

**Submission
No 148**

**INQUIRY INTO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND
TRAINING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

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Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this important topic.

I'd like to make four key points;

1. Millions are wasted as young people make ill-informed decisions on VET courses without ever having spent a day in the industry or ever having had a real career conversation with someone in the field. Little wonder so many students drop out costing the state a fortune, and young people with the burden of debt and a feeling of failure. Work experience programs in school need to happen earlier, before subject choices. the focus should be to validate their initial thoughts on career options.
2. Can't get a job without experience, but cant get experience without a job. NSW has the best Work Placement program in the country, but its still not enough! it needs expansion and better funding so students are truly prepared to meet employer expectations. See attached Info-Graphic.
3. In these fast and uncertain times employers are increasingly unable to commit to traditional apprenticeships of up to 4 years. Every worker must make a profit, and cant be carried for a year or more before producing. VET in Schools needs improved pathways to traditional apprenticeships so that thousands of students can leave school with a HSC and the equivalent of a first year of an apprenticeship under their belt. This requires leadership to better alignment of trade schools and trade training Centres, and clear NSW specific red tape to allow innovate schools to have a go.
4. Instead of investing in VET pathways, increasingly employers are resorting to 457 visa. Is becoming the first option, not the emergency option. The Federal government should put a levy on each 457 to fund two students through pre-apprenticeships in school so they can graduate with a HSC and the equivalent1st year of their apprenticeship training.

Happy to expand on any of these points if helpful.