

Queensland response to the draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Work Studies Years 9–10

March 2013



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Queensland Studies Authority

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Introduction

The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA), in partnership with Education Queensland (EQ), Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) and Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ), appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Work Studies Years 9–10* (the shape paper). Queensland supports the development of an Australian Curriculum that will provide consistent and explicit curriculum expectations across the nation.

This paper is a summary of the collated Queensland feedback submitted from:

- the Industry Engagement section of the *Queensland Government's Gateway to Industry Schools Program*
- representative curriculum and learning area reference committees of the QSA
- Queensland teachers from across learning areas
- representatives of the three school sectors, representing and advocating for 1400 EQ schools, 292 Catholic schools and 188 Independent schools.

Queensland's consultation identified strengths and a range of issues and concerns for the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority's (ACARA) consideration when redrafting the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Work Studies Years 9–10*.

The Queensland response is organised in the following way:

- key strengths of the draft shape paper, and broad issues and concerns
- specific feedback on each section of the draft shape paper with suggested ways forward and examples for some sections.

1. Key strengths, issues and concerns

1.1 Strengths

Participants in the Queensland consultation were supportive of some of the positions taken in the draft shape paper and the following strengths were identified:

- The shape paper generally gives a clear and coherent description of the subject and provides a workable framework for a curriculum with which to build an understanding of the nature of work.
- The development of Work Studies is timely as the accreditation by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) for Certificate I in Work Education and Certificate I in Work Readiness ends on 31 December 2013 and no suitable alternative vocational qualification certificate appears to be available. Work Studies may provide a suitable learning alternative when these certificate courses are no longer available to Year 10 students. However, the value of the learning may be limited without an authentic workplace experience component.
- This curriculum is the result of an Australian Government election commitment and the development of Work Studies is the curriculum component of the National Trade Cadetship (NTC) initiative.
- The naming of the course was generally seen as appropriate.
- The span of skills to be developed by the curriculum is appropriate:
 - a set of personal and interpersonal capacities that is transferable from one context to another
 - wide-ranging global awareness and the capacity to participate actively in global communities
 - entrepreneurial thinking and behaviours.
- The crucial part that self-knowledge plays as an underpinning foundation for the learning in the proposed curriculum is supported.
- There was general agreement with the component parts of the draft shape paper and wide support for many of individual ideas and underpinning aims.
- The aim to build positive attitudes and develop future enablers for students in relation to the world of work is welcomed. This positive approach will support young people to develop skills and behaviours to manage learning, work, schools and life for positive outcomes.

1.2 Issues and concerns

The following key issues and concerns were raised in consultations:

- While most responses generally agreed with the name Work Studies, the references to National Trade Cadetships (NTC) are confusing and deleting references to NTC was recommended by all groups who used the ACARA survey as a basis for their response.
- The content of the draft shape paper appears to have been written for a specific and narrow group of students, rather than for a full range of students and potential pathways.

- The draft shape paper appears to be about work readiness rather than work studies and it is unclear how it can be made to be appropriate and relevant for Years 9 and 10 students.
- There are tensions between a curriculum that is intended to encourage disengaged young people to remain in meaningful learning and a curriculum that is academically oriented and intended to be as equally challenging and viable as subjects or other options offered in Years 9 and 10.
- The purpose of this curriculum needs to be settled quickly and communicated effectively. Some groups in the Queensland consultation process favour a curriculum that is focused on disengaged young people and provides them with appropriate pathways for further learning or work. This type of a curriculum could set high expectations and be challenging, but with a clear focus on such a target student audience with descriptions of applicable, meaningful and relevant content.
- The knowledge and skills to be developed need to be specified more clearly and at a standard so that the credibility of Work Studies is not undermined.
- The frequent use of the terms “generic skills” or “generic work readiness skills” is confusing. The skills that are being developed should be explicitly identified.
- Aspects of conflict resolution and work relationships should be better represented.
- The description of Work Studies in the draft shape paper appears to be more like a general capability as opposed to a separate learning area or subject. Work Studies is not considered a discipline within Humanities and Social Sciences.
- There is a need to describe the critical balance of core components of the Australian Curriculum (English, Mathematics, Science, History, and Health and Physical Education) coupled with the general capabilities — as a foundation for long-term employment, success and healthy work-life balance.
- Queensland schools currently offer similar courses to work education programs.
- There is very little consideration for the impact on employers and industry throughout the paper, particularly in relation to the work placement component.
- On the whole, there is a need for greater clarity, focus and substance in the document — the draft shape paper needs to provide clear justifications for the subject that will be developed, how it fits into the whole curriculum, and a clear blueprint for the nature of the subject and structure of the curriculum.

2. Section-by-section analysis

Following is a section-by-section analysis of the draft shape paper, particularly focusing on clarity, coherence, appropriateness and structure.

2.1 Preface and background

The preface and background clearly describe the context for the draft shape paper in terms of government policy and the wider development of the Australian Curriculum. However, it is not clear how the inclusion of Work Studies connects with the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (Melbourne Declaration)*, which is the foundation for the development of the Australian Curriculum.

A general concern is that the preface and background of the draft shape paper are not clear about the purpose of the curriculum. The preface includes the statement that this curriculum is “for all young Australians”. Paragraph 5 makes it clear that the Federal Minister for School Education has been advised that the curriculum needs to have broader goals than the initial commitment. However, it is not apparent what those broader goals might be.

2.2 Rationale

Strengths

The following strengths were identified in consultations about the rationale of the draft shape paper.

- There is some theoretical evidence provided and a brief analysis of trends in employment areas and locations.
- The rationale is comprehensive; however, there is a need to be more focused on Work Studies and the rationale for why the subject is part of the Australian Curriculum and should be implemented by schools.
- This subject has the potential to collect disparate programs, currently undertaken in schools into a coherent and distinct package, which should be a feature of the rationale.

Issues and concerns

The following issues and concerns were raised in consultations about the rationale of the draft shape paper.

- There are no clear, defining statements that differentiate Work Studies from pastoral programs that already exist in many schools in the lead up to completing Senior Education and Training (SET) Plans in Queensland.
- The rationale appears to consist of a series of broad statements without providing a justification for Work Studies as a stand-alone course.
- This subject seems to rely heavily on the notion of developing the general capabilities as a rationale for its inclusion in the curriculum, placing the general capabilities in a different context to other learning areas. The rationale needs to address why developing the general capabilities through the other learning areas is not enough.

- The *Employability Skills Framework Stage 1* report prepared by the Ithaca Consulting Group for the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) indicates there is a need to develop “the non-technical skills and knowledge necessary for effective participation in the workforce” (i.e. employability skills), as distinct from those skills required more broadly in society (i.e. general capabilities). Participation in the workforce could be as an employee, an employer, as a self-employed worker, or a volunteer. Additionally, the DEEWR report emphasises the importance of educating students (future workers) about the non-technical skills and knowledge that underpin successful participation in work and provides an effective and valid way of describing and recognising them.
- In the context of learning, students who will become entry-level workers should understand the ongoing and developmental nature of knowledge, understanding and skills and how these skills will develop across an individual’s working life. These skills are “not something that you either have or don’t have”. They are part of a continuum of developing expertise, with some skills more relevant than others depending on the individual’s work context.

Ways forward

- The rationale should state the importance of capturing the non-technical skills that are required to transfer technical knowledge and skills into new contexts.
- The rationale should acknowledge and address the context-dependent nature of these non-technical skills.
- The rationale should state the importance of providing a common language and definition of these non-technical skills that is meaningful across education, training and employment service settings.
- The rationale should acknowledge the programs currently undertaken in schools and justify the Work Studies existence as a coherent and distinct package.

2.3 Aims

Strengths

The following strength was identified in consultations about the aims of the draft shape paper.

- There are strong points about lifelong learning, the need to prepare students for changing and multiple work roles, and recognition of global influences on career education.

Issues and concerns

The following issues and concerns were raised in consultations about the aims of the draft shape paper.

- The aims lack clarity and repeat earlier information.
- The reference to NTC needs to be removed.
- There are no strong explicit messages about the nature of Work Studies as opposed to more generic aims of learning in all classrooms through the general capabilities.

- The aims need to be more explicit if Work Studies is to be a curriculum area of importance (see other approved Australian Curriculum learning area aims for comparison).
- Both paragraph 10 and paragraph 76 references are made to Asia. However, one of the three broad skills categories identified in paragraph 13 is “wide ranging global awareness and the capacity to participate actively in global communities”. The draft shape paper needs to look beyond references to Asia alone — these internal contradictions in the paper need to be reconciled.
- Paragraph 13 is important and it makes very strong statements about the skills (in three broad categories) that young people will require in the future. These skills should be more closely aligned with the structure of the curriculum — this issue needs to be considered in the refinement of the paper.
- When comparing the broad skill categories in paragraph 13 with the aims of the draft shape paper, there is a close alignment with two of the aims. The third broad skill category of students participating in global communities is not reflected in the aims. Operating in global communities requires far more than students being able to “develop understanding of the complex communication and digital technology skills”.
- Paragraph 14 is not clear about the aims or the three broad categories of skills outlined in paragraph 13.
- The aim in paragraph 18 (i) is pitched at a different level of understanding to the aims outlined in paragraph 18 (ii) and 18 (v). Students need to develop their self-knowledge, self-concept and self-management skills to then be able to develop entrepreneurial behaviours and resilience. Students also need to develop their self-knowledge and self-concept to then be able to create career scenarios. This thinking is reflected in the paper itself in paragraph 35. Shaping the aims in a different way would communicate the critical importance of paragraph 18 (i) first to develop paragraph 18 (ii) and paragraph 18 (v).
- Paragraph 18 (iv) includes the phrase “community engagement”. This is an interesting choice of term and there is no reference to community engagement anywhere else in the paper, nor is it defined. The phrase appears to have been randomly included between “different kinds of work” and “the changing nature of work”.
- In paragraph 18 (iii), it is implied that general capabilities (literacy, numeracy and ICT) are not being developed here, but will be used to support learning in this area e.g. “supported by their existing literacy, numeracy and ICT skills”. This proposal goes against the ongoing developmental nature of the general capabilities.
- Paragraph 19 refers to “all” students and makes the point that the curriculum is designed “for both academic and career progression”. However, paragraph 22 appears to contradict this claim by arguing that the curriculum will assist those students otherwise disengaged from schooling and “increase the likelihood that all students will be supported in becoming successful learners”.

Ways forward

- Audit the document with reference to the skills in paragraph 13.
- Revise paragraph 18.
- The references to the general capabilities should be deleted from the aims — the position of the general capabilities and the cross-curriculum priorities are described in their specific sections of the draft shape paper.

Ways forward

- Reconcile the target student audience for the proposed curriculum and audit the shape paper to ensure that it is clear.

2.4 Nature of the Work Studies Years 9–10 curriculum

Strengths

The following strengths were identified in consultations about the Nature of the Work Studies Years 9–10 curriculum section of the draft shape paper.

- The nature of the subject being designed for the “benefit of all students” is commended, as is the link to the equity and diversity goal of the *Melbourne Declaration*.
- The draft shape paper refers to making the employability skills more explicit, especially those skills that tend to be taken for granted. Making employability skills more explicit is of particular benefit to those who have traditionally been disadvantaged in the job market because of their lack of experience or knowledge about work norms and expectations.
- The focus statement in paragraph 25 that states this subject will give students the “flexibility to make choices” in senior secondary and post-secondary pathways is supported, but more detail is needed.
- The enthusiasm for this subject in Years 9 and 10 is debateable. It would be more useful for teachers to have a broad framework to link to current work education initiatives that are currently part of many Queensland school curriculums.
- The notion of applied learning is supported. The stated nature of linking the community to the school is extremely worthwhile, particularly providing opportunities for students to make the link between school and the wider community through practical experiences.

Issues and concerns

The following issues and concerns were raised in consultations about the Nature of the Work Studies Years 9–10 curriculum section of the draft shape paper.

- There are a number of overarching statements made in this section with little evidence of how they will be supported or enacted by this curriculum. For example:
 - Paragraph 20: “Study of this curriculum will increase student options”. In this paragraph, the claim cannot be made that “students will be able to take this subject alongside others offered by the Australian Curriculum”. Subjects are offered by schools and schools may not have the staff, the willingness, the expertise or the resources to offer this subject. Offering this subject will be a school decision and the wording of this paragraph needs to be modified.
 - Paragraph 22: “It increases the likelihood that all students will be supported in becoming successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens”.
 - Paragraph 25: “It will also give students the flexibility to make choices that reflect their interests in senior secondary and post-school pathways”.
- Paragraph 23 is a cause for concern as studying Work Skills in Years 9 and 10 may not “influence the study behaviours” of young people.
- Paragraph 24 describes some admirable capacities that we would want to develop in

young people. However, it is debatable whether the development of these capacities is actually described in the content outlined in subsequent paragraphs.

- In paragraph 26, it is unclear about what “skills” will be explicitly targeted.
- Career planning described in paragraph 28 is an entirely different concept to “work”, as it suggests openness to multiple careers over a lifetime, or at the same time. Paragraph 28 also refers to using “literacy skills” rather than the broader term of “workplace communication”.
- The first sentence of paragraph 30 includes the phrase, “involves learning as an adult” does not read clearly. If this is a reference to future, post-school learning that keeps going even when you finish school, then it needs rewording.
- In paragraph 31, there is a concern that including project work in applied learning does not provide a realistic context for entry-level workers. If employability skills are developmental and span an individual’s entire career, then it is difficult to see how this project work reflects the entry-level nature of the students.
- Projects are referred to regularly in paragraphs 50–52, but with an optional “or” included. Either project work is essential to this curriculum or it is not. The draft shape paper needs to be much clearer about the place of projects in this curriculum.
- Some of the terms used need to appear in the glossary, for example “product-oriented learning”.

Ways forward

- Paragraphs 19–26 need to be redeveloped. They are confusing and contain contradictions.
- All statements made in this section should be supported by evidence.
- Paragraphs 19–26 should be reviewed for clarity and accuracy.
- It cannot be claimed that this curriculum will “give students the flexibility to make choices that reflect their interests in senior secondary and post-school pathways”.
- The glossary of terms needs to be expanded to include all terms, especially for readers who are not from a Vocational Education and Training (VET) or work education background.

2.5 Organisation

Strengths

The following strengths were identified in consultations about the organisation section of the draft shape paper.

- Work Studies has the potential to support all learning areas and to facilitate applied learning and practical learning within the whole curriculum.
- Work Studies has the potential to provide similar educational value if it is to be an elective alongside Geography, Civic and Citizenship, Economics and Business.

Issues and concerns

The following issues and concerns were raised in consultations about the organisation section of the draft shape paper.

- A major concern is that this draft shape paper does not fit into the suite of subjects that are discipline-based, that is the disciplinary nature of subjects such as Geography and History is not evident in the description of Work Studies.
- Humanities and Social Sciences is a very full curriculum with four subjects to be managed in middle primary to lower secondary years. The response to Work Studies from Humanities and Social Sciences teachers is likely to be negative, unless it is clear how Work Studies “fits” into this learning area.
- If Work Studies is to be valued and achieve its aims, it is important it is not seen as an “easy option” elective within the Humanities and Social Sciences.
- Work Studies needs to be framed around unique content. The only way it could conceptually relate to the Humanities and Social Sciences is if the Work Studies content builds on the disciplinary content of Economics and Business and Civics and Citizenship. The content must not be seen as the “simpler version” of this disciplinary knowledge, but rather it should add value by putting the knowledge into an applied learning context.
- It could be argued that the learnings in the draft shape paper are also closely linked to other learning areas such as Technologies.
- Paragraph 36 does not give applied learning the prominence and importance that is suggested in previous paragraphs. Paragraph 36 needs to be strengthened with more specific statements made about what applied learning will look like in terms of organisation.
- There needs to be a greater focus on “life skills” with elements such as coping strategies and adapting to change emphasised.
- There is no notional time included in the draft shape paper as a guide for curriculum writers (as is included in other shape papers).

Ways forward

- Reconsider the positioning of Work Studies as part of the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area and build on the alignment of Work Studies with the general capabilities.
- Audit the draft shape paper to include of life skills and align the descriptions of these skills throughout each section of the document.
- Include the indicative hours for Work Studies in the draft shape paper.

2.6 Structure

Strengths

The following strengths were identified in consultations about the structure section of the draft shape paper.

- The Skills for work and learning strand facilitates the important link between learning and doing.
- The diagram that illustrates the relationship between different elements of the course is useful and adds clarity, but consistency of terminology used in the diagram and in the text is needed i.e. Skills for work and learning.

- The diagram is very effective in positioning this subject to be more than just career education.

Issues and concerns

The following issues and concerns were raised in consultations about the structure section of the draft shape paper.

- In paragraph 38, the curriculum aspirations for this subject seem to replicate the general capabilities, rather than have a subject or discipline-specific focus that is evident in other shape papers.
- Paragraph 39 should use the term “skills” rather than “applied skills” to maintain consistency with other learning areas (especially other Humanities and Social Sciences subjects) that use the terms “Knowledge and understanding” and “Skills”.
- In paragraph 40 and the associated diagram, the following terms need to be clarified in the text and in the glossary of terms:
 - authentic experience
 - applied learning
 - work exposure
 - the generic “self-awareness” terminology.
- Paragraph 40 makes the claim that “the contextual elements of applied learning and work exposure or authentic experiences are described in paragraph 36”. This is the first time that the terms “work exposure” and “authentic experiences” have been used interchangeably with “applied learning”. These two terms have not been defined elsewhere in the shape paper and it is not clear how they mean the same as “applied learning”.
- The structure does not clearly emphasise “knowledge” and perhaps should include “knowledge of the world of work”.
- Paragraphs 74–76 describe the legal, moral and ethical rights and responsibilities of work and the law and work (industrial issues, discrimination, harassment), which is a challenging set of content for teachers without specific training.

Ways forward

- Differentiate the subject-specific content from the general capabilities.
- Structure the curriculum using the common framework of “Knowledge and understanding” and “Skills”.
- Ensure that the “knowledge” component is clearly articulated in the draft shape paper and organised so connections to Economics and Business and Civics and Citizenship are evident, as well as describing the unique knowledge content (e.g. the legal, moral and ethical rights and responsibilities of work; and the law and work).
- Clarify definitions and consistently use terminology and definitions.

2.7 Skills for the work and learning strand

Strengths

The following strengths were identified in consultations about the skills for work and learning strand of the draft shape paper.

- “Managing self” is transferable to any workplace (holistic) and is important for maintaining life–work balance.
- The workplace communication sub-strand (paragraphs 42–46) describes skills that are relevant and can be applied to the workplace. Relating communication to the workplace is a valuable strategy to engage students. It is hoped that the curriculum will provide students with the opportunity to select resources specific to their interest area, therefore increasing their commitment.

Issues and concerns

The following issues and concerns were raised in consultations about the skills for work and learning strand of the shape paper.

- The Employability Skills Framework is a useful resource for developing this strand. The framework indicates that employment and workplace employability skills are context-dependent. These skills cannot be demonstrated or assessed without understanding or recognition of the context in which the skills are being used. In the workplace, this means that individuals need to understand the rules and expectations of their work environment to successfully apply their skills. While part of the process of understanding the context relies on the knowledge and skill of an individual, the nature and extent of support provided by the employer and the workplace will have a significant impact on the process.
- The transferability of skills needs to be clearer in this strand. In reality, it requires some additional skills and, in many situations, the support and guidance of others to make this transfer.
- The descriptions of the content proposed for this strand need to be revised to include and emphasise the workplace context. Content needs to be explicit rather than just generic statements.
- In the workplace communication sub-strand (paragraphs 42–46), the skills are not unique to this subject. It does not focus on workplace communication, but rather standard English.
- The descriptions of workplace communication have no reference to the importance of understandings of self.
- The workplace communication sub-strand should include conflict resolution in the workplace.
- Entrepreneurial behaviours are described in paragraphs 47–48 without any understanding by the students of their own behaviour. It is not evident how skills for work and learning are being developed.
- Entrepreneurial behaviours were removed from the Economics and Business shape paper because of difficulty of evidencing this, or any behaviour, in student work.
- It does not seem realistic that entry-level workers would be expected to engage in entrepreneurial behaviours to “establish enterprises in workplaces through identifying potential markets, or better ways of doing things in social enterprise”.

- In paragraph 49 (managing self), the content does not seem to be age-appropriate and should include workplace behaviours that link to appropriate interactions in the workplace such as discussions on sexual harassment or workplace bullying.
- Managing self is not the same as “understanding self”.
- The descriptions of interpersonal skills and goal and life planning should connect to tangible real-world experiences.
- The skills listed in paragraphs 50–55 are not specific to Work Studies — more context statements are needed here and throughout this strand.
- In paragraph 56 it should be clear that decision-making skills and initiative are used within the limits of skill levels and authority.
- It is difficult to see how working with others in paragraph 57–61 will be evidenced in student work.
- Paragraphs 57–61 have a clear overlap with the Health and Physical Education curriculum.
- Paragraph 60 represents tenuous links to Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures and People with English as a Second Language. It should be clear that students need to develop an understanding that people in the workforce come from different cultures and, therefore, have different perspectives and experiences as well as different needs and motivations.
- There is a lack of consistent structure within this strand. For example, Workplace communication does not have subsets, but Entrepreneurial behaviours has five subsets.
- The language used is very theoretical and does not use industry or business phrases, and does not read like an introduction to the world of work.

2.8 World of Work strand

Strengths

The following strengths were identified in consultations about the World of Work strand.

- Generally, what is described in this strand is aligned to the aims of the *Australian Blueprint for Career Development* (MCEETYA).
- The conceptual intent of *Gaining and keeping work and the nature of work* is strongly supported.

Issues and concerns

The following issues and concerns were raised in consultations about the World of Work strand.

- Many of the descriptions are very generic and need a clearer expression of the context. The language is very theoretical and while it is important for students to know and be exposed to this information, it does not seem to be offered in a very practical setting, for example, the actual employment tools of interviewing and résumé writing are a very small element within a large amount of theory.
- While the inclusion of metacognitive skills (paragraph 63) is supported, they do represent another set of skills in this document.

- Paragraph 76 could be built on to include further international examples. There could be more specificity about what work opportunities might be available in the future and the cultural/social/economic requirements to engage with Asia.
- The ideas about students leaning to make decisions are supported, but they also need to understand how they fit into a bigger picture to be an effective employee. This strand needs to describe how employees focus on the vision and mission of the business they work for, and to understand where they fit into the organisation, to understand who has responsibility for what, and to understand who has authority and specific responsibilities.

Ways forward

- Review and revise the language and terminology used in this strand.
- Clarify the use of the term “skills”.

2.9 Work exposure

Strengths

The following strengths were identified in consultations about the work exposure section of the shape document.

- Providing opportunities for authentic learning and experience of the workplace is critically important and a range of practical options are suggested.
- It would be very difficult to offer authentic work-related experiences without including work exposure or placement.
- Students' experiences in part-time work may be able to be used.
- The notion of schools developing strong connections and partnerships with employers and community organisations is strongly supported as an essential element for the successful delivery of a course based on this subject.
- It is not assumed that students would undertake direct work placement as part of this subject.

Issues and concerns

The following issues and concerns were raised in consultations about the work exposure section of the shape document.

- The purpose of the work exposure section is not clear in paragraphs 77– 83.
- There is an interchangeable relationship between “applied learning”, “work exposure” and “authentic experience”. The outer circle of the diagram that illustrates the relationships between different elements of the course (paragraph 40) shows these concepts as being equally important to the curriculum. However, “applied learning” is used as a subheading to the section *Nature of the Work Studies Years 9–10* (paragraphs 27–32). “Work exposure” is a subheading for paragraphs 77–83. However, “authentic experience” does not have a separate section dedicated to it. In paragraphs 77–83, the term “authentic” is used only four times.
- Work exposure is described at length in the draft shape paper and, while generally supported, it should be noted that Queensland students must 14 years old to engage in work experience.
- A number of senior subjects in Queensland also include a work placement component and there is a concern that work placement in Year 10 could place pressure on school communities.
- Paragraph 82 implies a fairly onerous burden on teachers and schools. The phrase “are essential to the delivery of an effective course” should be modified to “would be highly desirable”.

Ways forward

- The draft shape paper needs to make it much clearer about how the concepts of “applied learning”, “work exposure” and “authentic experience” will be evidenced in the curriculum for students. If “applied learning” or “work exposure” or “authentic experience” are considered important, then these concepts need to be more accurately reflected in the shape report.

2.10 Inclusive practices

The feedback on the inclusive practices section of the shape report was generally supportive.

Issues and concerns

The following issues and concerns were raised in consultations about the inclusive practices section.

- There is a need to remain sensitive about student diversity — some may have had no experience of paid work within their family.
- There are concerns about whether diversity is adequately expressed throughout the document.

2.11 General capabilities

Issues and concerns

The following issues and concerns were raised in consultations about the general capabilities section of the shape report.

- The reference to the revised *Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)* and the *Core Skills for Work Framework* is not appropriate in this section. These documents should provide the foundation for the skills for work and learning strand.
- More specific details about how Work Studies develops the general capabilities are needed, rather than using generic statements.
- In several places throughout the draft shape paper, reference is made to the importance of the general capabilities being embedded within the Work Studies curriculum. However, a scan of the content suggests that some of the general capabilities are very poorly addressed. Ethical understandings and critical and creative thinking have received tokenistic treatment.

Ways forward

- The revision of the draft shape paper should make it clear that the general capabilities are “set” and that Work Studies will provide students with the opportunity to develop these capabilities in specific contexts.

2.12 Cross-curriculum priorities

Issues and concerns

The following issues were raised in consultations about the cross-curriculum priorities.

- A greater connection to the workplace is needed.
- There is a need to emphasise the importance of Asian business to Australian industry.
- While there is general support for this section, the cross-curriculum priorities and the associated learning is not clearly reflected in the rest of the document.

- Under the subheading *Sustainability*, there is a need to discuss food security in terms of guaranteed supply and safety for growing populations, undertaken in new sustainable and green ways, in addition to a sole focus on green skills.

2.13 Links to other areas of the curriculum

Issues and concerns

The following issues were raised in consultations about the links to other areas of the curriculum section of the shape paper.

- The relationship of Work Studies to Civics and Citizenship and Economics and Business is not clear. The draft shape paper appears to have significant overlap with these subjects.
- There should be links to Health and Physical Education, especially in relation to sub-strands like *Managing self*.
- In Paragraph 128, it should be noted that there is a difference between investigating the “history of work” and the understanding rights, responsibilities, legalities in the workplace.
- Stronger links to curriculum that address agriculture, agribusiness and food issues are needed.
- A statement that says, “School authorities, schools and teachers will decide on the most appropriate organisational approaches and pedagogy” (to maintain consistency with other learning areas) needs to be included.

2.14 Senior secondary years

Issues and concerns

The following issues were raised in consultations about the senior secondary years section of the shape paper.

- The model proposed for senior secondary is almost identical to the embedded VET model abandoned in Queensland. The model proposed is tokenistic of VET and students access only a few units of competency, without being able to a complete a qualification at a worthwhile level. A complete Certificate II, as a minimum, should be made available as part of this model.
- The model looks very much like the New South Wales Industry Frameworks, and seems geared to the New South Wales model of delivery, where school regions are the Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). This model does not operate in Queensland, where schools delivering VET must be RTOs complying with the VET Quality Framework, and are individually audited against it.
- Only three industry areas are available through this proposed model: Agrifoods, Manufacturing and Community Services. To be successful, the proposal should have at least 6–10 industry areas on inception. These industry areas should be in areas of identified skill shortages.
- In the proposed model, VET clearly plays “second fiddle” to the general education components.
- Mandating work placement for every student in every region of Australia will be very difficult. By Years 11 and 12 many, students are interested in a trade and should be able

to apply the curriculum to their trade rather than being exposed to a “family of occupations”.

2.15 Glossary of terms

Issues and concerns

The following issues and concerns were raised in consultations about the glossary of terms section of the shape paper.

- There is a need to cross-check terminology against terminology in other shape papers, for example Economics and Business or Civics and Citizenship, to maintain consistency of definitions.
- The inclusion of some terms commonly used in business is needed including “profit”, “customers”, “markets”, “business case”, “vision”, and “mission”.

2.16 Overall

The Queensland consultation raised a number of issues and concerns related to improving the clarity and quality of the draft shape paper. On the whole, there were many positive responses to the ideas about Work Studies described in the draft shape paper.

However, the overall concern was the position of the proposed Work Studies subject with the suite of learning areas and subjects outlined in the *Melbourne Declaration*.

The main issues and concerns involve the position of Work Studies within the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area, the time allocations for the subject, and the lack of a clear “home” for the knowledge and skills outlined in the draft shape paper.

The revision of the draft shape paper should include:

- developing a clear rationale and set of aims that sharpen the focus of the subject
- developing closer links to goals of the *Melbourne Declaration*
- resolving how this subject will cater for all students who elect to complete it, and how it connects to, or replaces, other work education, career education and VET initiatives that schools currently undertake.

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