge, it aimed to address the gap in theoretical knowledge many of the workers had. Developed in conjunction with what is now known as the Sydney Institute of TAFE, Ultimo College, the Textile, clothing and Footwear Union of Australia, and relevant community workers, the program sought to certify skilled outworkers in clothing production VET modules. As a result of the first pilot program, 24 women, who were employed as outworkers, gained a statement of attainment.

The success of the pilot program highlighted the importance of the involvement of multiple stakeholders in the training program and led to the establishment of a fully developed program based on a community-centred model that included multiple sources of support. A full-time consultant was hired to act as a coordinator and liaison point between the Office of Industrial Relations Behind the Label team, additional funding sources (such as New South Wales Department of Education and Training), registered training organisations, TAFE staff (including teachers and outreach coordinators), and the community workers. In addition, two full-time bilingual community workers were funded by Behind the Label to work directly with the outworkers in the Vietnamese and Chinese communities and to develop networks that could offer support and encouragement to the outworkers.

The outworker networks, which were established and coordinated by bilingual community workers, are an integral part of the Skill Recognition Program. Behind the Label community workers made use of a networking initiative that had already been established in the Asian communities through partnerships between Asian Women at Work and other more specific community groups, such as the Vietnamese Women's Association. Originally, the practical support provided through the networks included information about employment rights and community services, as well as English language classes. The involvement of Behind the Label has extended the practical support that can be offered by including additional training programs, such as the Skill Recognition Program. One of the key social objectives of the networks is to break down the social isolation experienced by outworkers by offering meetings and outings for outworkers and their families.

The outworkers interviewed for this study were enrolled in the Clothing Production Certificate III at Ultimo TAFE, but actual classes were held predominantly in community halls in the areas where the outworkers live. The one exception to the off-campus classes was the computer module that was

necessarily run on campus where there was access to computing resources not available in the community.

Enrolment in the Clothing Production Certificate III requires a demonstrated ability to produce complete garments. Prior to enrolment, a teacher from Ultimo TAFE visited the outworkers in their homes and conducted a one-on-one assessment of both existing skills and of the training needs of these women. Enrolment in Clothing Production (Intermediate) Certificate II is available for outworkers whose skill level is limited to single tasks in clothing production (for example, they may only do overlocking, or sew seams); however, in this case study, all the women involved were enrolled in certificate III.

By comparison with most other training programs, the Skill Recognition Program was supported by substantial teaching resources. At each class there was the clothing production teacher, an English language and literacy teacher and the bilingual community worker. These resources were made possible by having the program funded from multiple sources. The clothing production teacher was funded through a partnership arrangement between the Behind the Label and the Department of Education and Training and included monies enabling the TAFE teacher to travel between the campus and the community centre where classes were held. The bilingual community worker was funded solely through Behind the Label. As a registered training organisation the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia funded the English language and literacy teacher through the Workplace English Language and Literacy funding the union receives from Department of Education, Science and Technology.

Classes specific to clothing production were held weekly at a community hall. Bilingual texts were supplied for these lessons, but students were encouraged by the English language and literacy teacher to use the English text during class and to only use the Vietnamese text while studying at home. The lessons were governed by the clothing production curriculum and the English language and literacy teacher provided support throughout the day with instruction on relevant language and literacy theory. The bilingual community worker, on the other hand, provided both morale and language support: in having a bilingual worker at the classes each day, the outworkers knew that difficult concepts would be explained to them in Vietnamese and thus were assured that they had correctly understood the concepts being taught. In addition, many of the outworkers said that they were only comfortable in participating in the course because of the relationship they had already developed with the bilingual community worker through the outworker network. This latter point will be discussed further in the next section.

## Barriers to participation

Despite the high level of existing skills, these Vietnamese outworker women had, there were a significant number of barriers that had to be addressed to enable them to participate in formal training.

### *English language and literacy skills*

From the student perspective, many of those interviewed had very low-level English language and literacy skills that presented real difficulties for them in following the lessons and communicating with the teacher. However, there were a few whose spoken English ability was well developed. For these women, although they could verbally communicate very well and understand almost everything being said, it was their perception that their language and literacy skills were quite low that created a barrier to their ability to participate in formal education and training. They admitted that fear of not being understood deprived them of the confidence needed to participate in a mainstream TAFE course that would contain a more diverse range of students and would not be supported by a bilingual worker.

From the teacher's perspective, the existing practical skills of the outworkers circumvented many problems that may otherwise have arisen if basic concepts and ideas had needed to be introduced as part of the course. However, having a class with students from the same ethnic background and

with the support of a bilingual worker and an English language and literacy teacher, problems typically encountered in classes with a more diverse student body were avoided. For example, from the commencement of the first class, the outworkers, although a little nervous initially, were quickly made to feel comfortable knowing that the bilingual worker would be able to ensure that their learning was not stalled by language barriers. Among many of the women enrolled, relationships had already been established through the Vietnamese outworker network, but even for those women who did not already know their classmates, being able to communicate readily with all other students in the class meant that rapport developed quickly. The rapport between outworkers and the presence of the bilingual worker gave the students much more confidence to speak out during class and to ask questions, thus accelerating their learning beyond that usually achieved in more ethnically diverse classes. Support from the English language and literacy teacher ensured that English competencies were integrated into the clothing production learning. Due to the high degree of relevance of the material to their everyday lives the application of language and literacy concepts to the clothing production subject matter facilitated the learning and recall.

### *Lack of formal education*

A number of Vietnamese women working as outworkers had come from rural backgrounds and had little or no educational opportunities in Vietnam. Participating in classroom-based learning was very foreign to these women, and many expressed the initial fear they had in coming to the first class because they did not know what to expect. Many thought that the course would be too hard and that they would lose interest, particularly in the theoretical aspects of the course. Being able to readily communicate with each other and with the teachers through the bilingual community worker was instrumental in allaying the fears of the outworkers and in making them comfortable enough to actively participate in class and in their own learning.

### *Cultural issues*

The experiences of people who have been forced to immigrate to Australia on humanitarian grounds due to significant upheaval in their country of origin greatly affect their transition into Australian life (New South Wales Department for Women 2002). For the Vietnamese outworker women who took part in this study, their experiences and understanding of the government in their country of origin had left them with a profound distrust of government and government authorities and institutions. For the outworkers, this distrust effectively cut them off from the possibility of even approaching a government institution such as TAFE and thus presented a significant barrier to entry into formal training arrangements and accessing accredited qualifications. Added to this problem was a general lack of awareness of the opportunities available through TAFE and of the advantage that such opportunities may provide with regard to securing improved employment arrangements with higher pay and better working conditions. The involvement of the bilingual community worker was crucial in dispelling distrust of TAFE and in informing the women of the advantages of formal nationally recognised qualifications. In this respect, the role of the outworker network was also vital in the communication of this knowledge and information to outworkers and among the broader Vietnamese community. As increasing numbers of women participate in the training initiatives and in the Skill Recognition Program specifically, interest in enrolling in the courses has grown throughout the Vietnamese and Chinese outworker communities.

Another significant cultural issue that many of the women faced with regard to participating in formal training was the pressure from their husbands to conform to traditional gender roles. In coming to Australia and settling in Sydney, many of these households had been forced to recognise the need for two incomes, and outwork provided an opportunity for many women to be involved in paid employment without the need to leave the home. Many of these women faced a lack of understanding and substantial resistance from their husbands in allowing them to participate in a training course outside the home. For these women, the support and understanding of the other outworkers and of the bilingual worker in the training course provided them with both the emotional and the practical support needed. Established relationships between the outworkers also



meant that, if someone missed a class, they could get together with class mates outside class time and get assistance catching up on any missed work.

### *Child care*

As with women in general, difficulty in accessing affordable and suitable child care presented a significant barrier to participation in training for outworkers with young and school-aged children. To alleviate this problem, the bilingual community worker, with funding through Behind the Label was able to organise regular child care for outworkers with small children. When classes had to be attended at Ultimo TAFE, the community worker also arranged subsidised before- and after-school care for those women with school-aged children.

### *Loss of income*

A substantial consideration for all the outworkers who participated in the training program analysed for this case study was the loss of income associated with time away from work to participate in formal training. The Office of Industrial Relations through the Behind the Label strategy provided outworkers with an hourly subsidy of \$5 per hour for lost production time. The subsidy was only available to outworkers attending the Skill Recognition Program for Clothing Production Certificate II or III with payment contingent on attendance.<sup>1</sup>

### *Travel*

The minimal time these women had to spend travelling to and from the course and thus the relatively limited amount of time outworkers had to spend away from paid work and home as a result of the classes being held in the area in which they lived also facilitated participation.

As has been mentioned, computer classes were a module of the Clothing Production certificate and these classes had to be held at Ultimo TAFE. The need to travel from the western suburbs into the city highlighted the extent to which travel was more generally a barrier to participating in formal training. Many of the outworkers had never been into the city nor had they had to negotiate public transport. For these women, having to travel alone on public transport to a place unfamiliar to them provoked extreme anxiety. To overcome this, the community worker arranged for all the women to meet beforehand and travelled with them by train into Ultimo Campus. Behind the Label also provided funding for all bus and train travel to classes for the students and provided funding to the TAFE to enable the teachers to travel to the community locations to deliver the classes.

## Conclusion

Of the three case studies presented in this report, Behind the Label has the strongest focus on economic outcomes, with its overall goal being the improvement of labour market conditions for women from non-English speaking backgrounds who are employed as outworkers. The objectives of the training initiative within the Behind the Label strategy are to ensure that outworkers have access to fair wages and employment conditions by upskilling and reskilling outworkers, to provide a skilled workforce for the clothing industry and to provide alternatives for outworkers who wish to leave the industry. However, with Behind the Label, the importance of social outcomes is not overlooked. An integral part of the training initiative is to break down the social isolation that outworkers experience by providing them with opportunities to participate in community networks of other outworkers and community members. The training initiative recognises that addressing social exclusion is just as important as addressing workplace exploitation, and in fact, it is by addressing the problem of social exclusion that these women develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to speak out about their wages and employment conditions.

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<sup>1</sup> Payment was not available for other courses such as patternmaking, English or alternative vocational courses. The subsidy scheme was under review during this project and will be withdrawn in the future.

# Appendix 2: FLOW

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## Youth support—Oasis and WAYS

### Oasis

The Oasis Youth Support Network was established in 1992 by the Salvation Army, with financial support from the Advertising Federation of Australia. Oasis offers a range of support services to young people primarily between the ages of 16 and 25 who experience chronic homelessness due to family discord and breakdown. There are 22 different services that fall into five broad categories available through Oasis for young people experiencing homelessness, including:

- ✧ outreach and contact services aimed at building relationships and providing support for young people aged 12 to 25 years
- ✧ a range of emergency and medium-term accommodation services for 16 to 21-year-olds
- ✧ education, employment and training initiatives
- ✧ specialist intervention programs and services
- ✧ network partnership programs that include a range of legal, health and education services offered in partnership with other organisations and service providers.

### WAYS—Waverley Action for Youth Services

Waverley Action for Youth Services (WAYS) is a charitable organisation established in 1979 to provide services to young people in Sydney's eastern suburbs who were experiencing disadvantage. The organisation is funded through a number of federal, state and local government grants programs and from private fundraising activities and donations. With a number of offices throughout the eastern suburbs and a head office located in its Youth Centre at Bondi Beach, Waverley Action for Youth Services offers a range of services for young people including:

- ✧ counselling services
- ✧ school education programs in 22 local schools
- ✧ recreational services for 11 to 19-year-olds
- ✧ employment services for 15 to 24-year-olds
- ✧ outreach projects
- ✧ sexual health youth clinic
- ✧ information, referral and advocacy services and personal support programs.

### Partnership Outreach Education Model and funding

In 2001 the federal government, through the Department of Education, Science and Training, funded the Youth Pathways Action Plan aimed at re-engaging 13 to 19-year-olds who had been disconnected from the education system and their communities. As part of the Youth Pathways Action Plan, 21 pilot projects were funded that used a Partnership Outreach Education Model to develop innovative ways of providing specialised assistance to young people to re-engage them with learning and education. A requirement of this project was that organisations use partnership

arrangements to develop educational programs targeted at young people aged 13 to 19 who were experiencing extreme hardship, whether due to homelessness, drug or alcohol dependency, abuse, or family breakdown.

## FLOW (Flexible Learning Oasis and WAYS) and TAFE

In one such partnership arrangement, Oasis and the Waverley Action for Youth Services (WAYS) organisation developed the FLOW (Flexible Learning Oasis and Waverley Action for Youth Services) program with Commonwealth funding through the Partnership Outreach Education Model program. The partnership arrangement allowed Oasis and Waverley Action for Youth Services to share resources as they worked together developing an accredited education program. FLOW (Flexible Learning Oasis and Waverley Action for Youth Services) is offered through the Oasis learning centre in Surry Hills, on the outskirts of Sydney city, and at the Waverley Action for Youth Services learning centre in Bondi Junction in Sydney's eastern suburbs.

The program is specifically aimed at young people who are no longer at school and who have been out of the education system for an extended period of time. Classes are conducted by Oasis and Waverley Action for Youth Services teaching staff at their own community-based learning centres, but young people who participate are effectively enrolled in the Adult Basic Education unit at Ultimo campus of the Sydney Institute of TAFE. The program is coordinated by the specific program staff and the head teacher at TAFE who is responsible for ensuring that the curriculum is followed and the administrative aspects of enrolment are completed. The students are specifically enrolled in the Certificate level I Foundation and Vocational Education, which is equivalent to the completion of Year 9 education. This certificate articulates into the Certificate in General Vocational Education or Year 10 equivalent. Assessment in the former is ongoing and based on the work completed in class and presented as a portfolio of best work and on attendance.

A key aspect of this program is that it is part of a holistic approach to helping young people who are experiencing extreme hardship. The range of services offered by both Waverley Action for Youth Services and Oasis work together to provide solutions to *all* the problems faced by these young people, not just education problems. With this level of support, the role of the Waverley Action for Youth Services and Oasis workers are clarified, and privacy and respect is afforded the young people involved. The teachers know that they can focus on the role of teaching and refer any other problems on within the organisation. Similarly, students know that they have available to them a range of support mechanisms, but that their personal problems can stay out of the classroom.

Another key aspect of the program is that it is based on Freire's (1973) model of flexible individualised learning delivery. The flexibility within the program operates on a number of levels. Multiple entry and exit points throughout the program mean that students can enrol and start in the program at any time during the year. The lack of structured enrolment dates allows the implementation of an individualised approach to learning. With this flexible delivery system, students are also able to learn at their own pace, and lessons are not dependent on the students being at the same level or on finishing their work at the same time.

The classroom environment itself is also far more flexible than mainstream classrooms. Students have far more autonomy and power in how their learning is structured. They can take breaks as they feel is necessary and come and go from the classroom freely. Although daily attendance is encouraged, it is recognised that at times personal and legal problems get in the way of learning. Students may not be able to attend for days or weeks at a time, but they know that they can come back into the program when their lives have stabilised.

The flexibility of the program is dependent on the flexibility and skills of the teachers. To enable individually tailored learning to take place, the teachers have to constantly rewrite and adapt the learning materials to meet the specific needs of each student. This approach also ensures that lesson content is focused on issues of particular relevance to each individual. Teachers, therefore, effectively develop new learning materials for each lesson each student undertakes. This requires a

much greater awareness of all of the issues faced by the students in general, but also of the specific interests of individual students than may otherwise exist in a mainstream classroom.

The holistic approach to dealing with the problems of these young people and all the aspects of flexibility built into the program contribute to the provision of a safe and secure structured learning environment for these young people. The academic focus of the program ensures that students gain a nationally recognised qualification on completion of the certificate. However, the program has a strong recreational component that fosters the development of self-esteem amongst the young people and which provides them with a direct connection to the community. For example, some of the recreational activities that the students have been involved in include volunteer work with the aged at a neighbourhood centre and cleaning up graffiti in the local area. But it also includes activities such as caving and white water rafting, activities subsidised by the businesses involved.

Although the educational components of the two Salvation Army programs have the same foundations as the Foundation and Vocational Education qualification and the recreational components are similar, each organisation targets slightly different client groups.

### *Oasis client group*

The Oasis client group comprises young people who are experiencing chronic homelessness. The minimum age to enter into the Oasis program is 15 years, with a maximum age of 19 to 20 years. Many of these young people have experienced homelessness from as young as 10 or 11 years of age and as such have been disconnected from schooling since the grade 6. These young people have endured extreme hardship on the street and in the refuge system. Restricting the age range to 15 to 19-year-olds was a conscious decision made by Oasis staff who felt that the learning environment would not be as safe and secure for 13 to 14-year-olds.

### *Waverley Action for Youth Services client group*

This program complements the Oasis program by offering education to a different client group. Like the Oasis client group, the young people enrolled in the Waverley Action for Youth Services program have been disconnected from the education system for an extended period of time and have experienced a range of social and family-based problems. However, this client group comprises some young people aged as young as 13 and extends to include those up to 19 years of age. Some of these students still have a connection with a home environment and parental or other guardian care. Other Waverley Action for Youth Services students, however, have recently experienced homelessness for the first time and are in refuges.

### *Referrals to FLOW*

Some students self-refer to the program, although, due to their age and circumstances, the majority of students are referred to the program. Referrals come from a range of sources including:

- ✧ outreach programs
- ✧ internal referrals from counselling services within Oasis and Waverley Action for Youth Services
- ✧ the juvenile justice system
- ✧ refuges and other youth services.

Young people may also be referred to the program by school welfare coordinators.

## Barriers to participation

### *Disconnection from education*

The main barriers that the program seeks to address are those associated with the reasons these young people disconnect from the education system originally. In this respect, the primary aim of the program, which is to provide a safe and secure learning environment, is the first step to

overcoming the barriers these young people face in participating in education more generally and vocational education and training specifically. Although some of the students from the Waverley Action for Youth Services program do actually make a successful return to the secondary school system, for the majority of students, the program offers a stepping stone into the mainstream TAFE system and additional VET-based qualifications. Many of the students on the program have been exposed to very negative experiences while at school and all had fallen behind their peers in school work, leaving the young people feeling ostracised. Thus the importance of the program and the experiences they have while on the program in reintroducing them to a more positive learning experience that encourages them to continue with their education, cannot be underestimated.

The program teachers go to great lengths with each student to discuss the learning outcomes the student wants to achieve, and to discuss their interests so the teachers can develop learning materials suited to each student. Initial meetings are held with each student before they enrol in the program. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss learning outcomes and to let the student know what to expect from the program in terms of content, flexibility, expectations and the qualifications attained at the end.

Students are encouraged to be closely involved in their day-to-day learning and the direction their learning takes. Collectively, students set the ground rules for suitable behaviour in class and with regard to what is expected of every one involved. Each Monday morning all the students and staff meet to discuss individual learning goals for the week and what they wanted to achieve. This helps students feel comfortable and in control of their own learning and progress.

The self-paced learning model adds to the positive learning experience of the students. This model of learning avoids establishing the competitive environment of ranking and grading which is the cornerstone of the mainstream institutional education system. In this sense too, students are never made to feel that they are falling behind in their class work or not progressing as quickly as others. With the multiple entry and exit points, which will be discussed in more detail later, there are no predetermined lengths of time in which course completion must occur. This is another unique aspect of the program. Students are typically enrolled for around 20 weeks but can stay enrolled in the course for as long as they need, with some students only enrolled for a few weeks before moving on to mainstream TAFE, and others staying enrolled for much longer periods while they develop self-confidence in their own learning ability.

Another element vital to the establishment of a safe and secure learning environment and the provision of a more positive learning experience is the level of involvement and commitment from the staff. For many of the students enrolled in the program, regular and timely attendance is a key goal to achieve as they struggle with other issues in their lives. If students fail to show up to class, the teachers contact them to try to encourage them to come in. Similarly, the Oasis teachers maintain contact with the students through the accommodation services and through the multiple networks on the street.

All of these factors are aimed at providing a positive learning experience. But the integration of this program with a range of other support networks and services provides the practical support and flexibility needed to address all the barriers that contribute to the young people being disconnected from the education system.

### *Circumstantial problems*

Students enrolled in the program do not have access to basic living conditions that are generally taken for granted by the broader population and which are generally assumed to be provided to school-aged students. In this respect, the program also has to address barriers, not just to participation, but to learning as well. For example, classes begin each day with breakfast at the learning centre in recognition of the fact that even those students still living at home have probably not had breakfast. Similarly, lunch is provided for students at the end of morning classes. Structuring the program around meals allows the staff and students time to interact informally and to build social skills in a setting in which they feel comfortable.

These young people have not been exposed to and are therefore unfamiliar with normal structures of learning, and in some instances, are uncomfortable with others having expectations of them. Many of the students have emotional, behavioural and legal problems and are suffering from health-related problems, such as drug and alcohol dependency. The students themselves recognise that providing an environment with consistent and reasonable structures is important and valuable in assisting them to participate in education again, and in making them aware that others do have expectations of them, and hence their achievements are important to others.

However, the program also provides a high degree of flexibility and enables students to move in and out as required. For example, it is important for students with legal problems who may be in and out of the juvenile justice system to be able to have options available to them if they are placed in a detention centre for a period of time. Students who are detained are encouraged to continue their studies. Alternatively, it is possible for them to leave their studies and come back to them at a later time and not have to 'catch up' on work. Multiple entry and exit points provide this flexibility when needed.

### *Institutional structures*

Some of the students enrolled in the program have re-established a pattern of learning with relative ease and are therefore able to make the transition either back into secondary school or into the mainstream TAFE sector quite quickly. However, the majority of students require much more support and need to be enrolled in the program for between three and six months. As has been discussed, many of these students also move in and out of the program as circumstances dictate. Neither the VET system nor the secondary education system can provide this level of flexibility and hence cannot even begin to break down some of the barriers these students face in accessing VET and education. The prescriptive frameworks under which the VET system operates do not allow consideration of the backgrounds and life circumstances of these young people.

The City East program at Randwick TAFE offers an exception to the general rule of institutional inflexibility. Students enrolled in the WAYS FLOW program have the opportunity to participate in mainstream TAFE classes by picking up modules at Randwick TAFE and attending the campus two days a week while maintaining attendance on the program for the rest of the week. In addition to the flexibility the Randwick program offers, there is also substantial resourcing, with individual mentoring offered as a key component of the program. This gradual introduction of students into campus life provides a transitional period during which they can become more comfortable with mainstream education and training and develop confidence in their learning capacity.

# Appendix 3: Animation program

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## Claymore—Animation Program

The Animation Program is a community development program based on the principles and philosophies of Paulo Freire's work. Freire's philosophy advocates social justice, civil rights and community development and education. The education principles associated with this philosophy propose that students are challenged with problems that are meaningful to them through a process in which both the educator and the student become the learner and teacher. This problem-posing method assumes that the educator and the student can, and indeed need to, learn from each other for true critical thinking to be achieved and, most importantly for the student to transcend the oppression of his/her objective social reality. As Freire argued:

Authentic education is not carried on by *A for B* or by *A about B*, but rather by *A with B*, mediated by the world—a world which impresses and challenges both parties, giving rise to views or opinions on it. (Freire 1973, p.66)

The Animation Program brings local residents together to discuss issues within the community with a view to facilitating collective discussion and decision-making on appropriate community actions. The bringing-together of residents assists them in building their own confidence and skills as they work towards social and community change (Society of St Vincent de Paul 2001). Claymore in Sydney's outer south-west is one of the areas in which the Animation Program is run.

## The need for the Claymore Animation Program

Claymore is a public housing estate in Sydney's outer south-western district of Campbelltown built in the 1970s and 1980s. With a serious lack of public services and facilities, Claymore was plagued by violence, vandalism and entrenched social problems by the 1990s. For example, in 1996 when the unemployment rate for Australia was 9.2% (ABS 1997), the unemployment rate in Claymore was 38%; almost half of all households (44%) were headed by single parents; only a quarter of residents of working age (25%) were actually in the active workforce; and the average income was the second lowest of all Sydney suburbs (Power 2002).

In the mid-1990s the Good Samaritan Sisters and the St Vincent de Paul Society recognised a need to provide direct social support within the Claymore community. They successfully lobbied the New South Wales Department of Housing to provide a rent-free house in Claymore in which the Sisters could live and work directly with the residents in the area. The Sisters established the 'Kalon House of Welcome' and began promoting self-determination amongst the residents. In 1997 Sister Mary Gregory started holding informal lunches for the community residents as a way of bringing the community together and creating social networks among residents. Attended primarily by women from the community, the luncheons began to break down the social isolation experienced by many of these women and provided an opportunity for people to get together and discuss local issues and problems.

Despite the establishment of a social network, initial attempts by the Sisters to encourage and promote self-determination among the local women were generally not very successful. In 1996, Paul Power, then a volunteer with St Vincent de Paul introduced the concept of 'animation'.

Dr Domathoti Abraham, a community worker from the Andhra Pradesh Social Service Society in India, was invited to visit Kalon House and discussed how ‘animation’ worked to instil hope and develop the leadership potential of residents in impoverished Indian communities (Family and Community Services 2003). The key aspect to the concept of ‘animation’ is the *process* community residents go through in developing awareness and understanding of the priorities of most importance to them, and then developing and exercising control over decision-making with regard to how those priorities are addressed. In this respect, the importance of attaining specific outcomes plays a much more secondary role. So while education and learning is intrinsic in the process, and pivotal in enabling community residents to bring about change within the community, it is not an *aim* of the project to have people complete or even participate in specific training programs or to achieve particular labour market outcomes.

In 1999, the Society of St Vincent de Paul and the Good Samaritan Sisters in Claymore secured funding from various religious orders, the Department of Family and Community Services and the Premier’s Department to develop a community and education initiative: the Animation Program. With this funding, the Animation Program was able to hire two staff members on a part-time basis (1.2 effective full-time equivalents). Julie Foreman was hired as the Animation Coordinator and Mauro Di Nicola was hired as the Community Education Coordinator. Consistent with the Freire philosophy, the role of the Animation staff was to support residents as they began to explore ways in which they, as residents, could orchestrate change within their community. An integral part of this process was also the self-recognition of existing skills and knowledge, and the subsequent identification of any additional skills they would need to be able to begin implementing change in the community.

In the early stages of the Animation Program, a community artist was invited to attend the fortnightly lunches at Kalon House. The artist introduced art as a form of expression and encouraged the women to draw and paint their community and the issues they felt were important to them. Through art, and with the support and Sister Mary Gregory, residents were able to identify and discuss the issues at the forefront of their minds and began to see that many residents in Claymore experienced real problems with social isolation. As a solution to this problem, the residents in the Animation Program (henceforth referred to as the Animation group) decided to lobby the local private bus company through letters and a petition to alter the only bus route in the area so that it ran directly to services and facilities that were needed by the residents of Claymore. Although getting the bus route altered actually took two years, the *process* of identifying a specific problem, devising a solution and then putting the solution into action through the formation of a petition and seeking signatures for it had an immediate influence on those involved. For many of the women involved in lobbying the bus company, it was the first formal letter they had ever written and none of the women had ever been involved in mounting a petition. The skills and learning the Animation group participants acquired during the process proved to both themselves and other Claymore residents that change could be affected from *within* the community and they did not have to be satisfied with unsuitable situations imposed upon them.

Today the informal lunches are still held by the Sisters in Kalon House, and through this learning circle, the residents are continually identifying issues within the community and developing strategies to act on these issues. The laundromat and coffee shop project is just one example of the many projects that the Animation group has developed and is currently running.

## Animation Program—laundromat and coffee shop

Although learning and skill development were integral to the lobbying undertaken by the Animation group, subsequent projects have involved substantial formal training and skills development. One such project, which became known as the Laundromat and Coffee Shop, clearly demonstrates the importance of the *process* in creating an environment that enables learning and skill development. As with the lobbying action, the Laundromat and Coffee Shop project began



with the women in the Animation group recognising the high need for a laundromat in Claymore. In discussing the issues that Claymore residents faced, the Animation group recognised that many local residents did not own a washing machine, much less a clothes dryer, and that even among those residents who did own washing machines, the majority probably owned unreliable second-hand machines. In addition to this issue, there was no place for residents to meet socially in the local area other than at the arranged luncheon meetings at Kalon House.

In merely identifying these problems, a greater social awareness and understanding of common hardship was developed and in raising awareness, the process of bringing the community together began. As the Animation group worked more on this problem and began discussing possible solutions, they identified the issues that would need to be addressed if a laundromat was to be opened in Claymore, including:

- ✧ conducting a feasibility study to determine the exact need for a laundromat and coffee shop
- ✧ raising infrastructure funding
- ✧ finding and renting premises
- ✧ promoting and marketing the laundromat and coffee shop
- ✧ day-to-day managing and running a small business.

The Animation group began putting their ideas into practice, and as problems and frustrations inevitably arose, they sought to identify areas in which support and education and training would be required. Specifically, the group identified that they would need support in conducting a community survey to assess the feasibility of a laundromat and that they would need to develop the following skills and knowledge:

- ✧ communication skills, including written skills for preparing submissions and applications for funding
- ✧ skills in accurately assessing community needs
- ✧ organisational skills
- ✧ team work skills
- ✧ small business management skills, including computer skills, cash handling and budgeting skills, customer service skills, bookkeeping skills
- ✧ design, promotion and marketing skills
- ✧ computer skills
- ✧ first aid
- ✧ understanding confidentiality
- ✧ a working knowledge of taxation, particularly the Goods and Services Tax
- ✧ occupational health and safety legislated requirements.

Together with the Animation staff, the Animation group members worked closely with the Outreach team at a local TAFE to develop a specific course that would provide the Animation group with the knowledge and skills needed to implement the laundromat project.

## Barriers to participation

The Animation group was closely involved throughout the development of the tailored course. The Animation staff facilitated a consultative process between the Animation group and the TAFE staff. In this way, the Animation group negotiated with TAFE on issues such as the structure of the course they wanted and the timing of classes. They were also instrumental in selecting the venue in the community where classes would be held and in promoting the course to other residents through the development and distribution of flyers advertising the course. As a direct result of their level of

involvement, the Animation group and other community members were highly committed to taking part in the formal education and training required to turn the laundromat idea into a reality. Nevertheless, there were significant individual and institutional challenges to be overcome to enable the 20 women in the Animation group to take part in the formal education and training.

### *Institutional structures*

The requirements of the Animation group posed a significant challenge to TAFE and the TAFE system. Initial attempts were made to develop an arrangement through the one nearby TAFE institute, but this proved too difficult when this TAFE was not prepared to assist in addressing some of the barriers these women faced in participating in VET. Getting the tailor-made TAFE certificate-level course up and running through another local TAFE institute took a year, but at the completion of the process was highly successful. At the end of the process a true partnership arrangement with the TAFE Outreach staff involved had developed. The contribution made by these Outreach workers cannot be understated. One community worker interviewed explained this very clearly: '... the course worked, not because of the TAFE system but in spite of it. If it wasn't for the commitment of the particular [Outreach] people, it wouldn't have worked at all.'

One of the significant outcomes achieved as a result of the development of these close relations with Outreach staff has been the continued participation of some of the Claymore women in further education and training courses in mainstream TAFE. Other women involved have since gone onto university, and yet others have entered paid employment in the labour force.

### *Systemic prejudice*

Even for the TAFE institute which did become involved in the Animation project, there were systemic problems to be overcome. The TAFE Outreach workers recognised that some of the TAFE teachers held prejudices against people from public housing estates and that this would be a significant deterrent to ongoing participation among the Animation group. After working so closely with the Animation group, the Outreach workers were able to see how vital it would be to the success of the course for the teachers involved to have an understanding of the issues faced by the women taking part in the training. A major component of this understanding was awareness among the teachers that the learning process would need to break away from the traditional didactic approach and to adopt a far more fluid exchange which readily engaged the women with content specific to their needs. Addressing the issue of systemic prejudice meant, therefore, excluding some specific teachers from teaching on the course, and making other resources available. For example, on one particular subject, an Animation staff member learnt the syllabus and worked with the Animation group on the subject matter rather than using existing TAFE teachers. The use of external resources on the course, in itself, was linked to the institutional structures that had to be overcome in developing and implementing the Animation course.

### *Child care and travel*

Two major barriers making participation in formal training difficult for the Animation group were the need for suitable child care arrangements for some of the women, and the lack of suitable transport to and from the TAFE campus for all the women. Both of these issues were addressed by holding the classes at the local community centre in Claymore. Holding the classes locally meant the Sisters at Kalon House could, through the local transport service they already provided, pick up and drop off the women who participated. The community centre is also situated next door to the Neighbourhood Centre. Subsidised child care arrangements were made for mothers with young children with the Neighbourhood Centre, and classes were suspended during school holidays to accommodate all mothers.

Due to a lack of resources, the computing module of the course could not be conducted at the Claymore community centre and thus posed additional problems with regard to child care and transportation when these classes were held at the TAFE campus. The Animation and TAFE

Outreach staff made arrangements for a community bus to take the women to the TAFE centre and child care arrangements were made with the youth centre adjacent to the centre.

### *Length of time out of formal education*

Many of the women who enrolled in the course had not been in a formal education setting for decades, and some had never finished primary school. The majority of women were therefore uncertain about their own abilities to re-engage in a formal learning environment. Although many of the women taking part in the tailored course had been engaged in informal learning through their activities in the Animation program, a substantial amount of interagency effort was expended into easing the transition back into a formal classroom-based education setting. For example:

- ✧ The Animation group decided that classes would be held on a fortnightly basis. This arrangement ensured that they were not overwhelmed by the classroom-based learning. Child care was also easier to arrange.
- ✧ The laundromat and coffee shop project formed a case study basis for the entire curriculum of the tailored TAFE course. All learning was therefore based around concrete problems the women currently faced and not on abstract concepts of little relevance to the participants.
- ✧ There was a high level of practical support from other community agencies. In particular, the Health Promotion Unit provided lunch after each community-based class. In turn, when classes were held on the TAFE campus, the TAFE hosted a barbeque lunch for the participants. These lunches went a long way to strengthening relationships, both amongst the participants, and between the participants and the TAFE and community workers involved.

### *Social issues*

Another barrier to participation in mainstream VET experienced by many of the women involved in the Animation Program was the lack of connectedness with other students in mainstream TAFE. These women had established relationships with each other, and indeed with the TAFE teachers, before any formal education and training began and thus were aware of each other's individual circumstances. This awareness enabled them to provide support for one another when necessary. For example, there were some women in the course who were experiencing domestic violence at home, and for these women the knowledge that their 'class mates' would be supportive and encouraging was extremely important for them in continuing with the course and seeing it through to completion. Holding the classes locally and comprising women from similar life circumstances provided a comfortable environment in which these women could be encouraged to gain formal qualifications. As one woman who had taken part in the course said: 'I don't think any of us would have done the course if it hadn't been held in Claymore ... I would never have thought that I could go to TAFE'. It is no small achievement that *all* of the twenty women, who enrolled at the beginning of the course, successfully completed their qualification.

## Conclusion

The Animation Program, and specifically the laundromat and coffee shop project, have allowed people to participate in the community development and education process in a variety of different ways. Some people only participate in the luncheons and take part in identifying community issues and possible solutions. Others have been key drivers in the laundromat and coffee shop project and have completed the certificate training. Still others have become volunteer workers in the laundromat and coffee shop themselves, while others have gone onto further education and studies or into paid employment.

From a financial standpoint, the laundromat has not achieved self-funding, as it currently only covers operating costs and relies on external sources to cover staffing costs (the Mercy Foundation funds a staff member for ten hours per week). However, this purely economic assessment is too narrow and overlooks the significant social outcomes that have been achieved by the community

women through their involvement in the Animation Program. As well as achieving important community development outcomes—highlighted in this case study—the Animation Program has also been successful in confronting the stigma attached to living in Claymore. The laundromat and coffee shop project has received extensive local and national, print, radio and television media attention. In this respect, both projects have personified the determination of the hard-working women who have been involved in the Animation Program.

# Appendix 4: Statistical details

## Definition of variables

**Table 5: Variables used in modelling**

| Variable name in model | Label   | Definition  | Used in first model | Used in second model |
|------------------------|---|---|---------------------|----------------------|
| male                   | Male  | Collected by interviewer  | Y                   | Y                    |
| atsi                   | Indigenous  | Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander  | Y                   | Y                    |
| disability             | Disability  | Has long-term health disability/chronic health condition  | Y                   | N                    |
| athome                 | Still living at home                              | Still living at home  | Y                   | N                    |
| famnes1                | First- generation NESB migrant                    | Born overseas in a non-English speaking background (NESB) country and with at least one parent also born overseas in an NESB country. | Y                   | Y                    |
| famnes2                | Second- generation NESB migrant                   | Born in Australia but with at least one parent born overseas in an NESB country.  | Y                   | Y                    |
| sinpar                 | Single-parent parent family                       | Parental presence at age 14: Father only – no mother or stepmother OR Mother only – no father or stepfather                           | Y                   | Y                    |
| unempf                 | Father unemployed at some stage                   | Father's unemployment experience when growing up: Father was unemployed for 6 months or more  | Y                   | Y                    |
| occ1                   | Parent with professional or managerial occupation | Occupation of father or mother, which ever was highest in ASCO hierarchy.   | Y                   | Y                    |
| occ2                   | Parent with trades occupation                     | Occupation of father or mother, which ever was highest in ASCO hierarchy.   | Y                   | Y                    |
| secto2                 | Catholic school                                   | Type of school attended: Catholic non-government school   | Y                   | Y                    |
| secto3                 | Independent school background                     | Type of school attended: other non-government school  | Y                   | Y                    |
| now                    | Youth population                                  | Identifies which population is coded 1 in the model (ie. youth or middle aged)  | N                   | Y                    |

Note: ASCO = Australian Standard Classification of Occupations.

# Modelling results

**Table 6: Youth model**

| Independent variable | Dependent variable |         |
|----------------------|--------------------|---------|
|                      | VET                | Uni     |
| male                 | 1.06               | 0.70**  |
| atsi                 | 0.71               | 0.29*   |
| disability           | 0.58**             | 0.40*** |
| athome               | 0.74*              | 1.13    |
| famnes1              | 0.87               | 1.34    |
| famnes2              | 1.19               | 0.82    |
| sinpar               | 0.66*              | 0.25*** |
| unempf               | 0.68*              | 0.58*   |
| occ1                 | 0.93               | 1.76*** |
| occ2                 | 0.77               | 0.59**  |
| secto2               | 1.09               | 2.10*** |
| secto3               | 1.30               | 3.59*** |
| _cons                | 1.40*              | 0.77    |

Notes: Results are presented as odds ratios (also called relative risk ratios).  
 Estimation method: multinomial logit. Reference category is no educational experience.  
 Omitted categories for dummies are: female, non-Indigenous, those without a disability, those not living at home, Australian-born with Australian-born parents, non-single-parent families, parents who are neither managers, professionals or tradespersons, and government schools.

Legend: \* p<0.05; \*\* p<0.01; \*\*\* p<0.001

Statistics: Log likelihood = -1556.7, Pseudo R2 = 0.07, N=1537

Table 7 presents the results of the first model as a set of predicted probabilities, shown in the second set of columns. These are termed adjusted probabilities because they present the probabilities for one category, after controlling for other characteristics in the population. By way of comparison, we also present (in the first set of columns) unadjusted probabilities, which simply reflect percentages from standard cross-tabulations of the data.

**Table 7: Predicted probabilities for multinomial logit model (young people)**

|   | Educational outcome |              |              |              |              |              |
|---|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|   | Unadjusted          |              |              | Adjusted     |              |              |
|   | VET                 | Uni          | None         | VET          | Uni          | None         |
| Male  | 0.38                | 0.25         | 0.38         | 0.38         | 0.24         | 0.38         |
| Female  | 0.34                | 0.31         | 0.35         | 0.34         | 0.31         | 0.35         |
| <i>Change</i>                                     | <i>0.04</i>         | <i>-0.06</i> | <i>0.03</i>  | <i>0.04</i>  | <i>-0.07</i> | <i>0.03</i>  |
| Indigenous  | 0.36                | 0.09         | 0.55         | 0.36         | 0.13         | 0.51         |
| Not indigenous                                    | 0.36                | 0.29         | 0.36         | 0.36         | 0.28         | 0.36         |
| <i>Change</i>                                     | <i>0.01</i>         | <i>-0.20</i> | <i>0.20</i>  | <i>0.00</i>  | <i>-0.15</i> | <i>0.15</i>  |
| Disability  | 0.32                | 0.15         | 0.53         | 0.31         | 0.18         | 0.50         |
| Not disability                                    | 0.36                | 0.30         | 0.34         | 0.37         | 0.28         | 0.35         |
| <i>Change</i>                                     | <i>-0.04</i>        | <i>-0.15</i> | <i>0.19</i>  | <i>-0.06</i> | <i>-0.10</i> | <i>0.15</i>  |
| Living at home                                    | 0.33                | 0.31         | 0.37         | 0.31         | 0.30         | 0.38         |
| Not living at home                                | 0.38                | 0.26         | 0.36         | 0.40         | 0.25         | 0.35         |
| <i>Change</i>                                     | <i>-0.06</i>        | <i>0.05</i>  | <i>0.01</i>  | <i>-0.09</i> | <i>0.05</i>  | <i>0.03</i>  |
| First- generation migrant                         | 0.30                | 0.39         | 0.30         | 0.30         | 0.33         | 0.36         |
| Second- generation migrant                        | 0.43                | 0.21         | 0.36         | 0.42         | 0.22         | 0.36         |
| Non-migrant background                            | 0.36                | 0.27         | 0.37         | 0.36         | 0.27         | 0.37         |
| <i>Change (3 to 1)</i>                            | <i>0.05</i>         | <i>-0.12</i> | <i>0.07</i>  | <i>0.06</i>  | <i>-0.06</i> | <i>0.01</i>  |
| <i>Change (3 to 2)</i>                            | <i>-0.07</i>        | <i>0.06</i>  | <i>0.01</i>  | <i>-0.06</i> | <i>0.05</i>  | <i>0.01</i>  |
| Single-parent parent family                       | 0.36                | 0.09         | 0.55         | 0.37         | 0.12         | 0.51         |
| Not single-parent parent family                   | 0.36                | 0.31         | 0.33         | 0.36         | 0.30         | 0.34         |
| <i>Change</i>                                     | <i>0.00</i>         | <i>-0.22</i> | <i>0.21</i>  | <i>0.00</i>  | <i>-0.18</i> | <i>0.17</i>  |
| Father unemployed at some stage                   | 0.34                | 0.15         | 0.51         | 0.32         | 0.22         | 0.45         |
| Father not unemployed at some stage               | 0.36                | 0.30         | 0.34         | 0.37         | 0.28         | 0.35         |
| <i>Change</i>                                     | <i>-0.02</i>        | <i>-0.15</i> | <i>0.16</i>  | <i>-0.05</i> | <i>-0.06</i> | <i>0.10</i>  |
| Parent with managerial or professional occupation | 0.31                | 0.41         | 0.28         | 0.31         | 0.37         | 0.32         |
| Parent with trades occupation                     | 0.37                | 0.16         | 0.47         | 0.37         | 0.18         | 0.46         |
| Parent with some other occupation                 | 0.38                | 0.25         | 0.37         | 0.38         | 0.25         | 0.36         |
| <i>Change (3 to 1)</i>                            | <i>0.07</i>         | <i>-0.16</i> | <i>0.09</i>  | <i>0.07</i>  | <i>-0.12</i> | <i>0.04</i>  |
| <i>Change (3 to 2)</i>                            | <i>0.00</i>         | <i>0.10</i>  | <i>-0.10</i> | <i>0.01</i>  | <i>0.07</i>  | <i>-0.10</i> |
| Government school                                 | 0.38                | 0.21         | 0.41         | 0.38         | 0.21         | 0.40         |
| Catholic school                                   | 0.33                | 0.38         | 0.29         | 0.33         | 0.35         | 0.32         |
| Independent school                                | 0.27                | 0.52         | 0.21         | 0.30         | 0.45         | 0.25         |
| <i>Change (1 to 2)</i>                            | <i>0.06</i>         | <i>-0.18</i> | <i>0.12</i>  | <i>0.05</i>  | <i>-0.14</i> | <i>0.08</i>  |
| <i>Change (1 to 3)</i>                            | <i>0.11</i>         | <i>-0.32</i> | <i>0.20</i>  | <i>0.08</i>  | <i>-0.24</i> | <i>0.15</i>  |

Notes: Population = Persons aged under 25, excluding those still at school.  
 Negative signs are somewhat arbitrary and simply depend on what category has been taken as the reference category for calculating percentage point change.

Source: Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey data

**Table 8: Historical model**

| Independent variable | Dependent variable |         |
|----------------------|--------------------|---------|
|                      | VET                | Uni     |
| male                 | 2.05***            | 0.88    |
| atsi                 | 0.6                | 0.65    |
| famnes1              | 1.37               | 1.25    |
| famnes2              | 1.1                | 1.68*   |
| sinpar               | 0.7                | 0.50*   |
| unempf               | 1.01               | 1.17    |
| occ1                 | 1.51*              | 3.95*** |
| occ2                 | 1.49*              | 1.26    |
| secto2               | 1.29               | 2.45*** |
| secto3               | 0.87               | 2.43*** |
| now                  | 1.85***            | 2.14*** |
| nowmale              | 0.49***            | 0.8     |
| nowatsi              | 1.24               | 0.43    |
| nowfamnes1           | 0.73               | 1.07    |
| nowfamnes2           | 1.19               | 0.49*   |
| nowsinar             | 0.94               | 0.47*   |
| nowunempf            | 0.7                | 0.46*   |
| nowocc1              | 0.65*              | 0.44*** |
| nowocc2              | 0.55**             | 0.46**  |
| nowsec2              | 0.86               | 0.9     |
| nowsec3              | 1.51               | 1.51    |
| _cons                | 0.60***            | 0.35*** |

Notes: Results are presented as odds ratios (also called relative risk ratios).  
 Estimation method = multinomial logit. Reference category is no educational experience.  
 Interaction effects follow below the now variable and are self-evident from their names.  
 Omitted categories for dummies are: female, non-Indigenous, Australian-born with Australian-born parents, non-single-parent parent families, parents who are neither managers, professionals or tradespersons, government schools. Now is code 1 for youth population and 0 for middle aged population.

Legend: \* p<0.05; \*\* p<0.01; \*\*\* p<0.001

Statistics: Log likelihood = -3107.2, Pseudo R2 = 0.07, N=3054

## The method of recycled predictions

The conventional approach to predicted probabilities is what might be termed ‘predictions at the mean’, whereas the method of recycled predictions used in our approach could be termed ‘mean predictions’. It is becoming an increasingly popular approach (see, for example, Blanchflower (nd); Blanchflower and Machin 1995; Ketsche and Custer 2001 and StataCorp 2003) because it avoids two of the main shortcomings with the ‘predictions at the mean’ approach. The first shortcoming is that predictions with this method can actually fall outside the range of the actual observed values, something which is somewhat nonsensical. Secondly, the mean of a categorical variable ‘has little or no meaning for the most part. After all, what does it mean to be 52% male? How do you explain that someone who is 52% male has a 2% higher chance of the outcome?’ (Sayer 2001).



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