Parliamentary Inquiry on Effective Strategies for Teacher Professional Learning

Submission 2007

Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network

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Introduction
This Submission to the Inquiry is from the Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network (SGR LLEN). The submission has been prepared with input from representatives of the SGR LLEN’s membership.

The submission presents firstly, a general position on the direction teacher professional learning should be taking, secondly, the implications of this position for teacher professional learning strategies, thirdly, a description and analysis of a specific teacher professional learning project supported by the SGR LLEN and, finally, a summary of the insights gained from this three step process for teacher professional learning structured by the terms of reference of the Parliamentary Inquiry. The teacher professional learning project is presented as an example of an effective strategy (or more accurately, a collection of strategies) for teacher professional learning compatible with the general position and its implications.

The primary focus of this submission is professional learning strategies for teachers practicing in the middle and post compulsory years of education although, the position presented here in detail can be extrapolated to both primary teachers and tertiary teachers.

A general position on contemporary professional teacher learning
Teacher professional learning in the first decades of the twenty first Century must reflect the contemporary context within which teachers practice their profession and must also be anticipatory of the future. Deliberately, this submission addresses teacher professional learning for the future while connecting to the emerging trends in education challenging the profession in this decade.

Teaching as a profession has always had an element of unpredictability about it. This element of unpredictability centres on the exchanges between teachers and their students. Creating and maintaining an effective teaching and learning environment that involves a single teacher and twenty plus students is fraught with uncertainty. Teachers strive to manage this classroom environment so that learning can occur with minimal disruption and maximum engagement; that is, with lower levels of unpredictability with respect to student behaviour and student learning styles. Traditionally, teacher professional learning strategies have been premised, to a large extent, on developing capabilities for more effective classroom discipline and management, more effective teaching strategies, increased understanding of the psychology of learners and greater understanding of knowledge content to be imparted to students. This has been the scope of teacher professional learning for effective teaching and learning within a work context in which many variables are at play and a regime of ‘control’ is expected. This is teacher professional learning driven by the requirement to address ‘internal’ unpredictability; internal in the sense that the unpredictability is internal to the school, in the teaching/learning workplace (the ‘classroom’).

But the teaching profession, particularly at the middle and post compulsory years of education, is facing ever increasing degrees of unpredictability emanating from
sources external to the school but impacting upon their practice with expectations of outcomes related to those of the past but now more diverse. Teaching as a profession is now, like all other sections of our society, needing to adjust to the demands for change driven by cultural shifts within our society as well as shifts in national and global economies impacting on employment, shifts in the aspirations of students and their families and shifts in government policies all resulting in shifts in the composition and characteristics of school student cohorts particularly in the senior years. Teacher professional learning now needs to address ways for the profession to cope with these changes that can be defined as sources of external unpredictability requiring demand-driven responses for change in the provision of education to young people in the middle and post compulsory years of schooling. This is the crux of the pressure for change within the profession; change from being primarily a supply-oriented profession highly focused on sources of internal unpredictability to being a demand-oriented profession responsive to external sources of complexity and uncertainty. Effective strategies on teacher professional learning must support teachers as schools undergo organisational change in the direction of becoming supplies of educational services responsive to the demands of the modern Australian nation now and into the future: simply put, a shift to the demand side of the supply and demand equation.

A concept that is useful in this context of change is that applied to the highly prized contemporary employees working in highly responsive and innovative organizations and enterprises – the concept of the ‘knowledge worker’. It is argued that our society is moving into a new era. This is the knowledge era and our teachers need to adapt to this new era and become models of knowledge era professionals themselves as well as ‘midwives’ for the next generation of knowledge workers.

Post compulsory education is about helping young people prepare for successful transitions to further education and training and to meaningful employment. To achieve these outcomes the school sector needs to find and invent better ways to provide high quality education and learning pathways for young people leading to the range of post school destinations on offer. The challenge for providers of school-based education and training is to expand teacher engagement in the innovative processes required to create improved learning experiences for young people and their families in the first instances, but articulating to tertiary providers of vocational education and training and higher education, and to career generating employment in businesses and communities. This challenge must be met through strategies for teacher professional learning effective in these new circumstances.

These strategies for teacher professional learning need to align the secondary school sector more closely with the growing demands of the global knowledge economy of which Australia is rapidly becoming a member. The school sector must consider new approaches to teaching and learning that prepare students for further study and work in knowledge organisations and for the anticipated demands to upgrade their skills and knowledge continuously throughout their working lives – demands to become lifelong learners. Development of these new approaches to teaching and learning within the school sector requires teachers to be knowledge workers themselves.

It is argued that improved capabilities of school teachers, in terms of being able to provide high quality learning programs for their students as future employers and
employees within Australia’s knowledge organizations and enterprises, will be achieved by these same teachers becoming adept at turning internal and external data and information relevant to their professional practice as contemporary teachers into meaningful knowledge that can be made productive by themselves and their colleagues. This implies that the process of knowledge meaning-making will require school teachers to share insights and practice-related applications based on new knowledge through mutual interaction and collaboration.

The aptitudes necessary for participation in these relationships are the capabilities of knowledge workers. These capabilities include a participative mode of involvement that draws on the knowledge sets of others and the ability to interact with others in order to share knowledge in ways that are readily understood within teams. Knowledge workers require job specific abilities as well as generic or higher-order skills. These latter skills include the ability to understand and interact with others, as well as the ability to be effective within the culture of their organizations while contributing to managed change within these same organisations. A key capacity is the speed with which knowledge and skills are acquired and deployed.

A teaching profession with the attributes of knowledge workers would be capable of the continuous individual and organisational improvement necessary for themselves and their schools to respond, over time, to the complexity and uncertainty of the externally driven demands on schools; that is, the shifting demands on preparing young people for productive and fulfilling lives as citizens into the future.

Knowledge era features and knowledge worker capabilities
The features of the knowledge era and corresponding knowledge worker capabilities are summarised below.

1. Knowledge era feature number 1: Knowledge is important and valuable to organisations
   
   **Corresponding knowledge worker capabilities:**
   - Strong conceptual thinking ability
   - Adaptive problem solving skills
   - Ability to rapidly identify relevant information, and discriminate from irrelevant information
   - Self-motivated, curious and passionate about learning
   - Strong desire for exposure to new ideas and perspectives
   - Ability to apply concepts in the context of their own organisation and consider problems affecting the organisation and society

2. Knowledge era feature number 2: Time span of discretion – speed with longer term planning
   
   **Corresponding knowledge worker capabilities:**
   - Greater efficiency and analytical thinking for medium-term planning
   - Conceptual thinking for long-term and strategic planning
   - Strong organisational skills
   - Rapidly acquire skills and knowledge
   - Speed of knowledge sharing and dissemination capability

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3. Knowledge era feature number 3: Relationships are more complex

Corresponding knowledge worker capabilities:
- Ability to build and maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders both inside and outside the organisation
- Ability to use networks
- Ability to identify and use mentors (both experts and peers)
- Understand and work effectively within the culture of the organisation
- Recognise and deploy the knowledge sets of others

4. Knowledge era feature number 4: Information and communication technology

Corresponding knowledge worker capabilities:
- Ability to use information and communication technology effectively
- Ability to rapidly acquire new technological skills
- Application of adaptive problem-solving in relation to technology

It is argued in this submission that these sets of knowledge worker capabilities, which arose from research in a 2003 ANTA funded project entitled *Professional Development for the Future*, are applicable to the Parliamentary Inquiry’s consideration of effective strategies for teacher professional learning with a particular focus on teachers in schools teaching young people in the middle and post compulsory years. Schools are being swept up by the pace of change associated with the knowledge era of the Australian economy and society. Schools are being required to respond more quickly than has been the case in the past to the new complexities of educating young people for transitions to post-school destinations under less predictable circumstances than was the case in the previous century. Innovation for the teaching profession under these circumstances still includes innovation at the level of classroom practice in response to internal unpredictability as defined earlier. Innovation at this level is dependant on an expansion of ‘classroom’ specific teaching skills and knowledge. But innovation now has a much broader footprint. Innovation for the teaching profession now involves significant changes to the way schools function as organizations for teaching and learning. Schools, in particular secondary schools, are on the cusp of metamorphosing into new structures better able to support teachers and their students along the newly emerging pathways from middle years into post compulsory years and onto further study and employment. These pathways and their destinations will be responsive to the changing context of the world of further study and employment for young people. Innovation at this broader level is dependent on the development of high-order knowledge worker capabilities.

The general position: summary

The general position on the direction teacher professional learning should be taking at this stage in Victoria’s history is one that is informed by the emerging context of education for young people during their secondary years of school education. This context is pressuring secondary schools to become more responsive to external demands driven by the larger scale and complex repositioning of the state and national society and its economy which is in turn impacted upon by global economic and cultural forces. There are inherent complexities and less certain predictabilities in this chain of causation. Schools seek stability. But what is now required is the organisational capacity to be flexible and to be comfortable with ambiguity and clarity and be able to recognise when each is appropriate in response to immediate circumstances.
Teacher professional learning directed towards the development of the generic capabilities of knowledge workers interpreted back into the teaching profession for the twenty first Century is what is now required. Effective strategies are those that move the profession in this direction.
Implications of the general position on contemporary professional teacher learning for effective strategies for teacher professional learning

The essence of professional learning for knowledge era teachers
The professional learning of knowledge era teachers is multifaceted drawing on all opportunities for communicative connectedness and understanding. These knowledge era teachers will:

• be self-motivated in their learning seeking out a variety of opportunities for exposure to new ideas;
• appreciate applied learning for themselves; and
• establish relationships through professional and collegial networks that introduce them to new ways of understanding their professional work.

Challenge, risk-taking and undertaking working/learning tasks outside of one’s comfort zone are characteristics of approaches to professional learning for these teachers, as are periods of consolidation and reflection.

These teachers embrace the integration of professional working and professional learning. This integration is a definitional feature of knowledge work. This insight shapes the relationship between professional learning and teachers’ ongoing professional practice. Professional learning when conceptualised as an additional resource offered by the employing organization (the school, the Education Department, the Catholic Education Office, for example) committed to the development of its teachers as knowledge workers, should support the ongoing cutting edge working and learning of these teachers within their workplaces.

These additional professional learning resources would, in reality, be drawn from the considerable range of conventional professional development strategies well known to us, particularly those associated with work based learning, reflective practice and communities of practice. It is the directness of the relationship of these strategies to the knowledge work being undertaken by the school’s teachers that determines the appropriateness and relevancy of any particular strategy as a resource for knowledge era teacher professional learning.

Individual personal and professional aspirations need to be negotiated and balanced within the boundaries set by the developing needs of the school. The explicit expression of a school’s corporate values lived out in the way professional work is undertaken, progressed and completed can create a positive and meaningful basis for teachers’ commitment to innovative work within the school. It can also be a catalyst for these teachers’ intrinsic motivations for professional learning. Meaningful knowledge work by teachers within a context of clear and accepted corporate values of their school builds self-motivation to learn and engage in new teaching arrangements.

An image of both a vehicle and a driver for knowledge era teacher professional learning is a so called ‘extreme’ project team (constituted by teachers and others with

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2 The concept of ‘communities of next practice’ is highly relevant here.
different skill sets and ways of understanding) designing through shared working and learning a new student learning arrangement that delivers satisfactory outcomes in an area identified as vitally important to the accomplishment of the school’s mission. Professional learning is intrinsic to this ‘project team’ approach for focusing knowledge work in a school. Additional professional learning resources can be readily integrated with the emerging learning needs of the teachers in the project team in a timely fashion.

Finally, a core element of knowledge work and of knowledge worker professional learning is ‘conversations’. These can be variously described and labelled, but the key is permissive and self-reflective dialogue amongst trusted, honest and generous group members through which ideas can be received, assumptions interrogated and understandings refined to build new insights and understandings. Further to this claim that conversations are central to the repertoire of knowledge era teachers’ professional learning is Redding’s (2000) concept of dialogue. Through dialogue “team members take special care to balance advocacy (presenting one’s own opinion) with inquiry (openly seeking to be influenced by others)” (p220). In these conversations team members strive to step away from their own assumptions while engaging in “a collaborative pursuit of new meaning” (p220) that, in turn, advances the project towards its goal.

Managing the working and learning of knowledge era teachers
The drivers of innovation in the secondary school sector is the rising complexity and uncertainty associated with increasing demands for a greater range of high quality vocational education pathways through the middle and senior school years. This observation strengthens the view that senior managers of schools are struggling to find order in a system where traditional views about prediction and control are no longer as applicable as thought to be the case in the past. Appropriate management under these circumstances requires a more flexible, responsive and holistic style of leadership in which a longer term view is adopted. Leadership of this form would support the potential of the school’s teachers to ‘design’ a variety of innovative student learning arrangements through their professional work and learning. Reciprocity, in the sense of expanding the sphere of knowledge era teachers’ agency so they can influence the direction of their school’s strategic organisational change, is a significant outcome of the leadership style envisaged.

Wheatley (1999) distinguishes between leaders and bosses, arguing for the former in “this chaotic world” (p131). She argues that the force that shapes behaviours in organisations arises from “the combination of simply expressed expectations of purpose, intent, and values, and the freedom of responsible individuals to make sense of these in their own way” (p129). Patterns of behaviour emerge over time amongst teachers as the school’s organisational values, embodied by its leaders, provide a secure sense of meaning to the school’s enterprise. Leadership in schools for knowledge work by its teachers is about creating a strong sense of purposeful meaning for the working and learning of teachers from which recurring patterns of professional behaviour associated with the generic capabilities of knowledge workers can be expected to emerge.
Organisational enablers of knowledge era teachers’ professional learning

Survival and growth of educational systems in complex and uncertain circumstances demand access to flows of information and new ways of understanding that enable the identification of patterns, trends and nodes of innovation. Schools as organisational knowledge systems remain active and growing if sustained by new information translated into new knowledge that in turn is interactive with new practices.

This nurturing of knowledge is more than the uptake of data-as-information available within the system and from external sources. It is knowledge continually regenerated through the interpretation of data and resultant thoughtful action, and through communication with others in shared contexts. This knowledge is active and embodied; it informs new ways of understanding oneself, one’s work and one’s organisation. The knowledge arising out of uncertain times is most likely to lack clarity and may even be discomforting to the school’s personnel. It may be characterised by the element of surprise.

Schools need to develop the capacity amongst their teachers and managers to process the potentially overwhelming amount of new information-as-data flowing through their school and, in response, generate the new ways of understanding their professional work. This capacity is a measure of the organisational intelligence of the school. It involves the capacity to notice both new information and ways of understanding that are meaningful to the school’s evolving mission and then to respond in ways that create organisationally sustaining but innovative outcomes in the form of new student learning arrangements.

Order in these non-routine contexts is a form of order without predictability. Order emerges as elements of a system (in this case, a secondary school located within the expanded regional post compulsory education and training sector) work together, discovering and relating to each other and then together inventing new capabilities for the provision of post compulsory pathways into further education and employment (Wheatley, 1999, p111). This is self-organised order dependent on processing information flowing through the school and its region, and thereby creating new knowledge expressed as new ways of understanding and practising.

The research project that has informed this submission identified eight ‘enablers’ that will facilitate the new style of teacher professional learning in the secondary schools of the twenty first Century. These enablers are essentially opportunities for embedding knowledge era teacher professional learning within the school as a developing knowledge era organization. Here is an enabler checklist for a knowledge era secondary school.

**Enabler 1: Socio-technical systems**

- School provides access to information and communication technologies for accessing information
- School encourages membership of networks and associations as integral to work outputs
- School encourages access to forums and special interest groups through the use of communication technology

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4 Adapted from a checklist prepared by the International VET Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning in TAFE, NSW (2004).
School provides internal electronic forums and discussions in the workplace

**Enabler 2: Networks and relationships**
- Leaders/managers actively seek to understand team dynamics
- Leaders/managers model wider organisational relationships
- School fosters and nurtures the teachers who make a positive difference to the organization

**Enabler 3: Organisational identity awareness**
- All employees embody heightened levels of the school’s identity
- All employers are cognisant of school’s directions
- All employees share same organisational mindset

**Enabler 4: Work outcomes and career paths**
- Professional learning resources are linked to work outcomes
- Professional learning resources connect to the career paths of employees

**Enabler 5: Emergent professional learning**
- Professional learning resources are linked to the work in hand
- Opportunities provided to take time to explore divergent views
- Opportunities provided to be part of a team who might explore new approaches and ideas even though the risks may be high
- Employees encouraged to create new opportunities and new insights even though there may be a potential for breakdowns along the way

**Enabler 6: Teachers as designers of their own professional learning**
- Teachers provided with opportunities to design their own professional learning activities when required
- Senior school managers have established strong relationships with teachers to better understand their professional learning needs

**Enabler 7: Working and learning as an iterative process**
- School understands the importance of the integration of working and learning
- School sees professional learning as a driver of both the learning needed to generate the necessary work to meet its mission and the work that generates new insights and new knowledge for the next phase of organisational strategic development

**Enabler 8: Intuition-friendly organisational environment**
- School values intuitive thinking and working
- School encourages open communication amongst team members and across its school community
- School encourages communication beyond its boundaries

It is argued that teacher professional learning strategies for the future (see earlier discussion) are those that promote knowledge worker capabilities amongst the teaching staff of schools. It is argued further that these strategies must be understood and accepted by school leaders as being interactive with school-wide organisational change. These teacher professional learning strategies for the future are catalysts of substantial school organisational change processes (shifts in the way we do educational business here!) but need to be given by school leaders the necessary degrees of freedom to ‘kick start’ these transformative processes. It is argued still further that the enablers identified above would, when taken together, provide the facilitatory organisational environment for these professional learning strategies to...
engage teachers with meaning for purposeful new action connected to organisational renewal.

The next section of this submission introduces a teacher professional learning project and then analyses this project as a potential knowledge era teacher professional learning project. The enablers listed above will be returned to in the specifics of the analysis of this project.
A specific teacher professional learning project supported by the SGR LLEN: the Post Compulsory Change Project (PCCP)

The project in context
In 2006 the SGR LLEN and a local government action group, the G21 Skills Taskforce, undertook an inquiry into the provision and status of vocational education in the Greater Geelong Region. The results of this inquiry were published in a LLEN discussion paper entitled ‘Supporting young people through the school to work transition: the role of vocational education in the Greater Geelong Region’ (October 2006). The paper identified that the Geelong Region was experiencing high youth unemployment and a shortage of skilled labour. “It is now more important than ever to provide young people with access to opportunities and pathways that encourage a mindset for lifelong learning and lead to sustainable employment in the Region” (SGR LLEN 2006, p1). This was in the broader context of the Victorian Government’s aim to increase young people’s involvement in education and training including an increase in skilled young people and those finishing year 12 or its equivalent with a retention target of 90% year 12 completers by 2010. The paper noted that “a key role for the Geelong LLEN in meeting the challenge of this future scenario is to increase the range and quality of post compulsory provision for young people and improve their transition to further education, training and employment. Vocational Education and Training (VET) plays a key role in meeting this challenge” (SGR LLEN 2006, p2).

The inquiry identified that the numbers of young people in the Geelong Region undertaking vocational education and training was below the National and State averages. Based on 2005 data, participation in VET in Schools was nationally 49%, for Victoria 32% and for the Greater Geelong Region 28.7%. The VET in Schools breakdown for the Greater Geelong Region indicated that 25.7% was being provided through a VET in VCE arrangement while only 3% was being provided through VET in VCAL arrangements. Additionally, the inquiry revealed that for 2005 the VCAL enrolments for the Greater Geelong Region were also below the State average at 5.2% of post compulsory enrolments. Other vocational education data included in the discussion paper included 2005 numbers of school students participating in Structured Workplace Learning and numbers in Australian School Based Apprenticeships. All were below the State averages.

These data were presented to forums of relevant stakeholders in Geelong. These included regional employer groups, senior staff from the Barwon South West Department of Education Regional Office, Geelong Region School Principals, Middle and Post Compulsory Years teacher network groups, and relevant LLEN working parties. The topic for each of these forums was:

“The Greater Geelong Region is experiencing major skill shortages at the same time as high youth unemployment. We need to ask WHY aren’t 50% of our young people involved in vocational pathways leading to jobs in our Region”

The collated responses from these forums to the regional vocational education data presented in the SGR LLEN discussion paper were listed under the following themes:
• Building strong partnerships between Business/Industry and the Education and Training sector to meet local employment and skill needs;
• Expanding the range of school-to-work pathways available within the Region;
• Improving employability skills and job awareness of Geelong kids;
• Updating teachers’ awareness of the needs of contemporary Business/Industry;
• Raising parents’ awareness of the value and range of vocational pathways leading to jobs for their kids;
• Raising the profile of vocational and applied learning pathways in the Region;
• Funding issues;
• Data needed.

The discussion paper identified from the inquiry eight key ideas for further consideration. These were (SGR LLEN 2006, p12):

1. Gather data on participation and outcomes for young people in TAFE, ACE and community settings and use as a basis for regional provision planning.
2. Explore the requirements of the new School Accountability and Improvement Framework and work with schools (Post Compulsory team leaders) to utilise the school self evaluation tool matched to outcomes and destination data as part of curriculum planning and resource allocation.
3. Develop an approach to the analysis of student Pathway Plans as the basis for discussion on local provision planning and resource allocation.
4. Work out implications of new Commonwealth and State Government post compulsory initiatives impacting on delivery of vocational opportunities in the region – eg. Youth Guarantee, Youth Commitment, Youth Transition brokers, TECs, VET facilities upgrades in schools, Skills initiatives, Skills Stores…
5. Explore decision making at schools in relation to how curriculum and resourcing decisions match the profile of young people who do VET and young peoples pathway aspirations.
6. Young people need long term exposure (years 7-10) to a range of options and opportunities supported by relevant careers counselling – explore potential role for Group Training Companies, Middle Years educators and other resources.
7. Communications Strategy: using kids who have recently completed school talking about what they are doing now; good news VCAL stories from perspective of kids, passionate teachers, employers and parents for use at careers nights.
8. Provide opportunities for education leaders to learn about and visit good practice sites and innovative models of provision.

The paper concluded with a reference to Dahle Suggett’s August 2006 address to the Victorian TAFE Association Council where she positioned post compulsory education and training at a crossroads and asked if it is sufficient to continue on the current trajectory to meet completion targets and the economic challenges they address or if there are adjustments to be made? Suggett noted the pressure on schools to tailor post compulsory provision to meet needs of their local communities and that this pressure would open up the schools to market forces which will in turn determine the shape of provision (SGR LLEN 2006, p13).

This was the context from which the PCCP project arose.
The project formulation
From October to December 2006 the PCCP project took shape through an iterative process involving the SGR LLEN and the Post Compulsory Network, together with two other stakeholder groups, the SGR LLEN Jobs4Kids Strategic Working Party and the Geelong Employers Reference Group.

The project, in December 2006, had the following form.


A Change Project: The Project is a two year Action Research Change Project in four (4) self-selecting schools in the Region.

Project Aims: The project aims to:

• support schools with their School Accountability and Improvement Framework (SAIF) and Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs) related analyses, and in the changes in curriculum provision through VELS, and VCE-VET and VCAL that may flow from these analyses and in implementing changes in curriculum provision.
• improve outcomes and destinations for young people by expanding pathways and transition support through partnership arrangements between:
  o the participating Schools’ communities (senior school managers, teachers, parents, students and local employers), and
  o the SGR LLEN’s Jobs4Kids strategy stakeholders (BSW Department of Education Regional Office, the Regional Industry Career Adviser, Local Community Partnership agency [GRVEC], Gordon Institute, Geelong Educators Network, Deakin University, Geelong Employers Reference Group, Group Training Companies and G21 – Geelong Region Alliance).

Internal Resources: Each participating school will align its involvement in the Project to the pathway and transition support developments already underway in the school. Participation in the Project is a natural extension of the positive and innovative pathways and transition support developments already occurring in each school.

External Resources: The SGR LLEN’s Jobs4Kids strategy stakeholders will provide resources to facilitate action research-based and change-oriented projects identified and implemented by each of the participating schools. (These resources can be reviewed in the appendices to this submission)
Project Methodology: The Project will adopt an action research approach through a number of within-school projects. (Further details can be reviewed in the attached documents). In the process of deciding upon their action research-based projects each participating schools will identify targets that aim for a closer match between:

- students’ aspirations (Managed Individual Pathways - MIPs),
- the school’s profile of school to work and further education and training transitions (OnTrack Destinations), and
- curriculum provision.

with particular attention given to those young people who are likely to pursue a post-school employment outcome or post-school vocational education in the VET sector.

School Selection: Participating schools will be selected using an Expression of Interest process. Interested schools will be expected to commit to participation in a comprehensive change strategy compatible with the aims of the Project over a two year period.

Key Questions: Key indicative questions were:

- How can we accommodate the range of VET interests of our students through a range of pathway options that meet the needs of the whole student population?
- Will ASbAs be a central component of the Pathways provided?
- What is the potential of a Themed VCAL where student interests and local job opportunities match?
- Who might be our partners in order to offer choice of pathways to students?
- How will we promote this project to our School Council and our school community?
- Do we have the right data sets available to support action research projects?
- Are there structural changes that can be made to better enable engagement with industry (eg designated VET days or block programs)?
- What would applied learning across the school look like?
- How can employability skills and job awareness education be best accommodated in the curriculum?
- What arrangements are possible so that selected teachers can spend time in industry settings?
- How to expand and manage pathways & transitions planning so that it becomes a central process to school decision-making?
Communications: A Communications Strategy will be developed that promotes a range of post compulsory pathways and outcomes including regular good news stories emerging from the participating schools. Media resource people available to SGR LLEN through G21 will be advisors to this Communication Strategy.

The project in 2007
The project has come to be known as the Post Compulsory Change Project (PCCP). Seven schools self-selected in February 2007. Participating schools joined the PCCP project by signing a School Charter aligned to the aims of the project (see appendices). All schools have their own within-school project teams each with a critical friend from the SGR LLEN Post Compulsory Network PCCP planning group. Each school project team has had a presentation of their school’s year 12 completers’ destination data for the period 2002-2006. In addition each school project team has had a presentation of their school’s VET in Schools data including their school’s VCAL enrolment data for the period 2002-2005. Participating schools have developed innovative pilot action research projects based on these data presentations for implementation in terms 3 and 4 of 2007. All project teams met in June 2007 to workshop their projects with colleagues from the other participating schools. School project teams will begin planning a larger scale school-change project in term 4, 2007 based on their school’s 2007 pilot project outcomes for implementation across 2008. The SGR LLEN has employed a PCCP Project Manager to assist in the coordination of the overall project and to support school project teams and the project planning group.

Analysis of the PCCP project as a knowledge era teacher professional learning project
In this section of the submission the enablers of knowledge worker professional learning are used to analyse the PCCP project as it has unfolded across the February-June 2007 period. In this analysis the term knowledge worker will mean a member of a PCCP school-based project team. The analysis is from the perspective of the SGR LLEN Post Compulsory Network PCCP planning group.

Enabler 1: Socio-technical systems
1. The PCN planning group needs to investigate the current take up of ICT among knowledge workers on the PCCP. An untested assumption is that teachers are inherently “people people” and have a preference for face to face interactions - however the brief demonstration given by a younger school project team member at the June forum (a Gen X) of the use of Powerpoint with an embedded movie and creative use of graphics as part of his presentation saw the teachers asking for help to use these tools in their own presentations. This teacher has also designed a school website to enable communications from his school’s PCCP team to the school community.
2. The PCN planning group needs to understand what this interest in technology was about – does it indicate the need for a Communications Strategy to convey information between and within schools or does it signal something

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5 Acronyms used in this analysis are: DoE = Victorian Department of Education, GDAL = Deakin University Graduate Diploma of Education (Applied Learning), PC = Post Compulsory, PCCP = Post Compulsory Change Project, PCN = Post Compulsory Network, SAIF = School Accountability and Improvement Framework, VIT = Victorian Institute of Teaching.
else like the teachers wanting a user friendly way to share their resources with one another?

3. The PCCP will need to communicate with a range of audiences including parents, Industry, governments and the broader community who will have varying levels of exposure to ICT as communication technology. Research on learning styles and multiple intelligences also indicates the need to find diverse ways to communicate with diverse audiences. The regular meetings of the PCN as the forum where PCCP teachers present reports on their progress is challenging the teachers to find ways to best communicate information to their colleagues and to enable their colleagues to engage in discussion about the Project. PCCP teachers began with quick verbal reports and have now progressed to organising structured presentations using varying forms of ICT including pie charts, powerpoint, graphics etc.

4. The initial data presentation meetings at each school were instructive as knowledge workers responded to the data “as if for the first time” because they were seeing the data presented graphically. In this instance ICT was used to assist in getting the message across and in analysing data in ways that text/stats and previous data meetings had not.

5. The use of email to communicate with schools is notorious for being ineffective as a tool to get things done – teachers often don’t visit their email till the end of the day or less frequently and tend not to use this channel to carry on a discussion. However email communication in the PCCP between the Project Manager and school teams has been used as a significant tool in the project. The Project Manager uses email to provide records of meetings, to capture key points in the project and to identify action steps and key people. These emails also serve the purpose of providing a record of progress and as an evidence base for tracking the progress of the project in each school. Schools are filing these emails as part of their record of participation in the project and are using sections of emails in preparing their school level project reports. Schools are also responding to these emails from the Project Manager to correct/check their understanding of conversations and to clarify any points that may not be quite accurate. Emailed Reports are also the paper trail for the Project Manager to keep abreast of what is happening in each school.

6. PCCP teachers need basic training in Excel both to organise and analyse data but also to understand the ways in which data can be manipulated. The push to use the ‘Students at Risk’ mapping tool in the PCCP will require teachers to understand how Excel works and how to build powerful stories from combining a range of data sets – this will help teachers to develop curiosity about the stories that live inside the data.

Enabler 2: Networks and relationships

1. The overall PCCP is part of a porous and complex network of systems and people. The work takes place in the framework of the collegial and strategic planning forum of the PCN; is a focused action research intervention in 7 schools that make up the PCCP; and with each school a system in its own right. Each schools project team is the locus for the change intervention – a part within a bigger school whole.

2. The PCN planning group oversights and participates in all levels of this complex set of arrangements and has responsibility for taking a meta-analytic view of how the change intervention has a ripple effect within and across all
parts of the bigger system. It will be incumbent on the PCN planning group to develop sophisticated ways of observing its own functioning, of observing what is happening in the bigger project and for modelling ways of monitoring and adapting to change impacts as they emerge. This meta analysis will require attention to relationships, the various iterations of the action research planning cycle, the selection of data sets, the kinds of evidence to be used, and how to track the ripples from small project interventions. The PCN planning group will need to work with the PCN, PCCP and individual schools to help them develop this meta analytic mindset. The role of the “critical friends” is important here.

3. The PCCP schools self selected to participate in the PCCP based on generalised regional data sets and a sense that there was improvement to be made in the ways in which students were supported in their pathway choices and destinations. As the project has evolved the school teams are now beginning to identify that they are part of something substantially bigger than they had anticipated and something necessarily ongoing – “they have embraced the gorilla”! The schools are starting to recognise that as they make one change it creates a ripple effect in other parts of the school as a system. It is really too late now to turn away from the gorilla.

4. Project teams will need to find ways to bring other “parts” of the school community along with them - this is accommodated in the required school council, parents and staff briefings built into the PCCP Charter.

5. A further observation is that the project teams themselves are discovering new parts of the whole as they move into the Project with one VET teacher observing the pie chart on destinations data and recognising that her school has actually had its entire focus on VCE pathways! This observation was made possible because the PCCP schools have put “new teams” in place as part of this project – teachers who might not ordinarily be involved in a change intervention. Some of these team members cross year level and subject boundaries and have not previously worked together – these new teams are bringing new parts of the system together and opening peoples minds to other ways of looking at the whole.

6. The planned incorporation of the ‘Students at Risk’ planning tool in project schools will enable the schools to see themselves as systems and to use data to drive planning in a systematic way across the whole school. This tool and the data it will provide will generate new questions in the schools that will in turn give rise to the next steps in the change project – the data will help to build a shared picture across the whole school of the needs of kids, the need for particular curriculum interventions and lead to the new learning for teachers.

Enabler 3: Organisational identity awareness

1. The use of the On Track Data sets and related school generated data has the potential to either confirm or challenge the organisational identity of the PCCP schools. Schools have really been grappling with the implications of their five year trend data and have been asking themselves what sort of outcomes they desire for their students and what sort of change interventions will need to be made to support these directions. This will pose a considerable challenge for schools that have long been invested in their academic profile and claims.

2. It will also pose a challenge for school leaders as they identify the professional skill sets required to drive the required school change process.
3. This enabler more than any other has the potential to drive radical reinvention or for schools to pull back from the implications of the change intervention. Communication across the board will be critical to managing this challenge to organisational identity. On the other hand the PCCP schools have recognised that the political imperative has changed and that schools need to better meet the needs of their whole cohort – a new identity as a pioneer or a Charter school or something may form?

4. It is clear from the antecedents to the PCCP (the VET Inquiry with regional VET data and stakeholder forums) and as we go along that information and data is powerful and enabling – parents and employers have started to ask new and different questions as they recognise that their kids or future employees are not able to access the kinds of pathways that will give them real future choices.

5. The PCCP will require schools to use their data with their school communities to identify a preferred identity – this will necessitate that schools provide opportunities for others to help shape and inform the new identity. In the PCCP opportunities for professional learning will emerge as teachers identify the need to “come up to speed” with the implications/consequences of change.

6. The new GDAL teacher education course has been developed as a regional proactive response to the demand for a new kind of teacher for the PC sector – as schools start to frame new identities they will better market and attract teachers who can help to consolidate this new identity. Having the GDAL student teachers linked with the PCCP will give both schools and trainees an opportunity to meet and form partnerships.

**Enabler 4: Work outcomes and career paths**

1. PCCP has provided an opportunity for some teachers to participate on teams that might not normally be involved in such change initiatives. Some of these teachers are working in part time roles and ways need to be found to support their involvement in the range of activities in the project.

2. A challenge for the PCCP will be how it can negotiate to have leaders/teachers involvement in the project formally recognised as professional learning – it has been mooted that the University partner in the PCCP could design a pathway linking involvement in the PCCP with the Masters in Professional Education and Training or a similar course.

3. The PCN planning group also needs to enter discussions with VIT to have involvement in initiatives like the PCCP to count as contributions to teachers’ 100 hours of professional development tied to ongoing accreditation.

4. The DoE regional office partner has identified opportunities for both school leaders and teachers to have their involvement in the PCCP recognised as part of the SAIF – an organisational learning plan that informs a team learning plan that informs an individual learning plan. When these are aligned a new enabler for organisational change will emerge. In this instance this is a strong recognition of the need to acknowledge professional learning as it emerges from the demands of teachers work and from the needs of teachers to increase their skills to meet the challenges of new roles.

**Enabler 5: Emergent professional learning**

1. The PCCP is a vehicle for the convergence of teachers’ work with teachers’ learning. The PCCP is a multi layer, multilevel Action Research Project that
requires school teams to analyse and respond to school data and identify project work that will reorient the school in the direction of the new outcomes being sought. In this sense there are no prescribed ways of doing things – project team members become active researchers of their own practice as they move through a number of action research cycles.

2. The PCCP teachers have had opportunities to report on their project work in a range of “public” forums like the PCN, the launch of the PCCP by the Minister of Education and Training and the ‘all schools’ forum. In these contexts teachers have been describing what they are discovering and what they are trialling. This has generated considerable interest from their colleagues in other sites and from non-project schools in the region. The questions that are emerging from these forums both support and challenge each school’s thinking and further consolidates that view that the overall PCCP is a Change Project where learning takes place in and through taking action and cannot be known in advance.

3. The opportunity afforded by having the PCCP embedded in a bigger PC initiative ensures that the PCCP schools have the added benefit of learning from a broad range of other practitioners and ideas – an emerging ‘community of next practice’. There has been considerable ‘sharing of ideas’ rather than prescription in this project.

4. There are also some professional learning activities that must be prescribed and these include developing expertise in technical areas like using Excel, Report writing, record keeping, data retrieval.

5. The PCCP requires that school teams identify action research projects to move them in the direction of their evidence-based aspirations. The purpose of these projects using action research methodology is to ensure the teams keep an open mind, a researcher’s mind as they initiate and try new things. A project also serves to contain the field of investigation so that teams can move incrementally in the direction of their new goals while taking regular opportunities to observe, reflect and re-act. These smaller projects help the teams to better understand the organisational whole with its relationships and systems and dynamics – all of which will serve the teams as they move towards identifying ‘their big project’ in 2008.

6. Project based work requires an ‘applied learning’ orientation so in the context of the work of the PCCP there is a ready congruence between the methodology used by teams of teachers and the methodology underpinning the new teaching/learning pedagogy through which students are engaged.

**Enabler 6: Teachers as designers of their own professional learning**

1. This enabler should be extended to include both working from the inside out and the outside in simultaneously. The PCN in which the PCCP is embedded brings school teams together with the broader LLEN partner organisations. This diversity of players gives rise to multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approaches to the issues that get raised in the PC sector. The presence of such diversity makes the learning space both one characterised by high vested interest as well as a neutral space. As these varying groups work together to be understood and to understand a shared language and a shared sense of agency is developed from which the ‘new work’ emerges.

2. An example of the professional learning needs emerging from the work in the project occurred in relation to the ‘Students at Risk’ mapping tool. Earlier in
the year the DoE hosted a Professional Development day for schools to come and learn how this tool worked. There was not a very strong attendance. In the course of the PCCP the need for the tool has emerged from the school level discussions and teacher teams are asking for an opportunity to learn about this tool. The DoE has responded by saying “we’ve already run a professional development session for you on this topic”! This is an example of a professional learning resource being delivered in sync with the teachers’ recognised need for further professional learning, a need emerging from their project’s working and learning.

**Enabler 7: Working and learning as an iterative process**

1. The PCCP uses an action learning/action research methodology as well as being embedded within a range of other supporting professional learning networks and activities.
2. The PCCP teams have regular team meetings with support of a critical friend whose role is to help teachers step outside of their ‘work’ to see their work with the eyes of the researcher and to ensure that the action research cycle gains traction in meetings.
3. This form of learning and reflection is also built into the Project Charter that requires that teams come together with other parts of the school community, with other schools and with the broader PC Network through a planned sequence of events to share their project work.
4. The PCCP Project Manager also visits teams and provides reports of meeting discussion. This activity prompts teams to revisit interpretations, sharpen their focus and broaden their understanding of emerging issues in their project work. Each of these activities adds another dimension to teacher reflection and adds new insights to be considered as school level project work is undertaken.
5. There is an emerging case for providing some training for teacher teams in the art of the designer cum researcher in action.

**Enabler 8: Intuition-friendly organisational environment**

1. It is clear from the PCCP that the teachers and partners have extensive experience that needs to be unearthed and valued. Tools are needed to help teachers access their intuition and ‘buried’ knowledge. Examples include brainstorming and other strategies that don’t allow judgemental comments - focused conversations and buzz groups have proved valuable in the PCCP.
2. Interestingly the use of these strategies seems to emerge naturally when teachers in the PCCP come together to talk about what they are doing. It is the role of the PCN planning group to provide the spaces for this sharing to occur and to value these less formal and intuitive ways to generate knowledge.

This analysis of the PCCP project using the enablers of knowledge era professional learning strategies shows concretely the professional learning strategies of teachers-as-knowledge workers in action. The analysis also shows ways in which schools can respond to the external demands now being placed on secondary schools to better balance vocational learning pathways with so-called academic pathways in the middle and senior years of school education. This analysis also shows the connectedness of these professional learning strategies with the individual schools’ agenda for organisational change so that there are better outcomes and destinations for young people through the schools’ expanded pathways & transition support.
To recap, the teacher professional learning strategies highlighted by this analysis of the PCCP project can be grouped under the following six themes for teacher professional learning in the knowledge era.

1. **Self-motivated learning**
   This is a fundamental theme. Knowledge era teachers have an intrinsic motivation to learn and develop and this drives them to respond to challenging opportunities, to seek out new ideas and perspectives, and to be ‘involved’ in activities and events related to their profession and their school. This is evident in the PCCP project through the self selection process of the participating schools and the members of their project teams.

2. **Exposure to new ideas**
   Exposure to new ideas occurred in the PCCP project through multiple methods including interacting with external stakeholders in the field of post compulsory education, as well as interactions with peers and fellow practitioners. Gaining exposure to new ideas from both inside and outside one’s own work group and school was as important as gaining new ideas and perspectives from both inside and outside one’s traditional secondary school teaching area and discipline.

3. **Learning by doing – applied learning for teachers**
   The notion that learning and development is an active process and the emphasis on ‘learning by doing’ was another theme. Action learning/action research models are not new but in the PCCP project are embedded in the dynamics of school-based project teams exploring new student learning arrangements at the cutting edge of anticipated broader change in their schools.

4. **Networking and conversations**
   Relationships with others are critical to successful professional learning in the PCCP project. The ability to develop relationships is a critical capability in knowledge era teachers as it is through these relationships that ongoing learning and development is facilitated. Professional learning includes the ability to interact with colleagues and others for exposure to new ideas, and also using networks inside and outside the school to speed up access to and dissemination of new understandings. Conversations are a tool for establishing shared meaning and developing understanding. This tool is clearly evident in the PCCP project at the levels of discussions within project teams, of communications beyond these teams in their own school communities and of across-team member dialogue at the June 2007 PCCP forum.

5. **Challenge**
   Challenge as a theme refers to the importance of seeking out and embracing opportunities that may be ‘disruptive’ or uncomfortable. The seven participating schools accepted this challenge at the outset of the PCCP project. This theme reflects the ‘extreme’ team project work where ‘high risk’ experiences result in ‘high return’ learning.

6. **Consolidation of learning**
   This is a teacher professional learning theme that is only just beginning to emerge in the PCCP project. A guest speaker at the June 2007 forum provided an assessment of the first five years of VCAL that brought together many of the issues project teams
were exploring. This was an opportunity for the teachers-as-knowledge workers to consolidate their new learning. Other strategies under this theme that will emerge over the two years of the PCCP are:

- time to absorb new information and to challenge existing mental models during this two year period of ‘immersion’ in the change project;
- time for regular reflection, both in terms of what is happening at work and what the teachers are working on, but also time to reflect on one’s personal development and interpersonal processes. The regular action research driven project team meetings are a vehicle for this form of reflection-based consolidation; and
- using formal education to introduce new ideas and perspectives relevant to the teachers’ developing professional practice. Possibilities exist here through the potential links between the form of professional learning promoted by the PCCP project and the SGR LLEN’s relationship with the local university faculty of education.
The Parliamentary Inquiry terms of reference

This submission to the Inquiry has presented a case for positioning strategies for teacher professional learning firmly within the contemporary social and economic context of Australia and Victoria. It has been argued that this contemporary context can be characterised as that of the emerging ‘knowledge era’. This is the new era of the twenty first Century and it is this era with which our school teachers need to be connecting through their professional identities, personal professional practices and their employing school’s corporate mission and values. Effective strategies for teacher professional learning are those that develop in teachers the generic capabilities of knowledge workers through engagement in ‘cutting-edge’ educational praxis where working and learning coalesce.

The submission now summarises the argument presented in the preceding sections through direct reference to six reference points of the Inquiry.

Term of reference (a): the relationship between ongoing professional learning for teachers and teaching expertise

Teaching expertise in secondary schools in the knowledge era is now broader than ‘classroom’ oriented expertise based on addressing the internal variables of uncertainty through a combination of revised classroom management skills for student engagement in learning, expanded and updated discipline knowledge acquisition and re-energised pedagogies. These professional developments are not to be dismissed as unnecessary but the landscape of professional learning in the knowledge era covers territory beyond the classroom and the individual school. Teaching expertise is now premised on developing capabilities to engage with the external uncertainties in our contemporary society to produce learning arrangements that maximise students’ learning through a range of pathways and transitions into further study and employment. Professional learning must ultimately be aimed at improving outcomes for students. It must be focused upon building the effectiveness of teachers so that improved student outcomes and enhanced pathways and transitions result. The changing external demands of the last decade on secondary schools with the increased retention of students through to year 12, the introduction of VET in Schools and, more recently, the introduction of MIPs, VCAL and VELS has redefined ‘teaching expertise’ and, as a consequence, the relationship between ongoing professional learning and teaching expertise.

Term of reference (b): which factors will support high quality professional learning for teachers, including learning methods and environments for the development of professional knowledge and pedagogy relevant to professional development of teachers

The eight ‘enablers’ identified in this submission will facilitate the necessary new form of teacher professional learning in the secondary schools of the twenty first Century. These enablers create the supportive organisational environment in schools for teams of motivated teachers to work at the risky edge of innovative student learning arrangements. These are the anticipated learning arrangements needed to transform secondary schools into more responsive providers of high quality and various learning arrangements for young people whose citizenship and livelihoods will enmeshed with Australia’s knowledge era culture and economy.
These ‘enablers’ strengthen the communicative health of schools for the form of professional learning advocated in this submission. Strong organisational health is dependent on supportive leadership fully aware of teachers’ work and challenges, collective clarity on the school’s goals and teachers’ roles in achieving these, collaborative engagement through teams building practice-based understandings from which to influence strategic decision-making in their school, and professional learning of individual teachers expanded through membership of ‘communities of next practice’ involving external stakeholders in their students’ learning outcomes (employers, youth transition agencies, tertiary institutions, for example).

From the position advocated in this submission the factors necessary to support high quality teacher professional learning projects would include:

- relevancy to local school community conditions. Professional learning projects would emerge from a process of scanning the regional environment identifying issues of critical importance to the school, the community it serves and the broader community;
- engagement of a broad range of external-to-the-school stakeholders in the project’s formulation, implementation and evaluation;
- acknowledgement of the strengths of individual teachers and establish school-based teams to carry the project forward;
- connecting professional learning with organisational development. Locate professional learning of teachers within an explicit change management project incorporating environmental scanning, data collection and analysis, robust and collaborative communication strategies, and progressive evaluation; and
- acceptance that high quality professional learning arises not from episodic and fragmented events but emerges from on-going, long term and sustained projects. High quality professional learning is an ongoing process over the long term.

**Term of reference (c): national and international trends regarding ongoing professional learning for teachers and report on innovative initiatives**

The position advocated in this submission draws on recent research into professional development of teachers. The position reflects both national and international trends in teacher professional learning approaches and strategies. The research undertaken by one of the contributors to this submission for TAFE NSW International VET Centre for Innovative Teaching and Learning and for the Victorian Qualification Authority’s VCAL evaluation supports this claim.

**Term of reference (d): determining how best practice in ongoing professional learning for teachers can be delivered into schools and learning communities**

The SGR LLEN Post Compulsory Change Project, described and analysed in this submission, is an example of best practice for delivering ongoing teacher professional learning into schools and their surrounding learning communities (tertiary institutions, employer groups, student support agencies, LLENs and Local Community Partnerships (LCPs)). It is important to distinguish between the professional learning for teachers whose ongoing work in their school is integral to an innovative action research project with which they are engaged and the delivery of professional learning activities packaged from ‘beyond’ the teachers’ project-based working and learning but provided as an additional learning resource to the teachers. Best practice in the
delivery of additional resources for ongoing professional learning is, in these circumstances, aligned with ‘enablers’ 5, 6 and 7; that is, resources are linked to the work at hand, are in response to teachers’ self-identified needs in order to move ahead with their work and are capable of lifting teachers’ actual practice and reflection on practice to new levels of understanding.

A further point about best practice in the delivery of teacher profession learning is the potential to link the professional learning to existing accountability, improvement and reporting regimes in schools and the systems to which they belong. An example is the SAIF recently introduced to Victorian government schools. Professional learning projects that are integral to a school’s strategic plan can play a pivotal role in the school’s response to this Department of Education accountability and improvement framework.

A government school’s strategic plan in 2007 defines the school’s key objectives for the next four years under the headings of Student Learning, Student Engagement & Wellbeing and Student Pathways and Transitions. Clearly, a regional project such as the PCCP can fit into all three areas of a participating school’s strategic plan. But, depending upon the major focus of a participating school’s innovative project, schools may choose to place their emphasis in only one or two areas. Once a participating school’s project is included in the school strategic plan, goals, targets and key improvement strategies can then be identified. Provided an appropriate consultation process involving the school’s teaching staff has taken place in the development of the strategic plan, the plan should provide the reasons and motivations for teachers to engage with a regional knowledge era project as exemplified by the PCCP. Specifically, the regional project would provide the data-driven and evidence-based platform that would, in turn, support and ‘authorise’ teachers engaging in the professional learning required to drive a ‘cutting edge’ project interactive with the school’s strategic planning, and accountability and improvement reporting regime.

Term of reference (e): examining the potential for greater cross-sectoral links between industry, training institutions and schools in the delivery of ongoing professional learning for teachers

Knowledge era teacher professional learning can best proceed as learning that challenges established teacher professional cultures when it is informed by ongoing cross-sectoral partnerships. This form of professional learning may be initially uncomfortable for a profession accustomed to a relatively secure service delivery paradigm. Cross-sectoral partnerships will inevitably shift the balance towards a more complex set of delivery arrangements in which the demand delivery paradigm comes more to the fore. The position on teacher professional learning and its delivery advocated in the submission is unequivocally premised on cross-sectoral partnerships between secondary schools and the relevant stakeholders accessible through regional networks. Here the LLENs initiative of the Victorian government provides schools with a productive avenue for building these partnerships.

Term of reference (e): examining gender issues in the delivery of ongoing professional learning for teachers

This submission has not considered specifically gender issues in the delivery of ongoing teacher professional learning. However, gender issues may well be addressed within the ongoing work-based nature of the professional learning advocated in this submission. If gender issues are adequately addressed or are being addressed within
the school as an equal opportunity organization then it could be assumed that these same policies would apply to the integrated nature of professional working and learning proposed in this submission.

References


Appendices
Appendix 1  Post Compulsory Change Project: Project Specifications – External Resources & Methodology

External Resources
In addition to the resources provided by each participating school, the SGR LLEN’s Jobs4Kids strategy stakeholders will provide resources to facilitate action research-based and change-oriented projects identified and implemented by each of the participating schools. These resources will include:

1. Students will be supported with transition planning and will be case managed into workplace learning by the LCP
2. An extensive Data project through Deakin University will support schools to gather and analyse student data to make better planning decisions
3. Teachers will spend some time in Industry settings with support through LLEN
4. Professional development will be provided for school staff through links with the new Graduate Diploma of Applied Learning at Deakin University by the University
5. BSW DoE Regional Office will work with school leadership to facilitate use of the SAIF and to embed this Framework into each schools’ strategic planning
6. Information on local job opportunities and engagement of employers through the work of the RICA
7. Students will be supported to a job ready stage and case managed into ASbAs where appropriate by local Group Training Companies
8. Vocational Taster programs will be delivered through the Gordon Institute
9. The Employer Reference Group will support schools by promoting the Project to business and industry assisting in gaining employer involvement.
10. G21 will provide to schools regional economic planning data to assist in pathways and transition support planning.
11. Schools’ transition support planning and implementation will be enhanced by Regional youth transition programs operating under government funding through local service providers.
12. A Careers Awareness Program for years 7-9 will be developed with Geelong Educators Network for Innovation and Excellence team and others
13. A significant information campaign will target parents and ensure that parents and school councils are made aware of the implications of student outcomes and destinations data
14. A regional promotional campaign to raise the profile of vocational education and its contribution to this Region’s future growth will be developed through the G21 Skills Task Force in tandem with the Employer Reference Group.
15. The SGR LLEN will also provide funding for a Project Officer in 2007. The Project Officer will work with the Project Management Team and with Project Steering Committees in each of the participating schools. The Project Officer will be familiar with both Education and Industry environments.
Project Methodology
The Project will adopt an action research approach through a number of within-school projects.

Within each participating school:
- a Project steering committee involving school community representatives and representatives of the Geelong Post Compulsory Network planning group will be formed.
- each Project steering committee will undertake the detailed project planning for the school shaping their participation in the Project to the identified needs of the school as relevant to the overall Project concept.
- Steering committees’ project planning will be informed by a detailed data analysis of student pathways within the schools’ curriculum provision and the destinations of the schools’ early leavers and year 12 completers. This phase will be the initial reconnaissance phase of each school’s action research.
- Following this initial reconnaissance phase, it is anticipated that each school Project steering committee will undertake an information awareness exercise with its School Council, parents and students based on the detailed data analysis. This school community communication phase of the action research will set the parameters for the next phases of each participating school’s action research for the remainder of their involvement in the Project.
- Each school will design and implement a number of manageable pilot innovation projects consistent with:
  - the aims of the overall Project, and
  - the parameters set for the school’s action research set by the school’s community.
- At each phase of the schools’ emergent action research, the resources available through SGR LLEN Jobs4Kids Strategic working party and the Geelong Employers Reference Group will be tailored to the schools’ requirements. This input of resources external to the schools will be managed through each school’s Project steering committee and the overall Project management team.
1. **School Project Steering Committee:**
The School project steering committee’s school community members are:

   (a) (insert name)
   (b) (insert name)
   (c) (insert name)
   (d) (insert name)
   (e) (insert name)
   (f) (insert name)

2. **Initial Action Research Reconnaissance Phase:**
This phase will involve a detailed student pathways & transitions data analysis undertaken with Deakin University personnel. This phase will be completed with a *Student Pathways & Transitions Report* to the project steering committee by 13 April 2007.

3. **Initial School Community Communication Phase:**
This phase will be a pathways & transitions school community awareness-raising activity with data-based information specific to (insert name of school). This activity will involve presentations of the Student Pathways & Transitions Report to:

   (a) School staff
   (b) School Council
   (c) Parent Forums
   (d) Years ? & ? Students

The project steering committee will compile a *Future Directions Report* for (insert name of school) based on the outcomes of this school community communication phase. This report will be presented to the School Council and the P-CC Project Management Team by 11 May 2007.

4. **Design of Initial Pilot Innovation Projects (PIPs):**
Based on the Future Directions Report for (insert name of school), the project steering committee of (insert name of school) will design (insert a number) of pilot innovation projects for implementation in Term 3, 2007.

Each PIP design will identify:

   - The objectives of the project
The actions to be taken (start-up and anticipated further action steps)
Project team members (internal & external)
Resources needed (internal & external)
Critical friends
Reporting on project outcomes
Timelines for project’s activities

5. **June 2007 P-CC Project Forum:**
   (insert name of school) PIP designs will be presented at the June 2007 Forum of P-CC Project participants and will be workshopped at this Forum.

6. **Second School Community Communication Phase:**
   This phase will be a school community awareness-raising activity focused on the PIP designs. Project designs will be finalised at the completion of this phase by 29 June 2007 for implementation in Term 3, 2007.

7. **Revised School Project Charter:**
   (insert name of school) will update its School Project Charter by 29 June 2007 with details of its Term 3, 2007 PIPs and with commitments to the Charter from the SGR LLEN Jobs4Kids strategy stakeholders and employers.

8. **Implementation of PIPs:**
   (insert name of school) will implement its PIPs beginning 16 July 2007. Interim project reports will be developed including case studies of projects-in-action. These reports will be completed and disseminated within the school community and to the P-CC Project Management Team by 21 September 2007.

9. **Third School Community Communication Phase:**
   This phase will be focused upon the interim project reports of (insert name of school). The outcomes of this phase will be:
   
   (a) a decision on each PIP whether to continue its implementation into Term 4, 2007 as is or revised, or whether to deem the PIP completed;
   (b) identification of the next level of projects (Expanding Quality Pathways & Transitions Projects) to be implemented in 2008.

10. **Continuation of PIPs / Design of 2008 Expanding Quality Pathways & Transitions Projects (EQPTPs):**
    From 8 October to December 2007 (insert name of school) will:
    
    (a) continue/not continue with PIPs implementation;
    (b) design EQPTPs for 2008 implementation.

    (insert name of school) EQPTP designs will be:
    • informed by PIPs outcomes
    • vocational education oriented
    • preparatory to expanding school-wide pathways & transitions support in 2008
• preparatory to expanding school-wide shifts in curriculum provision in 2008.

(insert name of school) EQPTP designs will:
• establish the within school resource allocation required to implement each project
• secure partnership arrangements with SGR LLEN Jobs4Kids strategy stakeholders
• identify teacher professional development requirements and source the necessary professional development programs.

11. November 2007 P-CC Project Forum:
(insert name of school) PIPs outcomes and EQPTP designs will be presented at the November 2007 Forum of P-CC Project participants and will be workshopped by Forum participants.

12. Fourth School Community Communication Phase:
This phase will be a school community awareness-raising activity focused on the PIPs outcomes and EQPTP designs. (insert name of school) community will commit to a school-wide change in pathways & transitions options as identified in the EQPTP designs.

Project designs will be finalised at the completion of this phase by 7 December 2007 for implementation in 2008 beginning in Term 1.

13. Revised School Project Charter:
(insert name of school) will update its School Project Charter by 7 December 2007 with details of its 2008 EQPTPs and with commitments to the Charter from the SGR LLEN Jobs4Kids strategy stakeholders and employers.

14. Implementation of EQPTPs:
(insert name of school) will implement its EQPTPs beginning February 2008.

These projects will:
• be structured through action research cycles of planning, acting, monitoring, reviewing, reflecting and re-planning
• be reported upon through case studies of projects-in-action
• involve external critical friends.

The first EQPTPs reports will be completed and disseminated within the school community and to the P-CC Project Management Team by 28 March 2008.

15. Fifth School Community Communication Phase:
This phase will be focused upon the EQPTP Report 1 of (insert name of school). The outcome of this phase will be a review the school Post-Compulsory Change Strategy, a revision of the EQPTPs if required and an endorsement of the revised projects.

16. April 2008 P-CC Project Forum:
EQPTP outcomes to date will be presented at the April 2008 Forum of P-CC Project participants and will be workshopped by Forum participants.

17. **Continuation of EQPTPs Implementation:**
From 14 April to 28 June 2008 (insert name of school) will continue with its EQPTPs implementation as decided upon at the end of Term 1.

EQPTP Report 2 will be completed and disseminated within the school community and to the P-CC Project Management Team by 28 June 2008.

18. **Sixth School Community Communication Phase:**
This phase will be focused upon the EQPTP Report 2 of (insert name of school). The outcome of this phase will be a review the school Post-Compulsory Change Strategy, a revision of the EQPTPs if required and an endorsement of the revised projects.

19. **Sixth School Community Communication Phase:**
This phase will be focused upon the EQPTP Report 2 of (insert name of school). The outcome of this phase will be a review the school Post-Compulsory Change Strategy, a revision of the EQPTPs if required and an endorsement of the revised projects.

20. **Continuation of EQPTPs Implementation:**
From 14 July to 14 November 2008 (insert name of school) will continue with its EQPTPs implementation as decided upon at the end of Term 2, 2008.

EQPTP Report 3 will be completed and disseminated within the school community and to the P-CC Project Management Team by 14 November 2008.

21. **Seventh School Community Communication Phase:**
This phase will be focused upon the EQPTP Report 3 of (insert name of school). The outcome of this phase will be a review the school Post-Compulsory Change Strategy, a revision of the Strategy and an endorsement of the revised Strategy for 2009.

22. **End-of-Year Expanding Quality Pathways & Transitions Forum:**
(insert name of school) will participate in the EQPT Forum at which all SGR LLEN schools will be invited to send representatives and give a presentation based on (insert name of school) EQPTP Report 3 and developments for 2009.

**Signed:**
Name & Position: ________________________________
Signature: ______________________________________
School: ________________________________