National evaluation of the Participation and Equity Program: case studies in five technical and further education (TAFE) colleges.

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NATIONAL EVALUATION OF THE PARTICIPATION AND EQUITY PROGRAM

CASE STUDIES IN FIVE TAFE COLLEGES

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NATIONAL EVALUATION OF THE PARTICIPATION AND EQUITY PROGRAM

CASE STUDIES IN FIVE TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION (TAFE) COLLEGES

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INTRODUCTION

This publication is one of the documents resulting from the national evaluation of the Participation and Equity Program (PEP), carried out in 1986 by a team based in the Centre for Program Evaluation, Melbourne College of Advanced Education. It contains:

- individual case study accounts of PEP in five TAFE sites; (Section 2)
- an overview of the five case studies. (Section 1)

The evaluation was commissioned by the Commonwealth Department of Education, and supported by additional grants from the Commonwealth Schools' Commission and the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission.

The case studies are part of a series of twelve. The other seven (of PEP in schools) are contained, with an overview, in a companion volume to this one.

THE OVERVIEW

The aim of the case studies was to portray a number of individual responses to PEP and the overview is intended as a summary of those responses. The overview refers only to the five case study sites and is not a statement about all TAFE PEP programs. However, other documents produced by the national evaluation team show that some of the statements which we have made about these five sites are supported by data from other sources.

THE CASE STUDIES

Each of the five case studies was carried out by a local evaluator, within a broad framework provided by the national evaluation team. Field work took place between April and July, 1986, but the case study accounts aimed to portray the impact of PEP over the entire period of its existence, that is from 1984 to July, 1986, when draft reports were completed.

1For an outline of the rationale for the case studies and their relationship to other elements of the overall evaluation design, see Elsworth, G et al: Design for a National Evaluation of the Participation and Equity Program, Centre for Program Evaluation, Melbourne C.A.E., 1985.

2The term "local evaluator" (rather than case study worker, field worker, or a number of other possible alternatives) was adopted because it was consistent with those who carried out the case studies being members of the national evaluation team.
The five TAFE sites were in four States and one Territory; four were in metropolitan areas and one in a non-metropolitan area. A rationale, criteria for inclusion, and an outline of the process of selection are contained in Appendix 2.

A large number of people involved in TAFE PEP programs, State PEP management groups, and TAFE administration helped to make the five case studies possible. Members of the evaluation team wish to thank these people most sincerely for their co-operation and willingness to talk about their experiences of PEP in TAFE. People working in, or providing support for, such programs frequently have heavy demands on their time and we appreciate the readiness with which the case study project was accepted, both in TAFE institutions and TAFE systems.

OTHER DOCUMENTS

These case studies make up one element of the overall evaluation of the Participation and Equity Program undertaken by the Centre for Program Evaluation at Melbourne College of Advanced Education.


These are available from the Centre for Program Evaluation, Melbourne College of Advanced Education, 757 Swanston Street, Carlton, Vic 3053. (03) 341 8382

In addition a limited number of copies of the final overview report of the Evaluation are available from the Department of Employment, Evaluation and Training (DEET), PO Box 826, Woden, ACT, 2606.


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SECTION 1

OVERVIEW

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INTRODUCTION

This overview is based on detailed case studies of five TAFE PEP programs, each in a different State or Territory in Australia. The case studies were carried out over a period of about five months in 1986, each by a member of a team associated with the national evaluation. Individual detailed case reports were written and they, along with case notes, form the basis for this overview. The case study team met for an intensive de-briefing session at the conclusion of the field work. This meeting was valuable in that it enabled the experiences of the team to be shared and provided an opportunity for them to contribute material which they had assimilated during the site visits but which had not necessarily appeared in their notes or reports.

Each case attempted to capture the impact of PEP over the entire period of its existence, that is from 1984 to mid 1986. Time was an important factor in organising the information and this meant that case study evaluators relied on the recollections of College staff and the availability of documentation to build up a picture, in addition to information collected first hand during the period of the site visits.

In each case there was a complex interaction between PEP, State initiatives, and the idiosyncratic nature of the site. This made it difficult to attribute changes which have occurred since the introduction of PEP directly to the Program. Perhaps the most appropriate perspective to take for the evaluation is to view it as examining changes in each of the five institutions during the period in which PEP was present.

We have relied on an inductive approach to build up generalisations from the five sites. There are few references to specific sites in this overview. The generalisations are firmly related to information from the case studies and the reader is invited to check the validity of the overview by reading the individual case reports.

We cannot claim that our findings represent the general picture in TAFE PEP across the nation. The generalisability of our findings to the total population of TAFE Colleges requires a further step, that of putting contributions from other evaluators and observers alongside our work.

We hope that the material here will provide a basis for comparisons of this nature. This would be consistent with what might be an implicit brief of a national evaluation which is to provide some sort of benchmark for others whose perspective may relate more to State, regional, or local levels.

STRUCTURE OF THE OVERVIEW

The overview has two sections. The first examines PEP programs and the constituent courses which make or made up these programs. Thus this section concentrates on the internal matters of PEP as an entity.
The second section examines broader issues; in the main, relations between PEP and the TAFE institutions in which PEP programs were located. Here, the emphasis is on the influences PEP has had on the mainstream of the Colleges to this time and the factors which have led to the present situation. It should be no surprise to the reader that there was wide variation in the extent to which PEP affected the approaches and educational rationales of the Colleges.

PEP PROGRAMS

PEP programs were sometimes individual courses and sometimes they were made up of a set of courses. Clients for the courses were the 15-24 year old unemployed who had often performed poorly in conventional schooling particularly in terms of literacy and numerical skills. They often had low personal self esteem and social skills, and had low expectations in terms of obtaining employment.

Part of the rationale for offering PEP programs in TAFE was to cater for people who had severe or multiple disadvantages, that is people who qualified within a number of the categories of disadvantage now commonly accepted by various Commonwealth agencies.

PEP programs covered by the case studies often had their genesis in the precursor to PEP, the School to Work Transition program, colloquially known as the Transition Education program (TE). In turn, TE had succeeded Educational Programs for Unemployed Youth (EPUY), which operated from 1977-1982. TAFE PEP can thus trace its origins over a period of almost a decade.

In some cases individual courses passed from the banner of TE to that of PEP with little or no change and the fact that they were already established in terms of client need ensured their continuity. When PEP followed TE, TAFE PEP guidelines encouraged institutions to continue those courses which they believed were successful under TE. Where departments within TAFE had supported such courses there was the added impetus for their continuity because departments saw the courses as part of their ongoing commitments.

Nevertheless, for the most part the group which was given responsibility for translating PEP guidelines into action were staff outside the mainstream of each TAFE College who had been involved in special purpose programs such as TE. Experience with special programs for youth was an important factor in determining the directions taken within PEP.

Sometimes these staff were loosely organised under the College's Special or Access programs. While there may have been a permanent staff member in charge of these areas the majority of the staff who picked up the responsibility for PEP were part time, often not trained in traditional TAFE ways and without a background in industry. Often they had no formal teacher education. Despite these potential problems, PEP staff provided sound courses for their students.
It was to these groups that the PEP guidelines were most often directed within the Colleges in the earliest phase of PEP. In some States, the Commonwealth guidelines, themselves hardly simple in terms of their educational rationale, were accompanied by less than explicit State level directions about the types of programs which would be sanctioned and the amounts of funding that Colleges could expect. Under these conditions it is not surprising that in some cases staff who were required to respond to the PEP initiatives turned to existing TE courses as the bases for the PEP offerings. In other cases there were strong attempts to develop new approaches which directly reflected the PEP philosophy.

Courses

A priority in TAFE PEP programs has been assisting students to obtain skills which will enable them to get jobs and/or lead them into furthering their education. There has been an emphasis in courses on the creation of conditions which simulate work environments, not only in the physical conditions but also in the social and personal aspects of work. Students are expected to meet standards in these respects and generally they have responded very positively to the requirements placed on them, for example in terms of attendance, application, and persistence. Courses which have been very successful, in terms of completion and judged by independent observers to have resulted in changes in self esteem and confidence have been 'tight ships'. This is not to say that they have always followed a rigid or traditional curriculum design. It means that the staff involved have had a very clear idea of what was required in the circumstances and have managed to convey these expectations to the students. In fact over the range of courses which we examined, a number of innovative curriculum processes were observed: flexible entry and exit to a course, team teaching for slow learners, use of a task to develop problem solving among students, self assessment by students and goal based assessment, as well as the simulation of work conditions already mentioned. As indicated earlier, many students in PEP programs came to them with a range of personal and 'social problems. The solution to these problems did not appear to be through the provision of courses which concentrated on these problems 'up front'. Rather, the fact that the students achieved something, often for the first time in their (postprimary) schooling, coupled with the guidance of patient and concerned instructors appears to have had a great impact on the students. In the cases where courses were set up with the major objective to assist students with interpersonal skills and the like there have been moves towards widening the objectives to include vocationally related outcomes.

There has, of course, been a wide range of courses offered and in the cases where the PEP curriculum development took place at the institutional level the quality has been variable. It has taken some PEP groups time to come up with the most appropriate curriculum plan for their circumstances. There were inevitably changes to be made to the original design as teachers found that their ideas needed to be modified in the wake of the first run through. In the early stages of PEP, staff were under pressure to come up with suitable curricula and some were not proficient in curriculum design techniques. (There is evidence to
suggest that expertise in curriculum design in mainstream TAFE Colleges needs to be developed further.

Clearly, PEP staff and others involved at the College level were faced with the need to get courses up and running and in some cases lack of expertise led to delays and the implementation of courses which did not achieve what was expected. That implementation was not always in line with the curriculum plan was not surprising since implementation theory tell us that in ALL situations, implementation of curricula which is faithful to the intentions of the design does not occur in the first round of its use. It takes teachers time to come to grips with the nuances of the offering and they will only implement the program in a congruent fashion after several rounds of use.

**Student Recruitment**

The Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) has, in conjunction with the Colleges, developed standard approaches to the recruitment of students to PEP programs. These include sending letters to those eligible, following up with telephone calls, and using local media to publicise the programs. At least in the initial rounds of PEP programs, recruitment of students to some Colleges tended not to be easy. For various reasons students were reluctant to sign up. CES officials believe that many if not most youth in the eligible category have been alienated from institutionalised education if not from formal institutions in general. Although most courses were eventually filled, the effort involved was very great for a small payoff in terms of the numbers of people enrolling.

The problem was one akin to that of implementing change in general; that of convincing people that an innovation is worth using without them being able to observe it at first hand. As PEP courses got going their reputation spread by word of mouth among eligible students and where courses were well regarded applications began to come in to the colleges direct. Also CES and individual Colleges developed tactics to encourage enrolments and in most cases there was strong mutual support between the two bodies. In any initiative which has a long term goal, continuity of staff is an important feature and in both Colleges and the CES there was staff turnover in the life of PEP. In some cases it has been CES policy to change personnel in charge of PEP and like programs every six months or so. This has worked against the spirit of building long term commitment to recruitment of the program.

This does not mean that all PEP courses had difficulty filling their quotas; in fact there were several for which selection of students was necessary. These were courses which had become well established under TE and had the reputation of leading to jobs (in particular) or to further education.

**Facilities**

One indication of the perceived importance of a person or entity in an organisation is the provision of facilities for that person or entity; in general the more important, the more facilities are made available. In TAFE, programs such
as PEP have generally had to put up with poorer facilities than those in the mainstream and this has had an impact on the teaching offered to students. In some, facilities used by PEP have been away from the main campus of the College although as PEP has developed and staff in Special Projects have become more organised, there have been moves to offer these programs a more equitable share of the facilities available. However, there were instances of PEP students using laboratories in and around the needs of mainstream courses, PEP courses having to run in vacation time, and PEP students working in rooms where there was constant through traffic during classes. Even within a given College PEP program there were variations in the provision of facilities given to different courses. In general those which had their genesis in TE and were well established were accorded better facilities than those more recently developed.

Staff

A key aspect of PEP has been that TAFE colleges have been able to attract staff to teach in core PEP and like courses who have personal characteristics which fit them to deal with the problems which unemployed youth bring with them. Despite conditions such as being on contract from year to year, teaching in less than adequate facilities in many instances, and having a marginal status in their institutions, PEP staff have managed to deliver programs which have been judged to be of great benefit to their students. In addition, as we outline later on, they have sometimes been influential in changing existing approaches in the mainstream of the Colleges.

The influence of core PEP teachers on the students involved cannot be overstressed. They were a dedicated group and acted in a number of important roles not least of which has been that of personal counsellor. In many instances their commitment has been well above a reasonable expectation for teachers. Where courses managed to retain these teachers for some time the reputation of the course became inseparable from the reputation of the staff involved.

In addition to subjects taken by staff on contract either as coordinator or teacher (or both), PEP programs have also used permanent staff from mainstream departments in Colleges. Coordination here has been as important as in the development of the course. In the early stages of PEP, coordinators did the rounds of the mainstream departments seeking out staff who, for one reason or another, exhibited some predilection for teaching in a program which was first of all different from the norm and second was of low status in the College. This is taken up again later in the overview.

Outcomes

In this section we concentrate on student outcomes which can be associated with PEP programs. Outcomes can be classified into several categories; changes in knowledge and skills, changes in attitudes, and what we will call empowerment. The latter is a decision to take on a job or to move to further study which was, at least in part, due to enrolment in the courses.
We have not separated knowledge and skill acquisition given the debate about whether they are distinctive or not. It has been suggested that they overlap, for example that it is necessary to have certain knowledge in order to acquire certain skills, and that there are a range of outcomes which all go under the heading of skills. Some of these can be classed as largely motor while others have a highly cognitive foundation. For an interesting discussion on the links between knowledge and skill development in the context of TAFE, see Stevenson, 1985.

Clearly there are links between outcomes. For instance self confidence is associated with the ability to master learning tasks although the ways in which these outcomes are linked in time is not clear. It is likely that there is an interdependency of acquisition between cognitive and attitudinal outcomes, each feeding off the other incrementally.

There are also links between decisions to work or go on to further study, and other outcomes, and here there is logically a definite temporal link. This is because empowerment as we have defined it is the final point in the chain of course or program related activities.

Knowledge and Skills

It is clear that an important outcome for students in PEP courses was an improvement in the area of so called basic skills, numeracy and literacy, which are seen as the keystone to building other skills needed to satisfy employers and selection officers in further education programs. In some courses, such as those for recently arrived migrants, the acquisition of these skills became the most important focus.

A question which needed to be addressed was; how did students succeed in these areas in PEP when some had such obvious difficulties while attending conventional schools? The answer lies in three aspects of the PEP programs. First, learning tasks in PEP were often related to 'real' tasks of a vocational rather than abstract nature; courses were based on problems which could be dealt with to the satisfaction of the student only if certain basic skills (such as computational skills) could be invoked. This increased the motivation of students to give attention to this aspect of their course. Second, they had the benefit of the teaching skills of empathetic and dedicated staff members who had access to information about the backgrounds of the students and who had a belief that the students could achieve something of value. Third, the relatively small groups of students in most courses was an important factor in promoting strong teacher-student links.

Attitudes

Attitudinal changes were also noted by course coordinators and evaluators; one of the major outcomes of the PEP program for students was increased self-confidence, self awareness, and personal presentation. It should be stressed again that those in PEP programs represented the disadvantaged on the educational spectrum, some with a history of continuous failure in schooling. For
the first time in many cases they were the recipients of educational interventions in which they were the primary and most important group. That they effectively responded to the programs in these ways is a testimony to the PEP rationale and to the translation of this rationale into action within the institutions.

**Work and Further Education**

An important element in this interface was for individuals to make informed choices about future alternatives; some who came into PEP had unrealistic expectations about the world of work. In PEP TAFE this was an important aspect; staff and students saw the ability to make decisions about future alternatives as one of the most important outcomes of the programs.

The case studies showed that students have moved into jobs or further studies. In some cases this occurred before completing their PEP course and in some instances the fact that the student was undertaking some form of study assisted them in gaining this employment. However, the majority of students completed their courses and subsequently moved into employment or to further study. Exact figures on the proportion of these students who moved into jobs is not available because of the variability in quality of record keeping in institutions. Successful job seeking depended on the nature of the courses, their relations with vacancies in the job market, and on the characteristics of the enrolled students. The criterion for success in finding jobs varied from course to course. For example, while a program in secretarial studies might expect 85 percent of graduates to find employment, another course in which a high proportion of intellectually handicapped students were enrolled might expect a job success rate of about 20 percent. Where there was a need for people in a given area of occupation, and where PEP programs offered courses in these areas, graduates were snapped up. In some cases almost all of the students obtained jobs and this trend has persisted over the life of PEP.

Some students went on to further education and this included prevocational and apprenticeship courses. However, compared to those obtaining jobs the proportion of PEP students who went on with their education was smaller, and in some cases almost no students went on directly to further study. While we were unable to follow up the reasons for this pattern in detail, anecdotal evidence and work from other studies suggests that the overwhelming concern of youth in general is to find a satisfactory job and and keep it. (Wilson and Wyn, 1987)

For PEP students in TAFE, a sub group of a cohort that has had a chronic history of unemployment, this concern is likely to be magnified and most may have found it difficult to pass up the opportunity of a job subsequent to PEP in favour of further commitment to study. There is also the problem of the scarcity of places in mainstream TAFE which means that PEP students must compete with others who may have better paper qualifications to enter courses. This throws up the question of the recognition of PEP programs which is dealt with in a later section of the overview.
THE INFLUENCE OF PEP ON TAFE INSTITUTIONS

Since the Government announced that it wanted all young people to complete a full secondary education or the TAFE equivalent and that it wanted equal access to, and more equitable outcomes from the programs of schools and TAFE, the Council has adopted the view, as expressed in its advice for the 1985-87 Triennium, that these objectives should apply to TAFE as a whole and not simply be confined to the Participation and Equity Program itself (section 9 of the objectives of the PEP TAFE Guidelines for 1985).

Thus, the (TAFE) Council concludes that the funds available for PEP in TAFE will be used best if applied to two main purposes:

(a) funding courses for the most disadvantaged groups with these to include both vocational courses and access or bridging courses;

(b) continuing its 'searching re-examination in TAFE of its role in this area' as sought by the Government, with a view to increasing the accessibility of 'mainstream' TAFE for the target group (section 11 of the PEP TAFE Guidelines for 1985). (our emphases)

The Commonwealth PEP guidelines for 1985 made several references to the need for PEP in TAFE to have some influence on TAFE systems as a whole, as indicated above, and an implication of this was that PEP should not be confined simply to specific programs within institutions but apply to the institutions themselves. It was therefore part of our brief to consider developments and outcomes at the whole College level.

At the outset it is necessary to discuss criteria for assessing the influence of PEP on TAFE Colleges. The underlying concept we have used is 'institutionalisation'. Rather than define the term it is easier to consider what this might mean in the context of TAFE.

First, let us describe an advanced level of institutionalisation of PEP in an educational setting. Here, the rationale of PEP pervades the entire development and teaching program and there is a general, across-college acceptance of the PEP philosophy. Some of the indicators of the adoption of this form of institutionalisation appear in departmental curriculum statements, and changes in forms of teaching and assessment. In addition there is a greater variety in the mix of students in mainstream courses with reference to previous academic attainment, gender and so on. The philosophy of PEP pervades the mission statements (or corporate plans) of the College and there is a strong across-College strategy to maintain the philosophy through continuing reviews of programs, professional development and assistance with new methods of teaching etc. There are no identifiable PEP courses, but there are some specifically for those needing to upgrade their skills in order to enter other courses. Let us call this Level 1.

There is a second and less advanced level of institutionalisation. Here, PEP
courses are recognised in the College in their own right. They are on recurrent funding and are accredited for student entry into courses in other streams which lead to a certificate or diploma; that is they count as credits. There is a staffing structure and resource allocation which recognise the importance of the PEP courses and College level policy acknowledges the existence of PEP through its mission statements as one element of the larger picture. Let us call this Level 2.

Level 1 is the sort of institutionalisation which schools are encouraged to strive for under PEP. Despite notes in the guidelines for TAFE PEP to fund courses and to increase the accessibility and suitability of the mainstream for a greater range of students, we have already indicated that the approach taken for the introduction of PEP into TAFE was to encourage the development of additional courses with a specific clientele in mind, rather than to encourage the Colleges to use the PEP resources for whole College review. Thus Level 1 has not been the primary goal in TAFE and it is thus not realistic, at least at this point in time, to look for whole College changes from this perspective.

Level 2 thus seemed to be closer to the realities for PEP TAFE given the ways in which Commonwealth guidelines have been interpreted and implemented in the States. Thus, we will use the general description under Level 2 as a criterion for examining the impact of PEP on the institutions we took as case study sites in the evaluation.

Tracing Impact Over Time

As was the case when dealing with individual programs it is important to acknowledge that time is a crucial variable in the description of impact. A full account of impact implies examining not only how individual Colleges varied on the criterion of institutionalisation, but also an examination of the factors which affected this criterion. Some of these factors may have had an effect at a given period of time or they may have been continuously present but varied in magnitude over time. In this study we are concerned with variations within a total period of about three years; from the release of the PEP guidelines to the present time, (October 1986).

To capture the impact of PEP fully it is also necessary to understand the nature of the institutions which have been the hosts for the Program. Despite the introduction of Transition programs and courses for unemployed youth in the years preceding PEP the ideology, the organisation and structure of TAFE Colleges remains closely allied to the need to provide industry with appropriately trained personnel. Links with industry are important and the Colleges are under pressure to expand their enrolments to meet the growing numbers of applications for apprenticeships and other vocationally oriented programs. Demand for places has led to a scarcity of resources for conventional training for the large number of students who have 'qualified' through prior educational performance.

This is the predominant culture of the Colleges, and it is maintained by centralised course development and accreditation and a strong emphasis on 'credentialling'. The production of skilled workers is the major objective of the
mainstream and this is carried out under a fairly rigid and controlled curriculum system. Under these conditions, and given the backgrounds and educational training of many of the staff, it is difficult for changes to be initiated in mainstream programs let alone consideration be given to methods and approaches which reflect a different or radical approach (see Kennedy, 1985 for a more extended discussion on the matter).

There were thus major differences between the ideology, organisation and structure of PEP courses and mainstream TAFE courses and these were reflected in the opinions of those who staff them. The perceptions of teachers and lecturers, whether they taught in PEP only, mainstream only or in both PEP and mainstream courses, were that PEP courses differed considerably in aspects such as the prior educational attainment of students, assessment procedures, relationships between staff and students, and the nature of emphasis placed on individual guidance. Making modifications to a course after learners join to respond to their needs, although educationally defensible and completely congruent with PEP principles, was an anathema to the background, experience, and attitudes of some TAFE teachers and administrators.

PEP and Change Strategies Within the TAFE Institutions

As was indicated earlier in this overview, in TAFE the unit of change was a relatively peripheral College group, charged first with planning and implementing an 'additional' program to that of the mainstream. Presumably the mainstream would then be influenced, over time, through a gradual infiltration of the ideas and procedures adopted by the PEP programs. A fundamental difference in practice between PEP in schools and in TAFE was the nature of the unit of change. For schools it was most likely to be the whole school and changes to individual programs came after reflection by the entire school about what needed to be done in the name of participation and equity.

It was therefore very important that, from the outset, the PEP group planned a program which, on one hand reflected the aims of the national policy while on the other had some credence in terms of the normative values and approaches of the Colleges to which they were attached.

The assumption behind these procedures was that a relatively powerless group in the institutions would act as a nucleus for encouraging whole College change through the use of a range of strategies within the institutions. Such an approach would be considered unorthodox by theorists of organisational change, but despite this PEP has done surprisingly well in some of these institutions.

The situation for PEP and to a lesser extent TE was one of introducing a small and alien culture into that of a large and predominant one. The strategy relied on a form of social interaction within the institution; that the implantation of ideas and action provided a nucleus for the internal dissemination of information. There was an assumption that the mouse might, over time, make inroads into the thoughts and actions of the elephant.
Factors Influencing the Impact of PEP

Given this, the fact is that in some Colleges PEP has made some inroads using the Level 1 criterion. Several factors have contributed to this. These include:

Legitimative support; the support of key people in the administration such as the College principal for special access programs as a whole and PEP and its predecessor, Transition Education in particular.

Educational leadership in PEP; the abilities and personal interaction qualities of key staff in the PEP program.

The nature and characteristics of PEP TAFE programs were strongly influenced by the ideologies and interpretations of the course coordinators. A sensitive coordinator was able to achieve the twin goals of conducting an innovative program while at the same time convincing the staff of the College as a whole that this program was not too radical and that the students in the PEP courses were not so different from those in the mainstream, or were different but equally deserving as mainstream students.

Internal dissemination of the PEP message; the efforts by PEP staff to spread information about PEP throughout the College, using a variety of formal and informal methods.

(We conclude that College staffs as a group were not aware of the details of the PEP initiative despite the attempts of PEP coordinators and other PEP staff. There was a limit to what could be achieved in regard to information dissemination by a small and often marginal group in the College. Systematic dissemination of information about PEP has not been a high priority of College administrators.)

In respect to bridging the culture gap, cases where the PEP coordinator had been on the College staff for a considerable time and was known to the staff also assisted in the dissemination process.

Selection of staff to teach in PEP; this often involved PEP coordinators in knowing the characteristics of mainstream staff and making bids for their services with department heads on an individual basis.

A criterion for sound selection was suitability of teacher/lecturer values and priorities as well as trade and teaching skills. Whether or not TAFE teachers took up notions of PEP depended on their values and priorities. Factors which seemed to influence these included prior experience with PEP funded staff and individual experiences which made teachers think about their teaching. Where teachers had, through one means or another, acknowledged the need to cater for a wide range of students and therefore increased flexibility in teaching, there was more likely to be a concomitant commitment to the PEP ideology.

Professional development; professional development was focussed on part-time
PEP funded staff and those in the mainstream who have been selected to teach in PEP courses. In some cases professional development activities for these groups of staff caused resentment among other staff not involved, not so much for their exclusion from the PEP activities, but because of the dearth of resources available for mainstream professional development in the Colleges.

Assistance from outside bodies; such assistance was a legitimating factor in the wider educational context as well as providing material and expert assistance. Central and regional support was important in this regard and in addition, central and regional PEP personnel provided assistance with professional development and representation of the needs of the programs in the Colleges for those in the state offices of TAFE.

Furthermore there was the help given from the CES and the links which emerged from the operation of the service and the Colleges. There were variations in the effectiveness of this aspect of the PEP program but basically the degree of cooperation between the two entities was high. This assisted in the selection of students; where there was a lower level of cooperation between coordinators and the CES, recruitment as well as publicity was not as effective.

There remain instances in which information about PEP, in a form which is attractive to the clients and which is thus likely to entice them into PEP programs, does not get into the hands of the majority of potential PEP students. The solutions for this problem are not easy and there is a challenge to find more effective ways of encouraging more students to enrol.

CONCLUSION

PEP programs

At the level of programs, TAFE PEP has encouraged student attainment of a range of outcomes which they had not been able to achieve in their prior educational experiences. In addition to increased knowledge and skills, there have been increases in personal confidence and self esteem. Many have gained jobs, and some have gone on to further study.

The reason for the success of PEP in TAFE is in no small way due to the development or refinement of sound and responsive courses, and their implementation by dedicated staff, who often worked under less than ideal conditions.

The quality of these courses varied, even within a given College. As we have outlined, staff characteristics and support from institutions and outside agencies affected course design and implementation.

PEP and mainstream TAFE

It should be noted that the direct and unique effect of PEP on Colleges is
impossible to determine given that other factors, some of which have their
genesis in State and local level initiatives, have also contributed to College-wide change. It is more appropriate to see PEP as an overarching framework within which initiatives from sources other than the Commonwealth have occurred in addition to direct effects due to this source.

We conclude that TAFE Colleges have been influenced by PEP and similar educational rationales, to different degrees, over the lifetime of the PEP initiatives. It must be noted that change takes time and the length of time required for a change to be fully incorporated depends on many factors. One of these is the nature of the change and how much it is at variance with the existing culture of the host institutions. We have indicated that the variance existing at the present time in most TAFE institutions is large. Nevertheless, some Colleges managed to reduce the distance between the ideals of PEP and the existing culture and this was achieved through the interaction of a range of internal College factors.

The PEP program, in addition to providing resources for institutions, has had the effect of challenging the modus operandi of TAFE Colleges and, if nothing else, this has provided an opportunity for debate about the operation of this important sector in the education system. We believe that the debate should not stop, and that any future Commonwealth program for the clientele served to this stage by PEP should have a well articulated educational basis which continues to challenge existing practices in mainstream TAFE.

REFERENCES


SECTION 2

CASE STUDIES
LIVERPOOL COLLEGE OF TAFE
NEW SOUTH WALES

by

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INTRODUCTION

Liverpool TAFE College is situated on the edge of Liverpool city, in one of the fastest growing regions of south west Sydney. It is a city that is a microcosm of multicultural and multi-ethnic Australia and reflects the high levels of national unemployment, especially in the case of young Australians. The College itself is adjacent to the busy main railway linking Liverpool with Sydney, the place of employment for many commuters who spend 90 minutes or more each day travelling to and from their workplaces.

The College is situated within the historic buildings of old Liverpool Hospital which was built in 1825 to the specifications of Francis Greenway, an emancipated convict and government architect for Governor Macquarie. The buildings are surrounded by peaceful lawns and flower beds. Unfortunately, the activities, especially those related to Specific Purpose Programs have outgrown the grace and charm of Greenway's design. Space for classrooms, teaching resources, and office space is at a premium, and this causes considerable difficulties. Thus during 1985, all coordinators of Participation and Equity Program (PEP) courses, along with the PEP regional coordinator, shared the same office space, which facilitated communication and team approaches to PEP at this site. In 1986 this is not the case. In a reorganisation of space in May, the regional PEP Coordinator and one College PEP course coordinator were moved off-campus to a building five minutes walk across the adjacent park and road. The other two course coordinators, one of whom is the College PEP Coordinator, are provided with office space in separate buildings and so as housed with the staff in the TAFE Schools in which they teach courses other than PEP.

The difficulties of space and the resultant problems of communication between PEP teaching staff are signals to a set of issues and problems concerning the interfacing of the philosophy, organisation and structure of PEP with that of TAFE, the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES), and secondary schools. The problems of these interfaces will be discussed in more detail below.

In general terms there is unqualified evidence that PEP at Liverpool has been successful. The courses have been well planned and structured to meet the clearly identified requirements of local CES offices, the people of the surrounding communities who are the clients for the courses, and the national guidelines of PEP. Such courses are taught by enthusiastic, dedicated, and committed people who have a high degree of empathy with the variety of students that undertake PEP at Liverpool.

More specifically, there is evidence of success according to the following criteria:

- movement of students into employment or further education; the gaining of employment skills; increases in students' self-confidence and self-esteem;
- staff development, curriculum development and increases in staff morale;
increased resources to the College.

PEP has been strongly developed at Liverpool TAFE since 1984, aided by the appointment of a PEP coordinator for the south west region and with particular emphasis on staff and curriculum development for PEP staff, publicity in local media, and intensive contact with a variety of community organisations (see Appendix 1 for further details).

Developments during 1984 and 1985 provided a strong structural base for PEP in 1986, even though funding cuts announced in 1985 resulted in the elimination of some courses and the reduction in components of courses offered in 1986. In addition, two of the courses have their basis in the school to Work Transition Program (Transition Education), and were developed during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

During 1986 six PEP courses were offered at Liverpool TAFE. The details are set out in Table 1 below.

**TABLE 1**

**PEP COURSES AT LIVERPOOL TAFE - 1986**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE TITLE</th>
<th>DURATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the Australian Work Place for people of non-English Speaking Backgrounds (hereafter called IAW for NESB)</td>
<td>18 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Handlers</td>
<td>17 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office/Computer Skills</td>
<td>18 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAW for NESB</td>
<td>18 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Handlers</td>
<td>17 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office/Computer Skills</td>
<td>18 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The story of PEP at Liverpool is in fact, not one, but three stories: a separate story for each course. Each story is different because of differences in the philosophy and ideas of each course coordinator; the nature of the content of each course; and the different backgrounds and educational, social, and personal needs of the students in each course.

Nevertheless, there are certain factors and issues which are common across all courses and these will be discussed as a background to the stories of each.
Firstly however, it is necessary to describe the basis of this evaluation report, the various data sources, and how the data were analysed.

FRAMEWORK FOR THE EVALUATION

The major purpose of this document is to describe as accurately as possible, the structure, development and achievements of the PEP courses at Liverpool TAFE from the participants' points of view. The PEP national evaluation framework was used to guide the data collection. The main basis for the findings is the triangulation of information from a number of data sources and/or from the same data source at different points in time. Details of the data sources used for this report are contained in Appendix 2.

The evaluation began with the distribution of a questionnaire. This was based upon questions designed to elicit information necessary to the PEP national evaluation, and to indicate factors and issues to be followed up in interviews and discussions with individuals and groups of participants. Eleven questionnaires were returned from fourteen teachers in the three courses. The responses to these questionnaires formed the basis for much of the information in the accounts of each course.

Audiotaped interviews and/or discussions were then undertaken with the PEP regional coordinator, the PEP College Coordinator, each course coordinator, and eight teachers, as well as the students in each course. In addition, observations were undertaken of classes in each course and of a number of other events. Data from all these sources were then analysed and points of similarity and difference were identified. Discussion of these points formed the basis of the draft report. The draft was returned to each of the people consulted in the data gathering process for comment and reaction. Changes to the draft were then negotiated and the final report developed.

The report consists of five parts. The first section deals with issues which are general across programs. Drawing from these issues, the next three sections provide a description of each of the courses currently operating at Liverpool TAFE. The final section provides a conclusion and suggests some recommendations for change which it is believed would make PEP at Liverpool even more effective.

GENERAL ISSUES

There are a number of issues which are general across all PEP courses at Liverpool TAFE. As already indicated, most of these issues are related to the interfacing of the philosophy and structure of PEP with those of secondary schools, TAFE, and CES. Because of the restriction of the length of this report two interfaces will be discussed in detail. These are the PEP/TAFE and the PEP/CES interfaces. They appear to be the most important to a majority of PEP teachers.
Certainly there is evidence that there is some need to increase the contact between PEP and secondary schools in the Liverpool region, and this is recognised by PEP staff. Unfortunately the attitude of some school principals towards informing students about the possibility of unemployment, and courses that may increase employability, hinders the distribution of information about PEP TAFE courses to those who may be its targeted clients.

PEP/TAFE Interface

There are two major issues in the PEP/TAFE interface recognised widely by PEP staff. These are the part-time employment of PEP staff, and the differences in the nature, philosophy and structure of PEP compared with mainstream TAFE courses.

Part-time nature of PEP staff

While part-time staff may provide flexibility and the opportunity to make rapid adjustments to courses in response to the needs of client groups, the part-time status of PEP staff is certainly of concern to a number of them. All PEP teachers, including all course coordinators and the College coordinator, are part-time employees of Liverpool TAFE.

Part-time staff are concerned about their lack of security of employment. This manifests itself in extreme stress when courses are considered for renewal of funding at the end of each year. Such lack of security and stress results in a rapid turnover of PEP staff and a loss of skills and experience which have been developed through costly staff and curriculum development. Thus one very efficient, well qualified, and experienced course coordinator left PEP at the end of Semester 1 in 1986 because of the need to find permanent employment. PEP staff are continually looking for such employment, and this situation is much more serious for PEP staff who do not teach in, and are not attached to a School of the College. Also there are few rights for part-time PEP staff and they still assert their need to belong to TAFE Schools, apart from PEP. A further effect of this is a reluctance by some PEP staff to spend a great deal of their own time developing resources and curriculum for courses which may not be funded.

The need for PEP staff to depend on other sources of employment results in them not being so readily available at the College. This renders communication between staff difficult and may even mean that PEP staff are not as conversant with TAFE procedures as they should be. If TAFE procedures are not carefully observed the result can bring criticism of PEP activities. This lack of awareness is not always the case since some course coordinators at Liverpool have a strong reputation for their organisation and efficiency.

The part-time nature of PEP necessitates fitting PEP courses around mainstream courses in their use of resources and facilities, except in exceptional circumstances where PEP courses have their own classrooms and resources. Course coordinators at Liverpool expressed appreciation of the manner in which head teachers were prepared to negotiate the use of resources. Once again, however, membership of a TAFE School is critical. As one teacher said "As a
PEP teacher you have to be more organised than anyone else". PEP at Liverpool TAFE College is perceived to fit reasonably easily into the College and to suffer from less difficulties than at other TAFE colleges. The part-time nature of PEP is, however, still an issue for many of the staff. Recent suggestions from the TAFE central office concerning the integration of labour market programs may alleviate some of these problems, especially for PEP course coordinators.

Differences in ideology, organisation, and structure

Comparative differences in the ideology, organisation and structure of PEP courses and mainstream courses is an issue in the PEP/TAFE interface. Perceptions of teachers, especially those teaching in both PEP and mainstream courses, are that PEP courses differ considerably in assessment, student/teacher relationships, curriculum flexibility and the degree of emphasis upon individual guidance. Because mainstream courses must comply with central curriculum and assessment guidelines there is less flexibility. Critical attitudes are aroused if courses do not fulfil the formal and often somewhat clinical approach of mainstream assessment policies, or if courses are seen to be changed midstream to adapt to the educational needs of learners. Developing a course after learners join and changing it to respond to changing needs, although educationally most defensible and completely congruent with PEP principles, is an anathema to the background, experience, and attitudes of some TAFE teachers and administrators.

Another aspect is the comparative difference in staff/student relations. PEP courses are based on strong staff/student adult relationships derived from mutual respect, with an emphasis on individual contact. First-name-based relationships, the opposite of many students' experience while at school (see Appendix 3 - Student Profiles), are an important symbol for many PEP students. It is however, difficult for some mainstream staff to adjust to this, and some staff have refused to teach PEP courses. Other staff would like to develop the principles of PEP in their own courses and regard the provision of individual guidance and a more relaxed classroom environment with some jealousy.

A final aspect is the requirement that PEP staff justify expenditure of kinds which are different from those of mainstream TAFE courses. The procedures of justification are often time-consuming, taking part-time teachers away from higher priority student activities. Such difficulties are exacerbated by a change in college executive staff or by executive staff who are unsympathetic or uninformed about PEP philosophy and ideals.

There are a number of factors that can help to explain the friction that sometimes occurs along the PEP/TAFE interface. First, staff, especially head teachers, many of whom are starved of resources themselves, perceive that PEP is overfunded. This was particularly the case prior to 1985. Further, these often substantial funds, are managed by part-time teachers and provide resources which are at a premium in a College lacking in accommodation, such as at Liverpool. Although these resources are available to the College, PEP courses have priority. Often funds are seen to be used on expenditure completely congruent with PEP
guidelines and essential to the success of PEP courses, but are not seen as worthwhile by non-PEP staff. What is interesting is that sometimes these supposed extravagances are actually paid for by the PEP students themselves (for example, the Canberra excursion of the Office/Computer skills course), partly to compensate for reduced funds and partly because the activities are seen to be so central to the course and its success.

The second explanatory factor is the high degree of staff development and curriculum development provided for PEP staff. PEP staff at Liverpool have had "more staff development than any other staff at Liverpool College". To some extent this is essential to inform them of TAFE and PEP procedures, and to compensate for the turnover of staff caused by the lack of security and part-time nature of the PEP. Mainstream TAFE part-time staff, however, are not eligible for any staff development, and the opportunity for staff development for full-time staff is not overgenerous.

Third, there is a difference in the rates of pay in at least one School, where PEP teachers belonging to that school are paid a higher rate of pay than their colleagues teaching the same content in mainstream courses in classes which have larger numbers of students. What is interesting is that PEP staff, who also teach mainstream courses, perceive vast differences in the teaching of the two types of courses, and significant differences in their own approaches and actions as teachers.

There is no doubt that some of the critical attitudes towards PEP by non-PEP staff derive from a lack of accurate information, and perceptions based on the early days of PEP when funding levels were high and curriculum decisions and development were not of the standard they are now. Even now, part-time employment and lack of security still affect the quality of curriculum work.

To summarise, although PEP is perceived to fit fairly comfortably at Liverpool, possibly because of the number of Specific Purpose staff and programs, there are still at times some tensions in the PEP/TAFE interface. To some extent this is because the philosophy, underlying principles, organisation and structure of PEP courses are not entirely congruent with TAFE ideology, aims, procedures and organisation. Sometimes however, these tensions are caused by non-PEP staff desiring to adopt some of the principles and practices of PEP in their mainstream courses.

**PEP/CES Interface**

PEP teachers and coordinators who returned questionnaires suggested that communications with the central and regional offices were very good, especially after the PEP Handbook was made available. What constitutes an issue for most teachers is the interface of PEP and CES. It is also an issue for the local CES Youth Officer.

The Youth Officer holds the Liverpool PEP courses in high regard. He believes they are of excellent quality and relevant to the main client groups of the Liverpool area. There is little difference of opinion between the Liverpool PEP
staff and the CES in regard to the aims of the courses or the identification of the main clients. The Youth Officer suggests that the main clients of PEP are young people who

- have an unrealistic idea of the labour market
- lack job-seeking and presentation skills
- have skills but are unable to find work because of low confidence or low self esteem.

A clear problem recognised by PEP staff and the Youth Officer is the need for sufficient and effective communication between PEP and CES. A seminar held during 1985 to facilitate this was effective but it was not repeated during 1986.

The need for communication of this nature can be seen in the following example. PEP course coordinators mentioned a series of difficulties associated with effective identification and assessment of potential students. (More effective and earlier identification would mean better course planning and organisation and greater lead in time to fit in with mainstream TAFE courses.)

The CES Liverpool Youth Officer claims that he has only met one course coordinator and does not know the other coordinators or teachers. Part of the difficulty of communication is the large number of programs that CES has to administer and the pressures of time on all concerned. What is not appreciated by some PEP staff is that there is an annual changeover of the person who is the Youth Officer. This is a CES staff policy. Thus it is necessary to establish good working relationships and promote awareness with a new person each year. Certainly it appears that a greater effort could be made by both PEP staff and CES staff to establish some regular and effective communication.

A further related issue is that of effective publicity of PEP by CES. Both parties recognise the need for this. They also recognise that reduced funds mean successful publicity of all labour market programs is difficult. Certainly evidence from students in Liverpool PEP courses substantiates the need for publicity. In only one of the course groups did the majority claim to have found out about PEP through CES contact, although all students enrolled in PEP courses at Liverpool were processed through the CES office. There is a general feeling, however, that PEP is a worthwhile and proven product and Liverpool has plenty of PEP clients who can benefit from its courses. All that is necessary is more effective resources to publicise PEP to those who would benefit from it as well as to prospective employers and the community. This is not to deny that efforts have been made to do this. (See Appendix 1.) Although Liverpool PEP is currently catering successfully for a range of students, it might be argued that those students who could benefit most from PEP do not know that it exists. The publication in 1986 of PEP posters and a brochure advertising Liverpool PEP courses is a beginning but a great deal more could be done if more resources were made available.

It is now time to turn to the individual stories of each of the three PEP courses.
INTRODUCTION TO THE AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACE FOR MALES FROM NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING BACKGROUNDS

This course began in 1984 and has utilised the findings of the 1984 "Search" conferences to meet the specific needs of young people recently arrived in Australia. The course caters mainly for immigrants from countries in South East Asia, South America, and the Middle East. It is coordinated by a part-time PEP teacher who is a recent migrant from Vietnam and who has close ties with the Vietnamese community in Sydney. He is joined by a female coordinator when the course has all or a significant number of female students.

Purposes of the Course

The underlying assumptions and purposes of the course are strongly influenced by the experience of the course coordinator as a bilingual information officer for the Australian Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. In this role he was responsible for providing information concerning government and non-government welfare agencies to recently arrived refugees. This experience convinced him that the most important barriers for migrants were an inability to speak the English language and significant differences between their own and the Australian culture. These convictions are clearly reflected in the course components (see below). The major emphasis of the course is towards the development of students' oral and written facility in the English language.

Because of the concentration upon English, there is reduced time for a great deal of training in work-specific skills. Although several areas of work skills are introduced some perceptions have been expressed that such a brief introduction does not develop sufficient skill and experience for employment or for moving into other mainstream TAFE courses. There is also some feeling that PEP courses should not concentrate upon the teaching of English, but should come after students' level of English has reached a certain standard. This is partly because it is felt that students' entry level of English does not permit them to make the most of other components of the course. There is no doubt that in the classes observed in this course the teaching/learning process was markedly affected by students' level of English. Students found it difficult to grasp abstract concepts such as measurement by micrometer and to understand manuals associated with micro-computers. The latter resulted in student absenteeism from the Computer Keyboard Skills component of the course.

The inadequate level of English is perceived as an issue by teachers and students alike, and there is some feeling that a screening process should be undertaken so that students who enter the course should have reached a level of language facility that would allow them to gain more employment-specific skills. The course coordinator believes that such screening procedures are unfair and discriminatory. He sees PEP as the last chance for older immigrants to gain employable skills and believes that the age limit for students entering PEP should be 55. Screening procedures may also mean that there are not sufficient student numbers to operate the course. Such a fear is extremely real to someone who has no security in TAFE. The coordinator believes that the educational needs of the client group are not so diverse that it is impossible to
develop a focus on specific detailed course content and marketable skills. Instead of screening, his solutions lie in the use of bi-lingual teaching and team teaching, although these were not observed during the study because funds for such teaching strategies were not available. He also believes, and this is confirmed by other teachers and by observation, that one of the problems is the lack of skills of TAFE teachers in teaching students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Course Components

As suggested above, the development of students' level of written and spoken English is seen as the prime purpose of the course. This is reflected in the hours devoted to these components in the list of subjects below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Hours/Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Conversation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English on the Job</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Life Skills</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australiana</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Seeking Skills</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Awareness</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheet Metal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpentry and Joinery</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eight teachers, most of them part-time, from a variety of Schools teach in the course. Facilities and teachers at Miller TAFE College are used for Sheet Metal and Carpentry and Joinery on one day of the week. This arrangement places restrictions on time-tabling. Notwithstanding this, there still appears to be an overconcentration of English subjects on certain days of the week.

The course has no rooms or facilities of its own. This sometimes means using Liverpool College facilities at times when mainstream students are on vacation, which can result in difficulties with the College administration.

Students

Fourteen students enrolled in the course in first semester in 1986. All were invited by letter from the local CES office to undertake the course. During the course, one left to take up employment and two others left to attend an English course with the Adult Migrant Education Service. Eleven students successfully completed the course. The average age of students was over 20 years, which supports the notion that PEP may well be the last chance for such students to gain employable skills. None of the students attended high schools in Australia, even though some of them had gained educational and employment credentials in their countries of origin and had also been employed there; (see Appendix 3 for Student Profiles). In the 1986 group there were two Spanish, one Turkish, one Russian Chinese, one Khmer, three Chinese Vietnamese and three Vietnamese students.
Achievements

In some respects it is more difficult to measure the achievements of students in this course than some other courses. Students do proceed to employment; at the time of writing two students have immediate prospects and the large majority of students suggested that they would immediately begin seeking employment. Students appear to have developed a greater awareness of the job market and possible work areas, while in addition they have all developed, or refined, specific work skills and applied these during a week of work experience. In addition they had gained a greater awareness of Australian society and some skills to function within it. For about a third of the students, however, their limited level of English language skills, and their lack of assertiveness, are likely to affect their gaining of employment.

Consideration might be given to several strategies that could perhaps render the course more effective. At the moment the course seems caught between two sets of purposes. One is to develop students’ facility in English; the other is to develop employable skills. The present tension between these purposes might be resolved in a number of ways. One would be language screening, but for several reasons this may not be appropriate, especially given the average entry age of students to the course. A second would be to develop consecutive courses. The first course would concentrate heavily upon the development of English with some introduction to a range of work areas. The second would concentrate heavily upon the development of specific employment skills. The first would be a prerequisite for the second which could provide a bridge to mainstream TAFE courses. Both courses should be available to males and females, although mixed groups may present difficulties for some ethnic groups, principally those belonging to Arabic and South American cultures.

Alternatively, the present course philosophy could be maintained but the structure changed so that the first half of the course concentrated heavily upon intensive language development while the second half concentrated heavily upon work specific skills. A further strategy would be to build in learning sessions where students become familiar with vocabulary and concepts that will be used in other components of the course. Finally, the greater use of individualised learning modules to cater for students' different levels of understanding and experience could be investigated.

The development of any course which tries to build upon the wide range of backgrounds, experience, and abilities of non-English speaking Australians and to meet their diverse educational, social, and personal needs is difficult. Perhaps one solution is to vary the philosophy and structure of each course so that the needs of a more specifically targeted group of students are more effectively catered for in each.

OFFICE/COMPUTER SKILLS COURSE

The prototype for the Office/Computer Skills course began under Transition
Education in 1981. It was developed by the current head teacher of Business and Administration at Liverpool TAFE, in co-operation with CES at Liverpool and with an awareness of employers' needs in the region.

Philosophy

The underlying philosophy and purposes of the course reflect the ideas of both the course coordinator and teachers of the course. There are strong elements of individual achievement, fostering of characteristics appropriate to successful employment, and competition between students built into the curriculum and structure of the course. Such ideas are reflected in the manner in which the Most Outstanding Student and Personal Achievement awards are organised and the "Office Teams" Incentive Scheme is conducted. It is also reflected in the organisation of Presentation Night at the end of the course. Parallel with these features, however, are also strong elements of co-operation and the development of group identity and cohesion. These latter elements are reflected not only in group activities (especially the three-day Canberra excursion which both teachers and students affirm as central to the course) but also in the fact that the students raise the funds together to undertake such activities.

Course Components and Purposes

All teachers perceive that the course components clearly reflect the major intentions of the course. There is unanimous agreement from teachers and others that the most important aim of the Office/Computer Skills course is to increase the employability of students so that they gain employment at the end of the course. There is also clear agreement by the teachers that the key to students' employment is the raising of their self esteem and belief in their employability. Identifying and refining existing skills; developing awareness about work, workplaces, guidance and counselling services; and helping students to develop specific work skills are all seen as important.

The curriculum clearly reflects these intentions and the specific work-skills nature of the course. Reduction in PEP funds has meant a continued concentration in keyboard skills, seen as central to any office employment, and a 50 percent reduction in components such as Job Seeking Skills and Communication, now one hour for each per week. In addition there has been a 50 percent reduction in the Office Skills component which means that an introduction to accountancy and potential bridging to the mainstream Accountancy course has been lost.

The curriculum to a large extent consists of learning tasks that are directly related to students' job seeking, such as the production of components of students' resumes and portfolios and preparations for, or reports of, other student activities such as the Canberra excursion or Presentation night.

Students

It is widely recognised that the students in this course are on average
academically more able than other PEP students and similar to the type of students undertaking mainstream courses. In addition they do not have difficulties with English. There is usually no shortage of potential students and 42 students applied for one course. Because of the number of students applying and the belief that there must be a basic level of spelling, grammar and maths, all potential students undergo a series of selection tests. If they fail these basic tests they are excluded and advised to seek assistance from other TAFE sections and then re-enrol. Some subsequently enrol in other PEP courses.

In the course operating during the period of the case study, there were several students who had gained their Higher School Certificate, and of the others, 50 percent had gained their School Certificate. (See Appendix 3) The remainder left school at years 8 or 9. Those who gained certificates did not succeed at the level they wished. Most had difficulties at school, either in their academic work or in their relationships with teachers, which reinforced their "lack-of-success" experience. In the words of the students, they were unable to take the subjects they wanted to and their schooling did not provide them with employable skills. Others were not sure about the areas of employment in which they wanted to work. In classroom observations, there were indications that a number of students had some difficulties with grammar construction, spelling, and mathematics. They also demonstrated strategies to overcome these problems.

Most students in the course had previous work experience although this was mainly short term and generally not seen as satisfactory. Most students heard about the course via word-of-mouth though a minority came through the CES offices. A significant number were using the course to upgrade their skills so that they could gain more desired employment.

**Teachers**

The five teachers in the course form a competent, well organised, and coherent unit. The staff have a shared philosophy for the course, high morale and respect for one another. They are committed to their work and their students. Students recognise all these things and staff/student relations are very good.

**Resources**

This course is the only PEP course that has its own classroom and facilities. PEP funds have provided a well-equipped simulated office and a computer laboratory adjacent to it. This is an important factor which facilitates the work of teachers and students and provides the opportunity for students to develop ownership of their "home room" as part of group identity and cohesion. When not being used by PEP students, these facilities are used by other courses.

**Achievements**

Achievement of the major purpose of the course, that is, to develop employment skills and have students employed shortly after finishing the course, is reflected clearly in the fact that over 70 percent of students find and retain permanent
employment. At the end of the current course five or six students had already found employment and another four had strong possibilities of employment. The high rate of immediate employment is to some extent due to the quality of students selected and the fact that the course is catering for a highly specific area of employment. This is not happening to the same extent regarding other PEP courses offered at Liverpool.

There are, however, other important achievements in addition to employability. These include: high levels of staff and student morale, consistently good student attendance and participation, positive student attitudes towards employment, an increased level of student self esteem, positive staff/student relationships. In addition the course allows students to develop work-specific skills such as keyboarding to a level commensurate with students in mainstream courses. In addition, a number of current students have indicated that they will undertake further education.

**FOOD HANDLERS' COURSE**

The Food Handlers course was first conducted in 1984. It was planned by full and part-time teachers in the Home Science School, in co-operation with representatives of the food industry in the Liverpool region, after it was identified as an employment area by the CES Liverpool Office. Three of the current teachers had previous experience with Transition Education and they suggested that this established a positive view of PEP. One teacher however, believes that whereas Transition Education was work-specific, PEP is quite different in its broader view of education emphasising student welfare and esteem.

From its inception, the course has attracted either slow or handicapped learners and has developed a good reputation in sheltered workshops and specific schools. Indeed an application was made to run a course specifically for handicapped people during 1986. This was unsuccessful because the local CES office considered there were not sufficient students.

**Philosophy**

The Food Handlers course, in many respects and compared with other PEP courses at Liverpool, caters for students from the widest range of abilities, backgrounds, and experience. The course operating during the period of the case study had the widest range of students in any course run so far. Food Handlers often includes students rejected from the Office Skills course and usually includes students with a greater incidence and variety of personal, social and academic problems. This wide range of students is probably partly due to the developmental history of the course and the predispositions of the course coordinator and teachers. Students are prepared for an extremely varied range of potential employment from basic kitchen hand, through fast-food employee to aspiring chef.

Because of the nature of the students and the attitudes of staff there is a strong emphasis upon student welfare and guiding students into the future which may
mean immediate employment, further work training or further courses in basic
education and living skills. This is not to say that there is not also an emphasis
on employment skills, however, these may not necessarily be used to gain
employment immediately after the completion of the course. The emphasis
upon the development of employment skills is clearly seen in the components of
the course.

**Course Components**

The course includes components appropriate to a wide range of employment in
the preparation, cooking, and serving of food in commercial and non-commercial
establishments. It has the following features:

- Individual guidance and support are very important especially for students
  with special educational, personal or social needs.

- Team teaching is used in all practical work of the course. Extra hours from
  PEP Liverpool College, and a regional teacher for the disabled, permit the
  team teaching to take place. From classroom observations such teaching is
  essential to provide the patient assistance and support necessary to meet
  the wide range of student needs and levels of ability.

- Commercial Cookery classes are split so that the slow learner students are
  taught separately from the other students. (In the course observed there were
  six in this category.) The prime reason for this is safety.

- Classes are provided for the slow learning students so that they have some
  understanding of vocabulary and concepts, especially of the Fast Foods
  component.

**Students**

There were 14 students enrolled in the course observed, ranging in age from 16
to 24 years. They found out about the course either through their school, family,
or the CES office. While one student had a reasonable pass in his Higher
School Certificate, another was classified as almost intellectually handicapped.
Of the 12 students who attended regularly, six were classified as slow learners.
In addition to academic difficulties each of these students had problems of
social adjustment due largely to immaturity. Most are not independent and
require a great deal of care, support and attention. It is quite possible that
some of them may have benefitted from a preliminary program, eg a course in
basic living skills, prior to enrolling in the Food Handlers' course. This would
require more effective procedures for identification and assessment prior to
enrolment.

Patterns in other students' backgrounds, as discussed in the Office Skills course,
are again common for students in the Food Handlers' course (see Appendix 3 -
Student Profiles). In general the students have not had success at school, and
they lack awareness and skills for job seeking and employment. Often they
have not made clear decisions about their future employment.
Teachers

The six teachers who teach this course are skilled, committed, and dedicated teachers who have a particular empathy with disadvantaged adolescents. Staff morale is high and there are good relationships between staff and students. The teachers form a coherent unit and work very effectively with each other, not only in teaching the course but also in planning and management. The demands on teachers by the students attracted to this course are great and teacher "burnout" is probably more an issue in this course than others in the PEP program at the College.

Achievements

One of the main achievements has been the high retention rates particularly given such a wide range of student abilities and backgrounds. Further, although the students who are not slow learners admit that sometimes things become difficult, they believe that many positive results have stemmed from the wide range of student abilities in the group. They claim to have learnt much about themselves, and helping other students has increased their own confidence and self esteem. Many people are currently employed in the food industry without any training. Employers are thus very positive about employing students from this course. Work experience has not only been important for the students, allowing them to experience work as an adult and to employ the skills they have learnt; in addition it has been an important vehicle for employers to find out about the course and the skills which students possess. Work experience has led to an offer of employment for several students including two of the slow learners. The other four slow learners will probably undertake further basic education courses which will enhance their prospects for employment. One of the students has decided that his career lies in Catering Management. He has found employment and intends to enrol in the Food School at Ryde TAFE College, which looks favourably on students who have undertaken the Food Handlers' course.

Apart from these achievements students have gained in self esteem, have learnt job-seeking skills, gained an awareness and knowledge of the availability of employment of different sectors of the food industry, and mastered a range of specific employment skills in work areas available in the local region.

CONCLUSION

The PEP TAFE courses offered at Liverpool are of a high standard and are designed to meet the needs of groups targeted by PEP guidelines. They have developed from a sound basis, extending back in some cases to the days of Transition Education, and supported by active and supportive regional coordination and the advantage of extensive staff and curriculum development.

In general the courses fit fairly easily into the College and relations between PEP and other sectors of Liverpool TAFE are claimed to be more amenable than in
some other TAFE Colleges. This situation is probably to a large degree, the result of a competent, efficient, and dedicated PEP staff who are committed to students and their needs. There is still some tension created by PEP. Generally this results from expectations and experience which are not congruent with the ideology of PEP. To some degree PEP fits uneasily into the structure of mainstream TAFE.

The development of high levels of separate internal group cohesion and identity within each course has to some extent mitigated against high levels of interaction between students in different courses. Thus apart from a weekly meeting of course coordinators there is minimal between-course interaction. This lack of interaction can also be attributed to the perceptions of course coordinators that the three student groups are quite different in their needs and backgrounds, the courses are too short, and time is too important to allow for much interaction between courses.

The creation of permanency and greater security for PEP TAFE staff is certainly an issue. So is the need for more effective publicity of PEP courses in the Liverpool region. It is important that better communication be established with the Liverpool CES office and with local secondary schools. Finally, a movement to develop closer links between PEP and Specific Purpose programs staff and some attempts to integrate activities and personnel may result in a more effective use of shrinking economic resources. A "School" of Labour Market Programs could well be the solution to a variety of problems. A move such as this may also facilitate the development of bridges between PEP courses and mainstream TAFE courses and closer integration of the work of PEP into Liverpool TAFE College.

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In postscript it can be added that the follow-up survey conducted two weeks after the completion of the courses revealed that, of the 12 students in the IAW for NESB course, three had gained full-time employment and one had part-time employment. Of the 12 students who completed the Food Handlers' course two had full-time jobs, one had part-time employment, five had enrolled in the mainstream TAFE Living Skills course, one was in an English TAFE course, and one was both employed and is in training as a catering manager. A number of students gained jobs in the place of their work experience. This underlines the importance of the work experience component, especially for the students in the IAW for NESB.

There are three courses running in the second semester of 1986 at Liverpool TAFE. There are 15 students in each of Office Skills and IAW for NESB, and 14 in the Food Handlers' course. In the latter course none of the students have been classed as slow learners. Four of the students in the IAW course, which has changed its focus to retailing, are females.
APPENDIX 1

Summary of Developments in PEP at Liverpool 1984 and 1985

1984

8 courses:

1. Office Skills - Semester 1 and 2 (18 weeks)
2. Young Women and Work - Semester 1 and 2 (12 weeks)
3. Food Handlers - Semester 1 and 2 (12 weeks)
4. Job Seeking Skills for Vietnamese Women - Semester 1 (18 weeks)
5. Introduction to the Australian Workplace for Indochinese - Semester 2 (18 weeks)
6. Introduction to Visual Arts and Trades - Semester 1
7. Introduction to Trades and Technology (only ran for 8 weeks)

13 Days of PEP Liverpool Staff Development
130 Hours of Curriculum Development in 2, 3, and 4
38 Contacts with community agencies
15 Articles in Liverpool and community newspapers

1985

8 courses:

1. Office Skills - Semester 1 and 2 (18 weeks)
2. Food Handlers - Semester 1 and 2 (12 weeks)
3. Introduction to the Australian Workplace for Indochinese - Semester 1 (18 weeks)
4. Introduction to the Australian Workplace for Women from non-English Speaking backgrounds - Semester 2 (18 weeks)

5. Introduction to Trades and Technology (only ran for 8 weeks)
6. Introduction to Visual Arts and Trades - Semester 1

*These courses were discarded in 1986 because of reduced PEP funds and changes in CES priorities.

12 days of Liverpool PEP staff development
120 hours of Curriculum Development
44 contacts with community agencies
18 articles in Liverpool and community newspapers

- Appointment of Liverpool TAFE College PEP coordinator
- Purchase of 16 Apricot computers for use in the Liverpool TAFE PEP Office Skills course and other courses in the region
- PEP poster and pamphlet designed and printed
- PEP course regional directory produced
- Introduction of the Most Outstanding Student Achievement award and Personal Achievement award.
APPENDIX 2

Summary of Data Sources

Formal Audiotaped Interviews:
Coordinator of Office Skills/Computer Skills Course
PEP Liverpool College Coordinator and Coordinator of Food Handlers' course
Previous PEP Regional Coordinator of South West Metropolitan Region
Students in the Introduction to the Australian Workplace for persons of Non-English Speaking Background (I.A.W. for N.E.S.B.)

Discussions:
Coordinator of I.A.W. for N.E.S.B.
A part-time teacher in all three PEP courses (Job Seeking Skills/Communication)
A part-time teacher in I.A.W. for N.E.S.B. course (Computer Skills)
A part-time teacher in Office/Computer Skills course (Keyboard Skills)
Coordinator of Office Skills/Computer Skills course
A part-time teacher in Food Handlers' course
Temporary PEP Regional Coordinator, and,
PEP Liverpool College Coordinator
Students from I.A.W. for N.E.S.B.
Students from Office/Computer Skills course
Students from Food Handlers' course
A part-time teacher Food Handlers' course and owner of a restaurant
Youth Officer, Liverpool CES Office
Principal, Liverpool TAFE College

Observations:
Auto Electric class for I.A.W. for N.E.S.B.
Job Seeking Skills for I.A.W. for N.E.S.B.
Food Handlers' Teachers' Meeting
Job Seeking Skills for Office/Computer Skills
Keyboard Skills for Office/Computer Skills
Office/Computer Skills Students Meeting
Practical class for Food Handlers
Shop Skills for Food Handlers (Slow Learners)
Basic Education for Food Handlers (Slow Learners)
Fast Foods for Food Handlers
End of PEP course Presentation Afternoon
Presentation Night for Office/ Computer Skills
English for Work for I.A.W. for N.E.S.B.
APPENDIX 3

PEP Student Profiles (pseudonyms are used)

Jim - is 20 years old and is attending the Food Handlers' course. He undertook his Higher School Certificate in a Victorian boarding school but had little information or skills in how to seek employment. For Jim PEP has been an opportunity to take stock and make a decision about his future career. After completing the Food Handlers' course he will find employment and enrol in the Food School at Ryde to become a catering manager.

Kathy - is 18 years old and is attending the Food Handlers course. She repeated Year 8 at Campbelltown High School and left as soon as she could. Her experience at school was negative. Coming from a home in which she was allowed to make her own decisions she did not like teachers making decisions about her life without consulting her. She chose to repeat "to get them back". In 1984/5 she first worked with her father in a cleaning business and then undertook several labour market program courses. She is now sick of courses that don't result in anything and wants employment. In 1986 Liverpool CES suggested she enrol in PEP.

Marion - is 16 years old and completed Year 10 in a Special school in 1985 along with four of the other girls in the class. Her teachers suggested she undertake the Food Handlers' course. She is on the border of being intellectually handicapped but can certainly cope with vegetable preparation. She worked as a food hand in a hospital during work experience and enjoyed it. She is fairly immature and sometimes reveals problems of social adjustment in the class.

Kerry - is 23 years old and is completing the Office/Computer Skills course. She completed the School Certificate. She then sat for the Higher School Certificate and "did well in the subjects I was interested in." She has done numerous courses but only completed the nine month course in sound engineering. She has been a floor manager of Coles and is currently a saxophonist in a band. "PEP is the first course where I've felt I've been getting any useful skills." She wants to work in a music-related area and PEP has allowed her to upgrade her skills.

Barbara - is 19 years old and has her Higher School Certificate. In 1985 she enrolled in the Secretarial course at Liverpool TAFE. She was a poor student, uninterested and absent a great deal of the time. These facts are confirmed by one of the PEP Office Skills teachers who was one of her teachers last year. Barbara didn't like the mainstream course because "you were treated like a kid - just another one of the group - in PEP you're treated like an adult - like a person."
John - is 18 years old and is enrolled in the Office Skills course. He left school in Year 10 after gaining his School Certificate. He worked as a paint salesman but wants a job in using or selling computers. He is also completing his Higher School Certificate at Liverpool TAFE at night, and even though it is a commitment of four nights/week so far he has attended regularly.

Mehmet - is 22 years old and is attending the Introduction to the Australian Workplace. He has recently arrived from Turkey and his spoken English is still heavily accented. Furthermore he has yet to master a number of the idioms of Australian language use. He holds a qualification in motor mechanics which he gained in Turkey, and has been a practising motor mechanic in that country. He has worked with a large local car retail and repair firm for his work experience and he hopes that they will offer him employment.
APPENDIX 4

DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Campbell, R.,  The Educational Needs of Young People from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds: Report from the PEP Search Conferences Liverpool, May 1984 and July 1984, NSW Department of TAFE.

Campbell, R.,  PEP in the South West Metropolitan Area 1984, N.S.W. Department of TAFE, February, 1985.


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Parsonage, J. and Simon G., "TAFE PEP Programs and ATP Programs in the South West Metropolitan Area, July-November 1986", NSW Department of TAFE, June, 1986.

NSW Department of TAFE, "Submission in support of the restructuring of the PEP Unit and associated College-based positions to take into account all Labour Market Programs developed and implemented through NSW TAFE", April, 1986.

THE DARWIN OFFICE PRACTICES COURSE
NORTHERN TERRITORY

by

GERALD SELLINGER
INTRODUCTION

In a large second storey room of a primary school in one of the older suburbs of Darwin, young women are learning new skills and gaining a new sense of themselves as useful people. They are students of an Office Practices course which is funded by the Participation and Equity Program (PEP). Over the period of a year, at least 45 students will enrol in the course, although not all at the one time. If the experience of those who have previously completed Office Practices is repeated, almost all of the young women will find employment, most in an area of office work but some in other areas which suit their particular interests.

At any one time, the group is likely to be quite diverse in terms of age (from 15 to 24 years) and ethnic background (Aboriginal, Vietnamese, Thai, white Australian). Common features are that they are unemployed and almost all have, or have had, some difficult personal or family problems. Frequently, these experiences have left them with feelings of lack of self-worth and very limited aspirations for the future.

The young women will spend varying amounts of time in the course because it has flexible entry and exit. When they are judged to be ready for work experience, they will spend about two weeks with an employer. In the majority of cases, this will allow the employer, the coordinator of the course, and each young woman to assess whether she is ready to begin applying for jobs. She will be coached and helped through this by course staff and can then expect to gain employment.

THE OFFICE PRACTICES COURSE

Office Practices is one of the courses funded under PEP through the TAFE Division of the Northern Territory Department of Education.1 The course began in 1982 as part of the Department's School to Work Transition program (Transition Education) and remains under the administration of the Department, referring directly to the PEP Executive Officer and PEP Committee, rather than being allied to an institution.

Two fixed-length, short courses in Office Practices were run in 1982 and a further two 12 weeks courses in 1983. Although successful in terms of the number of young women attracted to the courses, it was apparent to the staff of the course and to some administrators of the Transition Education program that a fixed time period was not appropriate for all those who came to the course. Some were ready for employment in a shorter time but most needed a longer

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1Within the TAFE Division, PEP courses are provided by Darwin Institute of Technology, (through a direct grant from the PEP Committee) and through the Department of Education's Regional structures and TAFE Colleges under its direct administration.
period to develop sufficient skills and self-confidence.

So, since 1984, open-ended entry and exit conditions and a modular structure for skill development have been features of the course. This structure is seen by staff as most successful in that it allows students to start when it is appropriate for them and to stay as long as they need to gain confidence and skills. The average time on course is five months but staff are prepared to work with someone for considerably longer than this when there are major problems to overcome and when they can see that a young woman is obviously moving, however slowly, towards increasing confidence and employability.

The course has been located in a primary school since its inception because it was Department owned space which was available and centrally situated. The large double room in which the course is housed is at one end of an upstairs block and although obviously part of the school, it does have the feeling of being apart. In general, students do not seem to be put off by being in a primary school environment although one young woman wrote in an essay, "I feel funny when I walk past the kid's school room... I wish we had a small college where we can feel like adults."

Several Education Department officers who have a close knowledge of the course regard it as highly successful. So too do some administrators even though they do not have such close connections with it. Because Office Practices is historically a 'Department' course and it is seen as so successful, there is a concern that it remain a 'Department' course.

PURPOSES AND AIMS OF THE COURSE

The stated aims and objectives of Office Practices are to:

- enable students to acquire skills sufficient for them to obtain employment as office juniors;
- assess the suitability of students for office work and to redirect them to other courses or agencies if necessary;
- ensure students have an understanding of agencies and government departments in order to make effective use of their services;
- develop appropriate work habits and attitudes;
- help students develop self confidence and improve life skills.

The purpose of the course is to train students for immediate employment, so the specific training which is provided involves knowledge and skills which are essential to succeed as an employee in an office situation. However, the staff of the course and the Executive Officer of PEP in the Northern Territory regard Office Practices as the entry point rather than the only focus of the course. If office work does not interest students as an area of employment, they are
assisted to develop other interests but the office skills themselves are still seen as useful. The personal development part of the course is regarded as crucial.

Course staff emphasise that one of their main tasks is to raise the aspirations of the young women on the course. Low achievement at school together with, in most cases, home and personal problems, has resulted in them having limited personal horizons. In addition, according to the coordinator, pregnancy has served to restrict the aspirations of some current and potential students. While early pregnancy has been seen as a way of achieving love and of being needed, it has often meant that a young woman was restricted even more in the independent decisions which she could make about her life.

SELECTION OF STUDENTS

Students are attracted from greater Darwin as well as from areas closer to the location of the course. Some are referred through the CES and welfare agencies but most come because they have heard about the course from friends or acquaintances or through a community group. The Coordinator stressed the importance of informal networks in Darwin, both among potential students and among administrators. There is a close working relationship between some CES officers and the Coordinator and an exchange of information about individual young women and their particular needs. The course is well-known in agencies which have contact with potential students, among employers who have taken graduates from the course (particularly some areas of the public service), and among community groups as a result of the guest speaker program which forms part of the course. Information about Office Practices has been disseminated through all of these groups.

The Coordinator is responsible for the final decision as to whether or not a student is accepted. There is a deliberate effort to include those most in need ie young women who are most disadvantaged and who would not be accepted into other courses. Many students experience not only the disabling effects of unemployment but also other personal problems which affect ability to find and keep employment.

In the interview which all potential students have prior to acceptance, the Coordinator looks for signs of motivation and a willingness to put some effort into the course. The evaluator observed an interview with a potential student, during which the Coordinator was firm, friendly, and encouraging and able to draw the young woman out to talk about herself and her plans for the future. The Coordinator is also emphatic that the course is not a "sheltered workshop" and people with problems which the staff cannot deal with eg severe psychiatric or drug problems, are not taken on. Students who are judged as being able to benefit immediately from a mainstream TAFE course are not accepted into Office Practices, but referred to the appropriate course elsewhere.

Of the 41 students who enrolled in the course during 1985, 36 attended for a period of longer than two months, the other five withdrawing or terminating for various reasons. The average age of the students was 17.4 years and the
average educational standard was completion of year eight. Fourteen were Aboriginal and ten were of non-English speaking background. Over half of the young women were not living at home; four were wards of the State and five were single mothers.

SELECTION OF STAFF

Staff were recruited using the following general guidelines as the basis for selection:

• staff must have demonstrated competence in the skills they are employed to impart although formal qualifications are not essential;

• they must have an affinity for young people, an understanding of their problems and a commitment to helping them;

• they must understand and accept the philosophy of PEP as well as be flexible enough to accept new ideas.

The present Coordinator has been employed since late 1982 and the part-time instructors since 1983. The success of the course is obviously due in large part to these three people. All are committed to what they are doing and despite the frustrations and setbacks which they talk of, the enjoyment and personal satisfaction which they get from their work is very apparent.

COURSE STRUCTURE

As indicated above, the course is conducted by a full-time Coordinator and two part-time instructors. The instructors' areas of expertise overlap to some extent, but in general one covers the bookkeeping and typing area and the other covers Maths, English and Computer Skills.

The course runs concurrent with the school year. However, as noted before, there are no fixed schedules for entry into, or exit from, the course or for student progress. A student may enter the course at any time and normally leaves when she has completed the requirements and the Coordinator and instructors believe she is ready for employment.

As the fundamental aim of the Office Practices course is to prepare students for immediate employment, training is given in the basic skills needed for office work. These include office-oriented English and mathematics, typing, bookkeeping, and computer skills. As well, students take part in a variety of activities which are aimed at developing acceptable attitudes toward work, appropriate levels of self-confidence and self-respect, and enhanced life skills. The latter include an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of an individual and a knowledge of agencies and services available within the community.
The coordinator and instructors have structured the course to produce a 'work' rather than a 'school' atmosphere. Students are expected to behave as employees in an office and to adhere to a set of rules. Course hours are from 8.30 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. and regular attendance is essential. Other rules cover the wearing of suitable clothing, appropriate language in the classroom, payment for and timing of personal telephone calls, prohibition of smoking during 'work' hours and a total ban on alcohol and illegal drugs in the course room.

DECISION-MAKING IN THE COURSE

Most decisions made by staff in the course can be placed into one of three categories: administrative decisions, decisions relating to instructional matters; and those regarding personal development activities.

Administrative decisions involve the day-to-day operation of the course and are usually made by the Coordinator but in many of these matters, she consults the two instructors. She is responsible for the course as a whole including the delivery of instruction, liaison with TAFE and outside agencies, admissions, discipline and all general student matters. In addition, the Coordinator has a role in advising the Department on the problems and needs of disadvantaged groups so that gaps which exist in training schemes can be filled. Recently, she advised them of the need for training of older migrant women and offered her assistance in setting up an appropriate course of training.

The two instructors, in consultation with the Coordinator if necessary, usually make decisions relating to the skill development of students. There is a lot of contact between staff members and much discussion of individual students.

Decisions regarding personal development activities often involve consultation between the coordinator, the instructors, and the students. Although the coordinator has a clear idea of the sorts of activities which she believes are appropriate, she is ready to respond to student requests and interests. Some activities in this area are very popular, particularly talks on birth control and sexuality.

The Office Practices course involves the following areas:

Training in Skills

Skill development covers:

- English and Mathematics relevant to office work;
- typing including keyboard mastery, standard procedures and formats;
- instruction in the use of a dictaphone, a telex and a typewriter with a memory;
- computer skills including word processing and use of software;
• bookkeeping;

• operation of a telephone switchboard.

Lessons are systematic, modular, and learner-centred. Each student works through the packages of material at her own pace. This has a positive effect for students who have had experiences of 'being left behind' in traditional school classrooms. As one student put it,

"They (the teachers) let you do your own pace of work. I find this very good because you don't have to work your brains out and say to the teacher that I have finished and then you hurry up and do your next assignment, to please your teacher. No, its entirely different. You can relax your body and brain at the same time and like I said go at your own pace."

Personal Development

Personal development involves a wide range of activities for staff and students, many of which are carried on outside conventional course hours. A few of these are quite informal and relate to the particular interests of staff members. Some personal development activities are designed to supply students with information relevant to their problems and aspirations. There is a regular program of guest speakers on a range of topics relevant to the girls' needs. In this aspect of the course, there is negotiation. Some guest speakers are decided upon by the staff and others are the result of students' requests. Videos relevant to students' problems and needs are shown. A collection of books which deal with problems relevant to the students is available for reading and consulting at appropriate times. In addition to these general information sources, students receive instruction on how to approach a job interview and on general dress and deportment. Networks established by the coordinator and the instructors are invaluable in this regard. Staff frequently know what sort of situation the student will be meeting and can advise on general presentation.

Other personal development activities involve girls in working together toward a common goal. These activities reinforce the need to be punctual and reliable and to show emotional maturity. Examples of these activities include preparation of special morning teas and lunches and planning and preparation of a display for a local festival.

Another type of personal development activity is designed to instruct students in the use of equipment other than the standard office hardware which they may encounter in the course of their employment. Examples are as varied as learning to cook in a microwave and visiting the local Telecom office for instruction in the use of sophisticated telecommunications equipment.

Still another sort of activity is carried out for purposes of general development. Students visit a country area with conservation personnel to view the native plants and animals. This is the first trip out of Darwin for many of the young women and it is generally regarded by them as both informative and enjoyable.
A visit to a restaurant is also usually included in the course. Again this is frequently a new experience and is used as an opportunity to learn how to order food, how to behave generally and to adopt a sensible attitude toward drinking. All of these activities require the young women to plan ahead, meet time commitments and develop a sense of responsibility. One student wrote,

"I think it's great to visit (them) because it gives you your own responsibility to work out how to get there from one place to another... You think how to get there for a minute, and then you might ask one of your friends or teachers or maybe ring to find out when the next bus that goes to town or wherever."

In carrying out the various personal development activities, staff share their own values and emotions with students. They try to demonstrate values and emotional responses which they believe are appropriate to various situations. The ultimate purpose is development of a greater degree of self confidence and self respect for the young women.

**Counselling and assisting students with problems**

Frequently students request advice or assistance from members of the course staff in solving a personal or family problem. Counselling and giving assistance to the girls thus forms an important part of the activities of the staff. One staff member described it as being rather like a "mother hen". Where they feel unable to help, staff refer students to welfare or counselling agencies in the area. Personnel from such agencies are often invited to speak to the students on issues of concern to the young women.

Staff are sometimes called upon to handle complex and potentially volatile situations. The Coordinator feels very strongly that she has to support the young women where issues of personal rights are concerned, even though the situation may be one involving family conflict. This is partly because she and the other staff members place great emphasis on explaining to students what their rights are and encouraging them to speak up for them. In one incident a student was experiencing conflict with her mother. The situation was made more complex by the fact that the family was not Australian-born and the mother's expectations of the mother-daughter relationship were very different from her daughter's. In this difficult situation, the Coordinator actively supported the daughter.

**Assessment of student progress**

Progress in the various skill areas is monitored by means of student self assessments. The purpose of the assessments is to provide feedback to students regarding their individual rates of progress as they work through the units.

A final assessment is based on the observations of the instructors and the course Coordinator. Throughout the period of instruction the Coordinator and instructors carefully monitor the progress of each student. This is done in an
informal way with frequent exchange(s) of information between course staff. A
formal weekly meeting was tried some years ago but staff regard the informal
approach as much more satisfactory. After a student has made substantial
progress in both skills and personal development, the members of the course
staff meet to decide whether she is ready for work. If the decision is 'yes', the
Coordinator arranges for her to begin a period of work experience.

Work experience

Each student is required to complete a period of work experience (normally one
or two weeks) before beginning to apply for jobs. Periods of work experience
are arranged by the course Coordinator. It is here that the contacts which she
has been able to establish with the CES and with employers are extremely
valuable. The CES officer who has most contact with the course has information
about potential employers and their particular requirements and efforts are
made to match young women and employers. Useful working relationships
have also been formed with officers of a number of government departments.
Unsuccessful periods of work experience are rare as course staff do not
organise it until they feel that students are really ready. Even then, students who
may have difficulties are carefully monitored through the two weeks and are free
to contact staff for assistance and advice. It is obvious that there is close
attention to individual needs and skills in the selection of suitable work
experience. Each employer is required to submit a report on performance
during the work experience.

On completion of a successful period of work experience a student is usually
regarded as having completed the course. She then begins making
applications for jobs. Again, she receives assistance in preparing an
application and accompanying samples of her work and later, in preparing for
an interview if necessary.

The course also enables young women who do not have a primary interest in
office work to undertake work experience in other areas. One girl who was
interested in working with children did work experience in a local day-care
centre. She has since completed the course and has taken employment in the
child care area. At the end of each year, certificates of achievement are
presented to those who have completed the course. Wherever possible, the
Coordinator follows up young women in their employment to see how they are
progressing. They are encouraged to come back and talk to other students
about their job.

COURSE OUTCOMES: STUDENTS

Course staff have identified three particular areas of change in students as a
result of participation in the course. They are the development of employment
oriented skills, increased levels of self confidence together with an increase in
perceived and actual 'status', and a greater degree of community responsibility.
Employment oriented skills

The Office Practices course is regarded as highly successful in terms of the number of graduates who have found employment. In 1985, of the 29 young women who successfully completed the course, 27 obtained a job. The course undoubtedly ensures that most students develop work oriented skills and are able to present themselves to employers as potentially capable workers. Course staff are concerned to emphasise that there is considerable variation in the time taken for individual young woman to reach this point.

Although the immediate aim of most young women entering the course is employment, course staff regard the training as a foundation for employment or for further training, either on the job or in an educational institution. In some cases initial employment has been the first step to further training. In interviews which the evaluator had with two separate employers of course graduates, it was obvious that while they were very satisfied with their new employees, each was aware that the young woman's potential was not fulfilled in her present position. Steps were being taken to develop that potential, in one case by assisting the employee's entry into a further training course and in the other by shifting her into a sales position in the company. There are no figures available on the total number of young women who do further training although staff know of several who have gone on to further study. Through their efforts some have proceeded to study at night school or in one case, at Brisbane College of Advanced Education.

Self confidence

Both students and staff refer to the sense of achievement which comes with development of skills. Initially, many students feel that they will not be able to overcome their sense of failure. Successful completion of the course and getting a job means a change from 'unemployed person' or 'failure' to 'responsible trainee' or 'employee'.

The social skills which are acquired during the course are equally as important as the work skills. Instruction in dress, speech, and punctuality results in increased levels of self-confidence and ultimately means an improved presentation of the person to the world.

A single mother who spent four months in Office Practices and then gained employment, wrote:

"Before I started this course I was slowly going out of my mind. Being a single mother I was compelled to stay at home every day to ensure my son had a proper rest... My home...was always messy as I could never be bothered doing the dishes or sweeping the floor as not many people came to see me. (Now) for the first time I feel as if I have more to look forward to then just living in a Housing Commission flat, on the dole. One of the sad things about being unemployed for long stretches of time is that a person's self-confidence is lowered and one of the aims of this course is to build up the self-confidence of students. This aim has been achieved in my case."
Some students see less dramatic changes in themselves.

"I have learnt something new about myself. I can talk as much as my mother can now, I am not as shy as I was. I don't really know if I have improved in posture, confidence and personality. I might have improved in skills, knowledge, ability to speak, understanding people and dress."

One young woman has been with the course for over a year. She came with very few employment skills and very little belief in her ability to gain them. She had her first child at 13 years of age and her second at 16 years and for many months she was not able to leave them without feeling extreme anxiety. The fact that she can now place them in a day care centre for short periods and can contemplate part-time employment is seen by the course staff as a major breakthrough. The Coordinator believes that this young woman was one of those who, having no other personal label but 'failure', resorted to pregnancy as a means of gaining status and love. Office Practices provides such young women with an alternative means to achieve self-esteem.

**Community responsibility**

The third change in students which staff have noted as a result of participation in the course is an increase in the level of community responsibility. Several former students have joined volunteer organisations such as St John's Ambulance. One former student, herself a victim of incest, has started a support group to help other incest victims to come to terms with the problem. The group has the financial support of a local welfare agency.

**COURSE OUTCOMES: OUTSIDE GROUPS**

The Coordinator sees part of her role as changing community attitudes towards unemployed young people. It is difficult to know how successful she has been although it is obvious that there are very good working relationships with some agencies, both formal employment and community agencies. She believes that the views of some CES officers have changed as a result of contact with the young women on the course. Whereas they used to see some people as 'hopeless cases' with very little prospect of getting employment, they now see them as potentially capable if given the opportunity to gain some skills and confidence. This view is confirmed by at least one CES officer, who regarded the course very positively. There are several instances in which the Coordinator and others associated with the course have been able to get changes made to regulations which affect students. The first involves payment of training allowances. Initially the balance of regulations governing receivers of Unemployment Benefits meant that a young women collecting Benefits required to forgo the Remote Area Allowance portion of her entitlement when she began the Office Practices course. This was viewed by the course staff as a significant disincentive for students. Politicians, prominent people and Departmental officers were lobbied on this matter.
The second example involves accommodation. Originally, single persons were not eligible for housing subsidised by the Northern Territory Housing Commission. The problem was especially significant due to the high cost of private accommodation in Darwin. Course staff were involved with campaigns to correct the problems. Both situations were eventually resolved to the satisfaction of the course staff and students.

REASONS FOR COURSE SUCCESS

There are six course design factors which appear to contribute to the success of the course. These are discussed below:

1. Both staff and students refer to flexible entry and exit to the course as one reason for its success. It means that the course is adapted to the working and learning pace of individual students and ensures that variations in these do not result in 'failure'. It is based on an expectation that, given time, most young women will succeed in achieving an acceptable level of skills. It also allows varying amounts of time to develop confidence and social skills.

2. The strong focus on personal development is a further reason for the success of the course. Personal development is interpreted broadly. It includes knowing how to behave and dress appropriately, general knowledge of world and local issues and the expression of views about these, the experience of a variety of social situations and the development of responsibility. All of these are seen to relate to self confidence and self respect.

3. Staff believe that a crucial aspect of the course is that students are both respected as individuals who are capable of achieving and they are expected to achieve. For many young women this is the first time anyone has expected success rather than failure from them. Most respond although some may take a long time.

4. The personality of each staff member is important. The three women are committed to what they are doing; they believe in the potential of their students and relate well to their problems. In essays written towards the end of the course, most students refer to the help and understanding they have had from staff members.

5. Along with the flexibility and relaxed friendly atmosphere, the course is run as a relatively 'tight ship'. The expectation is that work will be done and regulations adhered to. The coordinator has on occasion suspended students if they do not come up to her expectations of reasonable behaviour. In some cases she uses this as a test of a student's motivation to see if they are willing to come back at the end of two weeks with the intention of settling down.

6. Finally, selection of students may mean that some 'failures' are avoided.
Students with certain severe problems are not taken on; 15 year olds are generally not accepted because the coordinator believes that they are not yet ready to take full advantage of the course. However, it is also true that the course does take many young women who are severely educationally and socially disadvantaged and who are considered 'problems' by other agencies.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

This course is a vehicle by which seriously disadvantaged students are given an opportunity to enter the mainstream of society, and there is strong evidence that it is very successful in achieving this objective. It can not be overstressed that most of the clients enter the course with a history of failure and, in many cases, personal despair. That the course provides not only an opportunity for students to learn valuable skills but also enables the young women to overcome some of their personal problems is a credit to those responsible for course design and implementation.

Office Practices represents a particular type of PEP course in TAFE. There are two strong foci in the course which appear to be equally balanced. The first is a clear vocational orientation towards a particular area. The second is a strong emphasis on self development and group identity.

Historically the course has few connections with a TAFE College and at present appears to operate relatively independently apart from the usual administrative requirements by the Department for accountability.

The course must be regarded as an internal success because of the obvious satisfaction which many young women achieve from participating in it. The features making for success have been outlined above. In providing employment skills and increased self confidence for a disadvantaged group, it is in the spirit of PEP at a course level.

Staff are aware that the area on which the course focuses is an area of traditional female employment and that this emphasis is open to question as a long term strategy in increasing options for young women. Their argument for the viability of the course is threefold. Firstly, unlike some places in Australia, there is employment available in the office practices area in Darwin. Thus, it is a realistic option for young women and they are likely to gain employment. Secondly, they believe that at this stage of confidence building, most of the young women are reluctant to question the traditional female roles as far as employment is concerned. While on the course, they begin to gain confidence in expressing their rights as individual human beings, but to go further than this will take a significant shift in social and personal attitudes. Thirdly, one of the most common features of young women on the course is lack of self esteem. Many of them, rightly or wrongly, aspire to office work because they see it as a step up in status. This in turn becomes a motivation for further achievement. These factors, together with student satisfaction, are seen as fully justifying the focus of the course.
THE CONTEXT

The College and Previous Programs for Unemployed Youth

Goulburn Valley College of TAFE (formerly Shepparton College of TAFE)\(^1\) is situated in the major urban centre of a relatively rich fruit growing and agricultural region in Victoria. In the past five or six years the economic stability of the area has been affected first by drought and then by economic recession. In 1986, the CES office had approximately 2,800 young people registered as unemployed in the area, about half of them aged between 15-20, the other half between 20-24 years.

The TAFE College is the major education and training provider in the region. At the College, there is a strong sense of continuity of development in regard to programs for unemployed youth. So, in 1986 (two years after the initial planning phase for Participation and Equity Program (PEP) activities at the College) staff indicate that PEP developments must be seen in the context of what has happened at the College over the past seven years.

The first Education Program for Unemployed Youth (EPUY) course offered through the College began in 1979. With various changes in length, venue, personnel, and emphasis, similar programs were conducted each year until the introduction of PEP. In 1982, two pre-vocational courses were introduced under the School to Work Transition program.

PEP staff now at the College acknowledge with some pride, that Goulburn Valley TAFE is an innovator and a leader in this area of program provision. They tell you that other Colleges, including larger metropolitan ones, look at what Goulburn Valley TAFE is doing. The College also has a name for the co-operation and support which the administration gives to PEP-type programs. In addition the TAFE Board has, on a number of occasions, used the College as a trial bed for new approaches.

The reasons for this are embedded in the history of the College, its personnel and its environment. As a provincial city college, it tends to have a stronger relationship with the local community than a city college does. Shepparton is small enough for the key players in education, welfare, and industry to know each other.

In addition to contextual factors which might be used to explain the nature of the College, the outlook of the administration is also significant. The Director\(^2\) has

\(^1\)The College was known as Shepparton College of TAFE during the period of the case study and became Goulburn Valley College of TAFE shortly after the completion of this report.

\(^2\)Heads of TAFE Colleges are designated Directors. They were previously Principals. Both terms are used in this report, according to usage current at the time to which the report refers.
played an active role in the development of programs for unemployed youth. In the past the College was small enough, and he had time enough, to know some of the students on the programs personally. Then, the program co-ordinators reported to him directly. In the early 1980's, he promoted an alternative College-initiated course which was aimed at helping those young people who did not fit into either the EPUY course or the CYSS (Community Youth Support Scheme) program. He, and one of the co-ordinators of the original EPUY course, were members of a State-wide EPUY Standing Committee. As the College's involvement in such programs grew, he supported and encouraged an enthusiastic staff member who had given some assistance to the EPUY group to take responsibility for some aspects of the administration of these programs. These days, the Director is not able to be involved so directly due to a greatly increased workload. However, he is committed to the College giving a higher priority to groups which have previously been on the periphery and to integrating provision for them into the College's central functions.

In 1982, the teacher who had become involved in the EPUY course was given an SDA (Special Duties Allowance) and was afforded head of department status over an area which was eventually known as Community Access and Transition. His responsibilities included planning, contact with the rest of the College, budget matters, liaison with the community, involvement in a region wide workers' group, submission-writing and other responsibilities concerned with 'special project' areas into which the College was moving.

Links within the region were particularly important in the development of programs for unemployed youth at the College. In feeling their way into a new program, two co-ordinators of the original EPUY which began in 1979, visited other EPUY groups, in the immediate area and beyond. Out of this initial need to share information and ideas, a very significant group emerged. It included representatives of most of the youth programs in the region, local TAFE Colleges and the CES. In an area where much of the ground was uncharted and the work innovative, this group of workers from a widespread country area formed a support network, a co-operative learning group and a pressure group. The SDA teacher in Community Access and Transition was able to strengthen the organisation of the regional group, to promote exchange of information, and to provide for regular and useful in-service activities.

Features of pre-PEP

Planning for PEP began in 1984, the year of changeover when the School to Work Transition Program was subsumed under the new Participation and Equity Program. By this time, there were a number of people attached to the College who had four or five years experience of running courses for young unemployed people. In 1984 there were in fact five separate courses for unemployed youth run by the College. They were EPUY (Employment Program for Unemployed Youth); EPUMY (EPUY for migrants or young people of non-English speaking

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3 The course ran for several years and was finally absorbed by other programs.
background); EPUAY (Aboriginal youth) and two pre-vocational courses (PVC's), one in agriculture, the other in adobe construction.

These programs were staffed by full-time people who were employed on yearly contracts and by part-time sessional instructors. Full-time staff had varying amounts of experience with programs for unemployed young people. One had been a joint co-ordinator of the original EPUY in 1979 and was now leader of the pre-vocational courses; another had joined the EPUY team in 1980 and in 1983 was in charge of the general EPUY. The co-ordinators of the other two EPUY's (for Aboriginal youth and for young people of non-English speaking background) were both full-time and had several years' experience.

Thus, when the Victorian PEP Unit of the TAFE Board began distributing information about the direction and emphases of the new Commonwealth program, there were certain established features of programs for young unemployed people at the College. These are outlined below.

Firstly, there had been relative stability and continuity of key staff over a number of years. They knew the area well and several of them had already witnessed a change of program name and emphasis. There was the SDA teacher with responsibility for co-ordination and administration of the area. The Director of the College had a personal interest in the courses. All of these factors tended to give respectability, if not complete legitimacy, to programs for unemployed youth.

Secondly, although there was an established pattern of locating these programs in buildings away from the main College (and there were good reasons for doing so), some staff from most departments had some experience over the years with EPUY and PVC students. Interaction between the mainstream College and the programs for unemployed youth tended to be through individual teachers rather than at a general departmental level. The degree of co-operation and involvement of departments varied with the availability of interested individual staff members.

However (and this is the third point in relation to the established features of the 'pre-PEP' era), despite the co-operation from some individual teachers in the College and from the Principal, people in the College didn't know much about what was going on with courses for unemployed young people. It was easy to be unaware of the existence of these students. Many of them did not have occasion to enter the main College buildings and staff in the courses were always busy and did not have a lot of time available to engage in public relations. There was no concerted campaign to influence other staff, although there was informal contact between the access area and some mainstream staff. For example, the head of Community Access and Transition used his status as a mainstream staff member to bring up issues whenever he could in informal discussions with other staff members.
DEVELOPMENT OF PEP

Information received

During 1984, Colleges were advised by the Victorian TAFE PEP Unit of the general directions in which they should move in their planning for 1985 programs. During that year, the Unit organised two major meetings to outline the proposals' process and to assist Colleges in the development of their programs.

Despite these meetings, those who were most closely involved in the College's School to Work Transition program believed that they received only vague information about PEP. The Coordinator of the two pre-vocational courses thought that there was much speculation and some mis-information about at the time. It was unclear what types of programs would be funded but it seemed to him that programs needed to be innovative and that small programs would not be funded.

The Coordinator of the general EPUY felt that there was not enough early support from the PEP unit. There were difficulties in contacting the right people for advice and when this was done, the advice was often a personal interpretation of what should be done. The written guidelines were not always clear and gave few hard and fast rules about procedure. The difficulties were exacerbated by the distance of the College from Melbourne.

The head of Community Access and Transition had built up a number of contacts in Melbourne and used these to get some information about PEP, but there was still some uncertainty about the whole program and what would be funded under it.

Thus, decisions made about the nature of PEP were based heavily on the interpretation of guidelines by key individuals in the Community Access and Transition area. There was a general feeling of not having enough concrete information with which to work.

Planning processes

Planning for PEP went through two stages; the first was in 1984 in preparation for the writing of proposals to be forwarded to the TAFE PEP Unit in August. The second more detailed planning exercise took place during the first term of 1985 after the College knew exactly how much money they had been allocated.

In 1984, considerable funds were anticipated and the College submitted a proposal for four separate activities. They were:

- a joint initiatives program - an extension of a program which the College had already successfully run, whereby secondary school students who were having learning difficulties would spend some time at the 'White House' (one of the off-campus venues);
- a rural outreach program whereby a bus or van would visit various rural centres once a week throughout the year;
• interface activities between schools and TAFE, especially TAFE activities for girls and

• an Integrating Studies and Access Unit (PEP) program which would integrate the pre-vocational courses, EPUY, non-English speaking background youth, aboriginal youth and an existing EPUY at a nearby town, into one unit.

This last was to be the keystone activity of the program. The proposal as a whole reflected both the beliefs which the Community Access and Transition group had about what would be funded, and the general direction in which they wanted to develop programs. Believing (a) that they would not get funding unless they were innovative and (b) that a multiplicity of small programs would not be funded, they opted for an integration of the previously separate groups and elements of all existing programs. It was originally intended that there would be a 'core' unit plus electives with five sub-groups to be developed to facilitate the target group cores. This was seen to be educationally desirable as well as fitting the TAFE PEP Unit guidelines.

In essence, integration meant that whereas previously there had been a number of courses specifically designed for particular groups, the available money would now be combined and different core groups would move through the program. While each group would be involved in the main elements of the program, they would also retain a group identity. The planned core groups were to be organised around business studies, trade skills, farm skills, (and later) hospitality/tourism and antique furniture restoration. Students could move from one element of the integrated program to another but they would also identify with one of the groups mentioned above.

The fact that PEP was to be a three year program was significant for planning. Staff believed that in three years they could develop a very effective venue for young people to explore options and make decisions about their future.

While there was obviously some confusion about how the specifics of the guidelines would be interpreted, it is clear that the Community Access and Transition group strongly supported the general thrust of PEP. They were in accord with its particular emphasis on moving young people towards bridging courses and further education rather than focussing courses primarily on vocational preparation.

The head of the Community Access and Transition group certainly felt at home with the intentions of the program. He also saw it as totally consistent with the general direction of previous programs as they had been developed at the College. In a letter written to accompany the four submissions sent to the TAFE PEP Unit in September 1984 he wrote:

"This College has already made a large commitment to participation and equity well before the term was coined. It refers to the FE in TAFE. Education should not be seen in little boxes but as an open area that students can move freely about in, gaining the education/learning that they need, at whatever level is applicable. The PEP will make our job ever so much easier, as it is
underlining what we are already doing."

By October 1984, it was known that the College would receive only about one-eighth of the funds for which they had applied. This amount was to include funds for an existing program at nearby Cobram which would now be considered as part of the College program.

The fact that the total amount of money received for PEP at the College was much less than originally expected, meant that changes had to be made. There were eventually three main elements in PEP activities at the College: Stepping Stones, (which was adapted from the original Integrating Studies and Access Unit proposal), Jemuriah (the Aboriginal program) and the program in Cobram.

It was decided that the Aboriginal group had special needs and should operate as a separate element of PEP. There was no debate about this. It was accepted that there was much more chance of a young Aboriginal person establishing a strong identity and sense of self in a separate group rather than being part of a predominantly non-Aboriginal group. In addition, a large proportion of the original program was planned to take place in the mainstream college and the developers felt that mainstream staff were not sufficiently ready to cope with the needs of Aboriginal students. Thus, the Jemuriah program took place in a community house, separate from Stepping Stones.

The program in Cobram had begun as an EPUY program in the early 1980's. Up until 1985, it was formally separate from the College although there had been close informal contact over the years. In 1984, there was concern that small programs would not be funded so the program was included in the original College proposal as an outreach program. When notification about funding was received, funding for it was included in the overall College allocation.

The focus of the remainder of the case study will be Stepping Stones, with less detailed reference to Jemuriah.

THE PROGRAM - STEPPING STONES

Structure

At the beginning of 1985, the three people who had previously been the Coordinator of EPUY, the Coordinator of the EPUMY and the Coordinator of the two PVC's, began to plan the details of Stepping Stones. They were without the assistance of the previous head of Community Access and Transition. Because of overwork, he was relieved of his responsibilities for the area at the beginning of 1985.

The name Stepping Stones implied that young people who took part would be able to move from the course in a variety of directions. The original notion had been a common program with a number of groups moving through it, but the idea of five groups was not really possible with reduced funds. There was also
another consideration, that of mainstream preparedness. Stepping Stones was very clearly planned with the intention of allowing all students who completed it to move into bridging, compensatory education or mainstream TAFE courses. At the time, at least one member of the planning staff believed that the mainstream was not really ready to look closely at the needs of some groups, particularly migrants and Aboriginals. It was decided not to have a migrant group, because a large proportion of the Stepping Stones program was to take place in mainstream College areas and it was believed that the mainstream was not geared to cope with unemployed young people of non-English speaking background. The areas of interest which finally ran in 1985 were business studies, farm skills, antique furniture restoration, hospitality and tourism, and trades.

While the details of Stepping Stones were being developed, there was some uncertainty about the role of the staff most centrally involved. Whereas each had previously had charge of separate programs, now they had come together. It took some time to sort out different responsibilities and for a while the thrust of Stepping Stones faltered. Eventually, the tasks were split three ways; one person became responsible for looking after the program and the students on a day to day basis, another took on information dissemination and public relations, and a third became responsible for administration.

Stepping Stones was organised so that both full and part-time students could be catered for. The 1986 Coordinator of the course believes that it is important for students to be able to attend part-time, as some young people are in a position where they have to either work or maintain other commitments beyond attending a course. The decision was also made to run two half-year courses rather than one full-year course in order to avoid the problems of students having to make a long term, and perhaps unrealistic, commitment.

Curriculum

In 1986, the curriculum for the general Stepping Stones course covered Maths, English and personal development as requirements, with optional studies in five main trade areas: rural studies, building studies, automotive studies, metal fabrication (welding) and business studies. Maths and English were taken on two days per week and four hours per week were devoted to personal development and craft. The remaining time was taken up by the area studies. In 1985, there were pilot programs in hospitality and antique furniture restoration but these were not offered in 1986 due to general funding cuts to PEP.

All of the optional areas were taught by mainstream staff in the College. The Humanities Department was responsible for staffing the English component of the course. Within this organisation there was a high degree of flexibility to cater for the needs of individual students. For example, area studies could be replaced by work investigation in an area of particular interest to the student.

When Stepping Stones was planned, the fundamental difference between it and the programs it replaced was to be the greater degree of integration into the mainstream. Previously, sessional workers who were often not mainstream staff
came into these programs to teach vocationally oriented activities. Now, these activities were to be taken by mainstream staff using College facilities and students would therefore be spending a significant part of their time in the main college buildings.

Although there was to be a different focus in Stepping Stones compared to what had gone before, the experience of the staff who had been involved in EPUY courses was crucial. According to one staff member, the core of this experience was an understanding that self-esteem, stability, and time to sort themselves out are crucial for young unemployed people. These staff were able to draw on the experience they had developed over the years, particularly in understanding the learning needs and coping skills of students.

Selection of students

Before a Stepping Stones course commences, the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) office in Shepparton carries out an extensive campaign to inform potential students of the course and to persuade them to attend. After checking record cards to determine who is eligible, letters are sent out together with pamphlet-style information in simple straightforward language. In addition to this approach CES officers have carried out telephone campaigns (using female as well as male callers) and when appropriate, they make a point of mentioning the course to young people who come into the CES. However, the number of young people who respond to the information and the approaches is very small compared to the number who are contacted.

If a young person responds to the initial information with interest, he or she is invited to a group meeting at the CES offices where the course is explained by one of the Stepping Stones staff. This is an important decision-making point for most young people and the way in which the course is presented is quite significant. This is particularly so when more than one course is available and young people are able to weigh up which they would prefer.

Those who are still interested after the course has been outlined at the CES are interviewed individually. At that point they are asked to choose the area in which they would most like to work from the five offered. This is the beginning of decision-making within the course.

As Stepping Stones became known in the area among young people, there was an increase in the number of students coming because they had heard about it from a previous student. Students were also referred through community agencies.

THE PROGRAM - JEMURIAH

The program for Aboriginal young people began in 1983. For two years it was funded under the School to Work Transition program and then it became part of the College’s initiatives under PEP. After one year of funding under PEP, it was moved into the College recurrent budget. The program operates from a
community house which, while being generally suitable, is far enough away from the College to make getting to classes difficult sometimes.

Jemuriah has a strong relationship with the local Koorie community, who see it as serving a very important function. It is equally well regarded by students (only a very small number of young people have dropped out since the program began) and by people outside the area. The co-ordinators receive many requests for information and a number of groups have approached them for assistance in setting up a similar program.

Aims

The aim of the program is for students to become more aware about both educational and vocational areas. Equally important is the development of personal confidence and awareness of the importance of the Koorie heritage and struggle for their rights.

Curriculum

The curriculum covers Maths, English and Communications, Aboriginal legal studies and Aboriginal culture as core subject areas, and a number of optional studies. Some of these are taken by College staff, some by sessional tutors. Some are conducted at the College and others at the house where the program is based. Classes are conducted by sessional (non College) staff in maths, legal studies (taken by a Koorie person), typing, art/craft, sewing, photography and cookery. Typing and cookery classes use College facilities. Each year, the program includes a cultural awareness excursion, which is regarded as a very valuable experience for students.

Students

In 1986 there were 18 students aged from 15 to 24. The co-ordinators wanted to take more students but the size of the house made this impossible. Ideally, they would also like to make 16 years old the lower age limit for the program, because they believe that 15 year olds should get as much from school as they can before leaving. However, each year there seem to be more young people dropping out of school and wanting to get into the program. There are Aboriginal educators at most schools in the area but there are many social and economic needs which are not being met or are unable to be met by schools.

There has generally been no difficulty in attracting students. Much of the information about the course passes by word of mouth, although the CES also contacts young people who are eligible. The main sources of employment for students who go through Jemuriah are short term CEP type employment or work with local Aboriginal organisations.
 Relationships with the College

During 1985 the Stepping Stones group decided to embark upon a deliberate campaign to influence the mainstream College. This grew out of a conviction that PEP was much more about movement into further education than previous programs for unemployed youth had been and it was therefore necessary to influence mainstream provision. One staff member called it "pushing out the walls".

There were three main thrusts to this campaign. Firstly, PEP staff were determined to involve departments and individual members of staff in providing appropriate learning experiences for Stepping Stones students. They actively shopped about the College departments to promote departmental involvement in the program and to facilitate the movement of PEP students into the mainstream College for components of their course. Secondly, and more generally, they aimed to influence attitudes towards increased and more equitable student participation in the College. Thirdly, the group saw PEP as an opportunity to reduce the marginal status of access programs in the College. They believed that concepts of participation and equity are relevant in all areas of the College, not just to the students who go through a particular program.

So, a number of specific moves were made. The PEP staff attended meetings of groups in the College and spoke of participation and equity as a philosophy rather than a program, emphasising that the concepts and the issues applied to the College as a whole. Informal discussion took place between PEP staff and department heads and there was a deliberate effort to visit staff rooms to establish closer contacts. An in-service on the PEP guidelines for heads of departments was held but it was poorly attended. PEP staff were involved in discussions around the writing of a College profile.

Some of these moves were extensions of what had gone on before PEP but there was a new focus. Previously, the emphasis had been on general co-operation and attempts to involve mainstream staff in providing some time and resources for students who were not involved in mainstream courses. Now, PEP provided a philosophy from which to argue that the College had on-going responsibilities for such students. In a discussion document issued during the first term of 1985, the following statement was made:

The PEP staff believe that:

Stepping Stones should not be perceived as a set of short term programs and activities but rather policy and program initiatives developed over a number of years that will change the complexion of the TAFE student profile not only for youth, but for post youth, encourage quality course provision and ensure, as far as practicable that there is a much greater awareness within TAFE of the relatively advantaged and disadvantaged groups within society and their participation in TAFE.
The full-time PEP staff operated under two distinct disadvantages in their task of influencing the mainstream College. The first of these was their status vis-a-vis the mainstream staff; the second was the lack of a formal departmental link with the mainstream of the College.

At the beginning of 1985, the full-time Stepping Stones staff were, and still are, employed on a yearly contract basis. Although there is a great deal of respect for the particular individuals involved, it is undeniable that mainstream staff perceive PEP staff as having a different status from themselves. The reasons for this will be referred to in more detail in a later section. The point to be made here is that, because there were perceived differences in status, the PEP staff task of influencing the mainstream staff was made more difficult.

The other major difficulty came from the lack of a linkage into the formal structures of the College. There was of course the Community Access and Transition group of courses and activities but since the beginning of 1985, when the previous head of the section was taken off the PEP area, there was no mainstream staff member who had any formal responsibility for Stepping Stones. There was certainly no departmental head of equivalent status to other departmental heads who could argue their case in the decision-making bodies of the College. The Stepping Stones staff were in fact left "rudderless" for most of 1985. The resolution of this situation in early 1986 will be outlined in the section on Changes in Structure.

**Relationships with Departments**

It should be noted that there is a well developed program of non-certificated, community oriented activities at the College as well as a number of bridging courses. Decisions made, at either a departmental level or a general College level, to allocate time and resources to any particular group necessarily means giving priority to a particular group of potential students.

By 1985, it was established that most departments allocated some teaching time and resources to courses for unemployed youth, run as part of PEP. However, the degree of commitment varied across departments. The variation is explained by the degree of personal contact between PEP staff and key individuals in the trade and other mainstream areas over the years.

Some departmental staff had been taking classes for young unemployed people since the early days of EPUY; others had become involved when the pre-vocational courses were introduced in 1982. Some departments and individuals had fairly continuous involvement over a number of years; the involvement of others fluctuated. In the planning and public relations period for PEP in 1985, Stepping Stones staff were able to extend the number of departments which had been involved in 1984. One department became involved for the first time and another re-established a commitment which had fluctuated over the years.

In general, satisfactory working relationships between PEP staff and mainstream staff have been established. However, there are a number of concerns on both
sides. It should be noted that in the outline of concerns below, it is not possible to talk about a departmental attitude in general. Only a small number of staff have contact with PEP students and it is to these staff that the following refers.

**Mainstream staff concerns**

Regarding PEP, the first concern of mainstream staff is about general responsibility for the course and for students. The second is a more specific concern about regularity of attendance of students and the third relates to a perceived lack of curriculum development in PEP.

The concern about responsibility for the course and for the students has at least two facets. Firstly, in 1985, initial decisions about the overall planning and organisation for Stepping Stones were made largely by PEP staff. Various departments were then asked to service the program. A number of mainstream staff felt that neither Stepping Stones nor the departments had really clear objectives for the area studies components of Stepping Stones. As a result, the content of each area study has largely been a matter of trying out what was appropriate and then modifying it if necessary. Several staff members pointed out that mainstream staff were used to having a fairly clear idea of the objectives, content and structure of what they teach and found it difficult to cope with what they saw as lack of direction and clarity in the situation. In general, there was a feeling that Stepping Stones itself had not worked out clearly what they wanted students to get from the area studies.

The second facet of the responsibility concern relates to 'ownership' of the students. Stepping Stones students spend a limited number of hours in the various area studies and mainstream staff do not feel that they have very much chance to get to know them as individuals. They cannot regard them as 'their' students in the same way as they regard apprentices who spend all of their time in the department and become identified, for example, as a Building Studies student or an Automotive student.

General responsibility for students becomes a specific concern about attendance when students turn up irregularly or gradually drop out. Again, mainstream staff have feelings of not knowing where they stand in this matter. Do they have the responsibility and/or the right to follow up students who are not 'theirs'? What are the expectations of Stepping Stones staff concerning attendance? There were suggestions from some staff that Stepping Stones staff have different expectations from mainstream staff about such matters. Whilst the above problems have not been 'solved', there has been a number of attempts to resolve them and some changes have been made during 1986. One department, after discussions with the Stepping Stones staff at the end of 1985, changed both its procedures and its curriculum for Stepping Stones students. At the beginning of 1986, a departmental staff member took part in the initial selection of students for Stepping Stones. He was able to explain to potential students what would be involved if they chose that area study. As a result of this participation in the selection process, four young people were admitted directly into mainstream accredited courses in the department.
This department also re-organised its curriculum by providing a four week general introduction to the area, during which time PEP students decided whether or not they wanted to go ahead. Hence they did not have to make a long term commitment at the beginning of the year. If they decided to proceed, sections of the course covered the same content as an accredited course although they were done over a longer period.

As a result of these changes: students had a clearer idea of what they were doing and whether they wanted to proceed; the department felt a greater commitment to the students and to the course; Stepping Stones staff were pleased that the department had accepted responsibility for the students and that students had a worthwhile course.

Another department also initiated discussions with Stepping Stones staff in order to solve some of the problems of responsibilities for PEP students.

The third issue identified as a mainstream staff concern was mentioned by only one staff member but it appears to have general relevance. The staff member was concerned that, while there have been positive outcomes from programs for unemployed youth run at the College for some years, there has been very little useful consolidation of curriculum in the form of collection of appropriate resources and documentation of "things which have worked well". He believed that this would be very useful for sessional staff coming into the program, as well as for students, and would avoid some of the lack of clarity about objectives mentioned above.

Stepping Stones staff concerns

The concerns of Stepping Stones staff centred around selection of appropriate teaching methods and staff for the area studies. The method of selecting staff for Stepping Stones varied across departments. Some staff selected themselves into the program because they were interested; others were allocated because they were available. Stepping Stones staff believed that everyone teaching in the program needed to have a particular understanding of, and affinity with, the needs of students particularly as many students had experiences of failure in school. Different approaches to learning and more flexible attitudes to students were required. Stepping Stones staff stressed that some mainstream staff members who have been allocated to the program rather than opting into it themselves, have in fact proved to be very successful with Stepping Stones students.

In 1985, one of the PEP staff carried out a survey of attitudes of mainstream staff towards PEP students, and student attitudes towards staff. Some very general statements can be made based on the results. Firstly, while departments as a whole had some years of experience with the general PEP clientele, at least half the teachers surveyed had twelve months or less experience of teaching in this area. Secondly, there was a great deal of variation in the attitudes of teachers towards the students. Some had obviously made changes to the ways in which they generally taught; some were concerned about student unreliability; most had negative preconceptions of such students; some had changed these
preconceptions. The most general conclusion from the student point of view was that the teachers were more approachable than at school.

PEP - An industrial issue

As PEP moved closer to the mainstream of the College, potential areas of conflict became more obvious and there tended to be a polarisation of attitudes.

At present, the most contentious issue in the relations between PEP and the mainstream concerns teacher qualifications and employment conditions of PEP staff.

In 1985, a new agreement for PEP staff in TAFE was implemented. It included the following two conditions; that existing PEP staff who did not have teacher qualifications were to be automatically re-employed if the program was continued into the following year and that PEP staff would work under some TAFE Teaching Service conditions. The proviso was that staff without teacher qualifications would seek to obtain them when suitable training programs became available. Yearly contract employment meant that weekly rates for some PEP staff were higher than for some permanent staff. The result was that in some cases, PEP staff without teacher qualifications were receiving a higher take home pay than some mainstream teachers with full teacher-training qualifications.

Not surprisingly, this emerged most clearly as an issue as PEP staff attempted to become part of mainstream structures. A PEP staff member stood for membership of the Programs Committee, a body which was set up in a re-structure of decision-making bodies in the College. PEP staff were able to vote for teacher members of the Committee but they were not able to stand, because the College branch of the Technical Teachers' Union of Victoria (TTUV) argued that eligibility to be a teacher member of the Committee meant being a fully qualified teacher. PEP staff maintained that because they were union members and worked under TAFE teaching conditions, they should be eligible; further, that it was important for them to be represented on policy and program committees.

The implementation of programs such as PEP provides dilemmas for some staff in the College. They support the notion of such programs in TAFE and believe that the only way to protect them from the uncertainties of special purpose Commonwealth funding is to bring them into the mainstream. The College branch of the TTUV agrees that this should be ensured by bringing these programs under recurrent funding.

Consistent with the above, branch policy is that staff employed in such programs should be members of the TAFE Teaching Service. Union members believe that this would both protect their hard-won conditions of employment and ensure that education programs for the unemployed are run by people with teaching expertise. Most union members do not dispute that additional skills are needed for this sort of teaching situation. However, some believe that some basic elements of teacher training, such as knowledge of how adolescents learn,
experience with curriculum development and familiarity with available teaching materials, are necessary for a successful program. Without these, the students miss out.

The dilemma for some union members arises from the fact that a significant number of people who have gone through teaching training are not able to cope very well with the sorts of students who come to Stepping Stones. Their training tends to lead them to have certain expectations of students which are not always met in PEP courses.

In the long term the answer may lie in a different sort of teacher education. In the meantime, the union is committed to a policy which aims at integrating PEP type courses into the College. Unquestionably, this represents a significant shift in staff attitudes over the past five years. The Union branch asserts that once such programs became recurrent and therefore part of the on-going program of the College, staff in them would be supported to get teaching qualifications, provided they had base qualifications.

**JEMURIAH AND THE COLLEGE**

Most staff know of the existence of programs run by the College for Aboriginal people but they have little idea of the educational issues involved in a program like Jemuriah. At present, there are no Koorie people in mainstream TAFE courses. Students from Jemuriah are very reluctant to enrol for TAFE courses because they feel they would be on their own. It has been clearly shown that Aboriginals in predominantly non-Aboriginal classes are intimidated and tend to withdraw. The program co-ordinators believe that the appointment of an Aboriginal liaison person would go part of the way to solving this problem. While the Director of the College is very supportive of the Jemuriah program, there has not been sufficient change within the College as a whole. More time for staff development needs to be made available so that the educational needs of Koorie people can be explained and understood.

**CHANGES**

Because there has been a continuous development at the College from EPUY through the School to Work Transition program to PEP, it is not easy to attribute changes directly to the PEP initiatives. Changes which have occurred since the beginning of 1985 have been built on the foundations laid in previous years. However, PEP has definitely provided the framework for access staff to pick out what worked best in previous programs and to develop further, directions in which they had tentatively started to go. Just as importantly, it hastened the campaign to influence the mainstream College.

Unquestionably, PEP has changed the nature of programs for unemployed youth in the College. The PEP guidelines were seen by those most directly involved as a change in emphasis from previous programs and what is more, a change which accorded with their own views of what should happen. The Head
of the Community, Access and Transition area approved of the PEP objective which aimed at getting students into bridging courses and further education. All access staff were in favour of the new emphasis on integration with the mainstream and more generally with the philosophy of participation and equity as outlined in the guidelines. The Director believes that whereas EPUY programs were of value, they didn't provide students with a next step. PEP, which has a stated educational component, has forced the College to look more closely at bridging programs.

Departmental heads echo the gradual, but general increase in awareness which has occurred over the past couple of years:

".... there is an acceptance in the Department that there is a whole new range of students, apart from apprentices that teachers have to cope with..."

"....we take the issue of non-traditional students seriously..."

".... PEP type students are certainly becoming an issue in the College. They are discussed in meetings of heads of departments... we have a lot of informal contact with the Stepping Stones staff (about students)."

College Structures

As PEP moved closer to the mainstream during the 1985 campaign to 'push back the walls', the administration moved to legitimise the PEP initiatives and to bring them under the same control that other activities in the College operated. This was done at the beginning of 1986 by the appointment of a senior teacher to become the head of an area which became known as the Special Projects Department. It covered all those programs which were not included in recurrent funding (with one exception which will be mentioned later). The programs included were migrant education, Aboriginal education, prison education and the PEP initiatives. The Director saw this as a way of making these areas an integral part of the 'educational menu of the College'.

PEP staff are unsure how much their campaign was responsible for this move but they would like to think that it was partly responsible for the decision. The re-structure is regarded as a good move by most staff and PEP staff see it as a way of giving them more credibility and a say in the decision-making bodies of the College. They now have a departmental head who can and does, argue their case at appropriate meetings. The person appointed was previously a head of a mainstream department who had had contact with Community Access and Transition courses. He is seen as taking up the role of advocate for the Special Projects area.

College Policy

Staff in both the Special Projects area and the mainstream departments agree that a College wide philosophy on participation and equity has not been clearly articulated. There are however, some general indications that the bases for the development of such a policy have been laid.
• There is a general acceptance of the need to broaden the student base, although some people feel this is motivated more by the loss of Tertiary Orientation Program (TOP) students than by a positive policy of equity. The Director believes that the adaptation of all departments to a broader student population may not be easy to achieve but the direction has already been established.

• As outlined above, almost all departments in the College commit some staff time and resources to PEP or to similar programs aimed at greater equity e.g. the Women's Trade and Technical program. Both the cutbacks to PEP at the beginning of 1986, and the industrial issue relating to PEP staff conditions of employment, mean that the College is being forced to look at the future of PEP initiatives. The Director believes that if PEP funds were cut completely, the College would maintain a program such as Stepping Stones. The Special Projects Department has recently put up a proposal for recurrent funding of a general Stepping Stones-type course. This has been endorsed by the Programs Committee and is in accord with the general priority categories of the College. However, at this stage (July 1986) it is uncertain where the final decision on such a matter will be made.

• The College has moved towards placing non-traditional courses within recurrent funding. At the end of 1985, after the Jemuriah program had been funded by PEP for one year, the College submitted for its inclusion in recurrent funding and the TAFE Board accepted the submission as being in accord with one of its priority areas. Hence the salaries of two co-ordinators are paid from recurrent funds and the program has the use of some main campus College facilities. However, this does not mean that students have automatic access to the resources of any department. Decisions concerning priorities in the allocation of staff time to various courses still have to be made.

Recurrent funding of the program means that the program can no longer be regarded as peripheral to the College and there are indications that some staff regard the program differently now. Recurrent funding gives the program a wedge into the mainstream. However, both Coordinators are employed on a 12 months contract basis and as noted above, Jemuriah students have to compete with other groups for mainstream staff resources and can easily miss out.

• The College has shown a willingness to accept some non-traditional students and programs. In 1985, the College successfully submitted for funds to run a Women's Trade and Technical program, which was funded partly by the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Industrial Relations (DEIR) and partly by the State Department of Employment and Industrial Affairs (DEIA). This year, the program is being run again with only partial funding from outside sources and the remainder from the College.

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4see below
Students

Stepping Stones staff stressed that the achievements of their course were sometimes difficult to determine in objective terms. In an area where there is high youth unemployment and strong competition for the limited number of jobs available, movement into employment is not the only measure of success. Rather, they looked to achievements based on student perceptions of increased personal options, increased self-esteem, movement into further education, and ability to cope generally. The Coordinator of Stepping Stones saw the course as offering young people a chance to catch up where they had previously missed out and an opportunity to sort out personal directions.

What changes occurred in students as a result of their participation in the Stepping Stones program?

Firstly, one of the clearest messages received from students was the positive outcomes of learning in a group of young people with similar problems to their own. This was summed up in the following comment:

"I've learnt that I'm not worthless, that there are a lot of other people who feel like me. Everyone here has the same problem and we talk about it and help each other."

While society in general offers little personal validation for young unemployed people, the course provided an environment where they were understood and accepted. For some, this was not just a bonus but a matter of survival in the world. One young girl, who had been unemployed for eighteen months before she began the course, said:

"I would be in a mental institution if it wasn't for this place."

Secondly, there was undoubtedly an increase in self-esteem and self-confidence for most students. Some students talked about the awkwardness and shyness they felt when they first came and laughed about how quickly that disappeared.

"When I first came here, I wanted to hide. I had to take a deep breath to walk through the door. Now I'm much better."

A number of factors contributed to this. One was the role of the co-ordinators. While the co-ordinators were very supportive when they felt they needed to be, they also aimed to make students confident and self-initiating. So students were encouraged from the beginning of the course, to look at their options and make decisions for themselves. In addition, activities for Stepping Stones students were organised with a view to increasing confidence. Classes in Maths and
English were small and teachers were able to give individual attention to student problems. Personal development and craft sessions were relaxed and informal. Students appreciated the opportunity to talk about a wide range of matters which concerned them:

"Personal development is really good. You get to talk about the world, politics, anything which is interesting to the group. You also get to know your rights, which is important."

A final factor related to increased self-confidence was the discovery by students that they were capable of handling Maths and English, which for many of these young people had been a series of experiences of failure at school. The difference in attitudes towards school and towards the Stepping Stones course was striking. Frequently, school was experienced as a place where these students got further and further behind because the teachers and the class proceeded at a pace which they couldn't match. Consequently, they left school with a feeling of 'not having learnt anything'. In the Stepping Stones classes, students felt that they could ask questions when they didn't understand and they were not regarded as stupid when they did ask.

The third area of change in students appeared to be a greater sense of their potential options for the future. One 16 year old boy who 'had nothing' when he started the course now knows that he wants a particular apprenticeship. (He has a job lined up later in the year.) Others changes in this area are less immediate but just as positive eg the young woman who said:

"I wanted to do an apprenticeship in ceramics, so I did ceramics here. I didn't like it so now I've found out I don't want to do that. Now I'm looking around for something else. I've got a lot more confidence. Now I think I would be able to go for a job."

Another young woman now has wider interests and understanding because of the increased confidence gained through Stepping Stones. She has started volunteer work at a local Special School and admits that before the course, she would not have gone near such a place.

Most of the students who were interviewed saw the mainstream areas of the course as useful. Not surprisingly, potential usefulness varied with the interests of the students. For example, one young woman saw the business studies part of the course and the opportunity to learn about computers as very useful. She was currently studying for the public service exam. Another young man saw his welding experience as valuable for an apprenticeship.

**Destination of students**

In 1985, 97 students passed through the Stepping Stones course. The following breakdown shows numbers of females and males and students who attended full-time and part-time.
Information about the destination of these students is incomplete as the program does not have the resources to carry out a detailed follow-up. The information which is available was gathered by informal means - by the students returning to visit the program or by the Coordinator hearing about what a particular student was doing. Follow-up is made more difficult because the region is a focus for seasonal work. Some young (and older) people tend to work for a time in the area (fruit picking or in cannery production) then move on to another area, or even another State.

Following is the information which is available for 1985 students:

Destinations of 1985 students (mid-1986)

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FEMALES</th>
<th>MALES</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>found work at end of program</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>left for work during program</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>left the area</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>left for personal reasons</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enrolled part-time in TAFE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>45</td>
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SUMMARY

When the new Participation and Equity Program was launched in 1984, there was a group of people at the College who had some years of experience with programs for unemployed young people. The group was ready to accept and pursue the goals of PEP because they were consistent with directions in which they wanted to move, and indeed had begun to move. The knowledge and experience which the group had built up in previous programs was the nucleus for development of Stepping Stones and Jemuriah.

However, along with the continuity, PEP did lead to a re-focus of programs for unemployed youth at the College. Henceforth, there was to be a greater emphasis on integration of the programs into the College.

5A State TAFE PEP funded project which is now in progress will partly remedy this. It aims to trace destinations of students from Goulburn Valley College of TAFE and another College, who have passed through programs for young unemployed people since 1980.
During 1985, the PEP staff engaged in a deliberate attempt to influence the mainstream, both through the development of Stepping Stones, and through a special public relations campaign. Mainstream staff saw PEP as one more project but PEP staff saw it as a chance to reduce the marginal status of such programs at the College.

PEP staff have, in fact, attempted to operate on two fronts. The first has been the course front, directed towards providing individuals with an opportunity to catch up on basic skills, become more confident and gain some vocationally oriented skills. The second has been aimed at influencing the College to broaden its clientele and to accept responsibility for groups which were previously not part of the mainstream.

On the course front, curriculum approaches for PEP students in the trade areas vary in the extent to which they incorporate PEP guidelines. This variation is partly due to the degree of personal contact there has been over the years between PEP staff and staff in the trade areas. The links between staff in the trade areas and PEP staff are potentially a major path by which changes could be made.

As the PEP program began to move closer to the mainstream, two things happened. Firstly, potential opposition to its integration into the College became more obvious. The opposition was based on three factors: 1) different understandings and expectations of students, 2) different understandings and expectations about course objectives and 3) concerns about differential pay and conditions between PEP staff and mainstream staff. While all of these difficulties have not yet been resolved, there has been significant movement on the first and second and discussion of the third has brought a number of important issues concerning PEP to the fore.

The second thing which happened as PEP moved closer was that the College administration moved to legitimise PEP and bring it under the same control as other areas in the College. Together with this administrative change, there are indications that the College is moving towards a greater acceptance of the need to broaden its student clientele and to devote more resources to groups which were previously excluded from College provision.6

6Some time after field work for this case study was completed, the Special Projects department held a successful staff development seminar. One of the aims of the seminar was to inform people about what the College was doing in the special projects area. Personnel from the central and regional TAFE organisation were invited, as well as College Heads of Department, school personnel and members of the local community.
INTRODUCTION

Scarborough/Trigg Direct Step, funded by the Participation and Equity Program (PEP), grew directly out of previous programs for unemployed youth in the area. This case study outlines the changes of focus which courses have undergone since 1981 and documents two persistent emphases; a concern to cater for young people who are particularly alienated from education, and to offer them opportunities for personal and social development as well as work related skills. PEP at Scarborough/Trigg is 'community', rather than College, based and has strong connections with the State TAFE PEP Resources Unit and its services.

GETTING STARTED: PART-TIME COURSES

In 1981, youth unemployment in the metropolitan north western suburbs of Perth was known to be particularly high. The possibility of offering an EPUY (Educational Program for Unemployed Youth) course at the local Evening Technical School had been suggested by the officer in charge, and was discussed at a two day 'search conference' organised by TAFE Transition Resources Unit. School and Unit staff participated. A plan was developed which took account of the skills of available staff, their perceptions of the needs of the target group (then 15 to 19 year olds who had been unemployed for at least four months), and the constraints of available accommodation and resources.

A part-time course (of eight hours per week) was designed to run in the following term, and was structured in accordance with the Commonwealth's guidelines. Literacy, numeracy, and general work-related skills accounted for most of the available time. A single weekly one hour session (Personal and Social Development) was aimed at "building up students' sense of personal worth" and encouraging self-expression. All course components were to be handled in such a way to foster confidence: students were to experience success, and were to have their success recognised. Participants in the search conference had agreed that this should be a priority because improved self-image would not only be of lasting personal value, but it was directly relevant to the task of finding and securing work in a very competitive employment market.

The first course was well received; one student said:

"It got me doing something. I used to sleep until 12, and then just do nothing."

Participants were pleasantly surprised that the course "wasn't like school", and

1The name 'Direct Step' was adopted in 1985 to refer to PEP courses which were similar in approach to those previously known as EPUY (Educational Program for Unemployed Youth) courses.
that their relationship with teaching staff was quite different from that which they had experienced before. They wanted to spend more time on every activity, but were particularly anxious about their literacy and numeracy skills. So for the second course, it was decided to double the time allocated to this aspect of work. However, the Coordinator’s frustration at having been unable to include a career education or job seeking skills component had to remain.

Part-time courses continued through 1982. There was a shift of emphasis: recreational activities disappeared from the eight hour program, which became ten hours. From the original one hour per week of literacy and numeracy work, there were soon four. ‘Personal and Social Development’, in which issues of significance or concern to course participants were discussed, became a four hour component. The course Coordinator was beginning to feel that not only were many of the students experiencing personal difficulties which required resolution, but that significant progress towards resolution could be achieved within an EPUY context.

"The focus changed as I grew and as my confidence grew. I became aware that what I was doing was really worthwhile, really needed and really appreciated."

The TAFE Counsellor who had worked with this program since its inception (and who is still associated with it) supported this shift of emphasis, and his skill input sustained it. But it was not universally approved.

DIFFICULTIES WITH 'MAINSTREAM' TAFE

There had always been some difficulties of the kind associated with sharing facilities: it had not been possible to provide EPUY students with their own room, and the rooms which were available had through traffic while classes were in progress. One housed a photocopier to which TAFE staff required access during EPUY sessions. In addition, there were special difficulties associated with being sited in a TAFE institution, even though it was not a fully-fledged college. Many students had been apprehensive about enrolling in courses simply because of this. But problems with the program’s location became more acute as courses moved towards a more explicit, more prominent, and more professional concern for the personal welfare and development of students. It became apparent to the Coordinator that a crisis was approaching.

"The kids weren’t getting a go. I was getting a lot of flak from people who said you can’t just sit around and talk with kids. They’ve got to be doing something. The new officer-in-charge had been a trades instructor, and his sincere belief was that you weren’t being of any help to young people unless you were getting them to do things, to make things. He wanted my input to the program to stop, because he thought I had nothing of value to offer. That was a difficult time for me, and the little bit of confidence that I had, I began to doubt."

The Counsellor saw this clash as having been inevitable.
"being at the 'pointy end' of the change business, like in PEP, has been the cause of a lot of joy and also a lot of hassles. In the early days, it was difficult to get PEP activities accepted by the more traditional people in TAFE. For good reasons. EPUY dealt with non-examinable stuff, and EPUY students were viewed as being a bit 'wobbly': the kind of kids who wouldn't normally get into a TAFE college, and wouldn't be very amenable to the fairly precise organisation, the tight discipline, which is right for traditional TAFE courses."

The immediate problem was solved by the relocation of the program: away from TAFE premises and into the local surf lifesaving club rooms, on the nearby beachfront. The reason given for this move was that a full-time course was being planned, and that the Evening Technical School was unable to accommodate this.

"My real reason for moving was that the TAFE environment couldn't allow the needs of our young people to be met: at least not in the way that we thought we could best meet them. We needed to be somewhere where we could be private. Somewhere where kids could spill out the things that were really concerning them, and where we could start doing something about it. We couldn't work in an environment where people would be coming in and out to make coffee or to use the photocopier. We needed a safe and comfortable physical and social environment in order to get the kind of personal development that we were aiming for."

From 1983, the program offered courses on a full-time basis, initially in the beachfront clubrooms, and employing half a dozen part-time staff. The courses had exclusive use of some space, and the problems of conflicting educational philosophies and educational practices, which had seemed insoluble in the mainstream TAFE environment, disappeared. The absence of the supporting resources which a TAFE college could have provided was not an issue: the previously used TAFE premises had included only minimal facilities.

**WHAT DID IT HOPE TO ACHIEVE?**

Course planning workshops soon became a feature of the program. During these, issues relating to personal and social development - variously described - were consistently reported by staff as being an area of concern to students. Even on initial contact forms, which prospective students were asked to complete before enrolment interviews, many had expressed their reasons for being interested in the course in terms which indicated this concern. Reasons given included:

- "To learn to relate to others. To communicate."
- "To find out who I am and what I want to be."
- "To change my lifestyle."
- "To give me more confidence."
- "To help me develop socially and get on with people."

Not all students were able to articulate their motivation in such positive terms,
and gave personal difficulties or crises as reasons for seeking to enrol in the course:

"Depression."
"Family problems."
"I feel guilty not doing anything..."
"I have to get my parents off my back."
"To take the stigma out of saying 'I'm unemployed'."

A real interest in self-improvement, sometimes related to specific educational areas, was often apparent.

"I want help to keep my mind active."
"I have to keep up to date knowledgewise, so I won't drift away..."
"The course will help me learn new things."
"I need to push up my maths."
"I want to improve my education."
"I have to get my grades up."

For yet other students, the need to find work took priority. Their reasons for wanting to enrol in the course suggest something of the desperation with which this need was felt:

"My friends are working and I'm not"
"I'm sick of getting knocked back when looking for work."
"I have to boost up my knowledge so I can gain a job."
"The course will teach me how to get a job..."
"It will remove barriers between me and the job I want."
"I want to improve my job opportunities."

In determining priorities for courses, the program Coordinator was sensitive to this sort of information. Courses were designed to address the needs for enhanced personal and social confidence and skill, for the consolidation and extension of selected scholastic skills (in circumstances and by means appropriate to the student), and for the development of career awareness and job-seeking skills.

A particular concern shared by staff was that students should experience the course as part of a progression in their lives:

"We've always taken the view that every kid on a course has to be going somewhere at the end of it. Not because it's been imposed on them, but because they've been working on it. From about half-way through a course, I get kids to think about where they're going at the end. The idea is to be moving on, moving up to something which is a kind of progression: employment or education. We make sure that students have access to information about TAFE courses. The Counsellor would work on this... and now our timing - when our courses finish - is just right for TAFE intakes."

In 1984, PEP replaced the School to Work Transition Program, the previous
source of funding for the course. There was no immediate change to the course, although there was a change of venue in that year. The beachfront rooms proved to be exceedingly bleak during the winter months of 1983 and heating would have been very expensive. At the end of the year, those working on the program (eight part-time staff were then involved) agreed that a house would suit the small group work, which was such an important part of each course, better. So for 1984 a nearby house was rented. This proved to be most satisfactory. Care was taken to maintain good relationships with nearby residents, and students of the four courses which operated from the house during 1984 and 1985 developed quite a sense of ownership in relation to it. Many chose to take pride in renovating and maintaining the house and garden - a minor but perhaps not insignificant indication of success with respect to several aims of the program: to help develop positive attitudes towards school, authority, and community, and to lead students to an understanding that they can have control over their lives. In the Counsellor's words:

"I'm committed to the idea that life is a matter of choice and we were able to develop this idea quite strongly, with relevance to the situations that kids were actually in. We wanted kids to feel, for example, that how they reacted to being unemployed was a matter of choice. They could choose to stay drunk all day, or smoke dope, or whatever, or they could choose to do other more positive things instead. That was one major objective for me. To have kids discover their own power, the power of the group, and their power in the community."

The program was by this time well and truly community based. The original association with a TAFE teaching site was long past, and the only connection with the TAFE system was through the TAFE PEP Resources Unit and the TAFE Counselling Service. From the former came all administrative and material support, and almost all professional support. PEP funds permitted regular and highly valued counselling input to the program. In addition to providing a professional service to individual students, and being involved in the enrolling of students and in the planning of courses, the Counsellor would run timetabled personal development sessions. He recalled:

"Working with kids on an individual level has always been a big part of my work in the program. But this has to be preceded by group sessions, on issues such as confidence building, stress management, drugs, how to work well as a group... various things that might come up - issues perhaps which were coming up during the course and were not being resolved. Then kids can see you at work, can judge you as a person, and can get to have some faith in you... some confidence in you. Until that develops, you can't expect to be able to help kids. They have to trust you, and that means they have to know you. That's why the group sessions are so important."

PARTICIPATIVE PLANNING

Translating the aims of the program, and the concerns of the students in a particular course, into a specific course outline and a weekly timetable, was
demanding and complex. Project coordinators are urged by TAFE PEP Resources Unit to make use of a 'participative planning process' in designing and managing courses. Such a process emphasises the involvement of all who are committed to any particular project, and is felt to be appropriate for PEP activities. The TAFE PEP Coordinators' Handbook recommends that:

"...to help prepare young people to cope with an uncertain future, they must be given the opportunity and encouragement to use initiative, to accept responsibility, and to take risks. Within an educational context, this means that they must be given continuous opportunity to take real responsibility for their own learning."

In practice, this has meant that given certain basic parameters, students have always been involved quite directly in determining the direction of the course. Usually, the students, the coordinator, the staff, and a conference facilitator from TAFE PEP Resources Unit have met for a one or two day planning workshop - a 'search conference' - in the first days or weeks of a course. Participants have been invited to reflect on their personal visions of the future ie on what they might do to work towards that future, on what might be done during the lifetime of the course, and on how they might work to make the course a success. The documented outcome of each workshop would be used to plan the remainder of the course of which it was part. It would be a source document during the course.

"Students didn't come in to a prescribed course because we used a participatory process. They and the staff and I would work out together what we needed. The kids planned it with us. I wanted it this way because I wanted each course to take into account fully the needs and concerns of the people who were going to be in it."

Initially these planning workshops were the first events in courses, and the Coordinator acted as facilitator. Experience led to insights, developments, and refinements.

"I don't think that too many of our kids have had much experience at making decisions or planning important things that affect them. I found that it's just not on to take a group of kids and sit them down and say, 'Well, here we are, isn't this great, you're going to plan your own course!' For some kids this is really mind-blowing - you're taking away all the old structures and putting them into a kind of vacuum. So I changed. I began to plan the first couple of weeks, to give the group a lot of 'taster' experiences, then we would go away on a camp and do the planning while we were away. Then everyone has had certain experiences in common, experiences which they have an option about, and which are relevant to some of the decisions that have to be made."

Typically, the majority of students agreed that they needed to improve their self-confidence, their interview techniques, and their job-seeking skills. They were interested in learning how to express their feelings and how to get along with others in a group. They expected to be able to make some progress in literacy and numeracy, and they wanted to develop a variety of recreational and
Craft skills.

In addition to these initial planning workshops, evaluation workshops came to be used, at first only at the end of courses, but later in mid-semester as well. These allowed progress towards the individual and group goals (which had come out of the planning workshops) to be assessed. Weekly meetings of staff and students resolved ongoing management difficulties, and were intended to provide students with real and immediate experience of taking responsibility and of exercising power.

"I would give kids the choice of formal or informal weekly meetings, and most of the time they would choose to have a formal procedure, and appoint a secretary for that day and so on. Which visitors they were going to have, or what recreational activity and so on, were decided by the group. Many of the things we wanted to deal with, like goal setting, planning, conflict resolution, decision-making, were dealt with in context, while sorting out real issues. Sometimes there would be 'group dynamics' problems: maybe there would be some scapegoating, with one kid getting the blame for all kinds of things. Then we would have come in strongly on the point that we accepted everyone, that we weren't into solving problems by getting rid of people. The group would have to work it out. That sometimes took a lot of time, but from a social learning point of view, it was very valuable experience."

Participative planning has meant that the courses which this program has operated have differed in detail according to the expressed needs and preferences of students. But their general shape has been influenced by the values and priorities of the staff, in particular by the values and priorities of the coordinators, and it is this influence which has given the program consistency and continuity.

THE SHAPE OF FULL-TIME COURSES

One of the house-based courses had four major components. 'Future alternatives' included two hours of house and garden renovation and maintenance, two hours of cooking, sewing, or craft, and three hours of a recreational activity such as riding, bowling, or canoeing. 'Vocational skills' covered Maths (four hours), career education (two hours), and some work-related skills development chosen from welding, bricklaying, computing, or typing (four hours). 'Communication' was split between formal work (two hours) and creative writing (two hours). Eight hours of 'Life and Social Skills' addressed a range of issues: sex education, group skills, community awareness, first aid, and personal and social development. Every course included a camp, usually of four or five days, and was planned as an integral part of student experience. The planning workshops, during which students were encouraged to think about, and to talk about, what they needed and what they wanted from the course, came to be held as part of the camp. Recreational activities were often intentionally dramatic.

"On camp we would begin to build group cohesiveness. It starts with the
planning which goes on at the beginning. That experience is good: more valuable than the product. Then they would share some unusual, and some spectacular experiences, like abseiling. That makes for strong bonds. It looks hard, it's a bit scary, and it's something which none of their friends outside the course have ever done. It gives them something to talk about, something to be proud of. It really builds the group."

Work experience was encouraged, but was not initially an integral part of the course. In the Coordinator's view, many of the students had more immediate need of a supportive environment in which new skills and new self esteem could become established, and were simply not ready for the demands of a workplace. As Coordinator and staff became more familiar with the value of work experience, it was introduced, and is now considered an essential part of the program.

SELECTING STAFF

A major function of the TAFE PEP Resource Unit has been to oversee the appointment of coordinators, and to support their personal and professional development in carefully selected directions. TAFE Counselling Service has been able to provide substantial counselling input and consultancy support to programs such as this, on a regular and continuing basis. The influence of these two agencies, of the points of view which they represent and which they reinforce, has been a key factor in the development of courses offered in this particular program.

"What any EPUY or PEP course is like is very largely a function of who the coordinator is, what skills they have and what priorities they have. That's a good thing, because then coordinators pursue their agenda with some conviction and some sincerity. So getting the right person is important."

The first coordinator of this program was selected after discussion between the TAFE staff of the host institution and the TAFE Transition Resources staff. She had been a participant in the search conference, during which she had demonstrated an understanding of the problems faced by the young unemployed, and a real concern for their welfare. She was considered to have appropriate personal skills, and she had extensive contacts in the local community. Her previous work, most recently as a recreation officer with the city council, was highly regarded. And above all else, she was available. One of the newly appointed coordinator's first tasks was the engagement of part-time staff for the program.

"Selecting staff was a matter of drawing on my own contacts over the last 20 years. I've been working in this community for that long... I had a file of my own that I had built up, and I added people to it as I went along. I used to chat people up, exploring the way they felt about things, and making sure that they shared my ideas about how to go about the job. I would have quite long talks with people I didn't know all that well. Then I'd get them into a course."
She sought staff who were concerned about the youth unemployment situation; sensitive to the consequences of long term unemployment at the level of the individual; competent in relevant subject areas; able to work well as a team member; and willing to accept temporary part-time employment for an uncertain period of time. Such people, once found, were valuable: often they have been shared with other concurrent program. A networking process developed, which continues to useful effect.

Not all of the staff adapted easily to the program, which was quite deliberately operated along very different lines from standard school or TAFE courses. Some of those whose teaching experience had only been in the school system found it difficult to cope with the informality of this community based course, and those selected proved to be successful and enthusiastic. Three people taken on as part-time teaching staff became full-time course coordinators elsewhere in the city, and have since joined TAFE PEP Resources Unit.

1986: CHANGE AND RENEWAL

The program experienced major changes in 1986: a change of coordinator, another change of location, and a change of emphasis. The Coordinator who had established the program, moved it into the community, and given it a particular, distinctive style, began work in the TAFE PEP Resources Unit as the support and liaison officer for community-based Direct Step programs, of which there were then nine. Discussion with the local Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) office had already led to a decision to give the program a more definite vocational skill content, and CES files suggested that a course which could claim to give young people some background in the hotel and restaurant business would be appropriate locally. The possibility of a full year course had been considered. Coincidentally, the former coordinator of a community based course elsewhere in the city, was due to return from long-service leave...

Meanwhile, it had become necessary to find new accommodation for the program. For some time, working relationships with the local Community Youth Support Scheme had been particularly close and mutually beneficial. The CYSS management committee was considering taking over new premises and offered to share them with the new Direct Step Coordinator, in order to facilitate more extensive and more effective cooperation. The facilities would have particularly suited a course of the kind which was being planned. But the costs involved turned out to be beyond the available resources of either party.

"Instead, CYSS said that we could come into the empty part of their present building. But 'empty' was the word. It was like a barn. I thought, well, a hospitality industry course won't go down very well in this sort of place. But what a great opportunity to run a course which would centre on constructing some facility here... So I suggested to CES that we spend a semester getting something built, and then run the hospitality course in decent surroundings in the following semester. Kids could get skill input at a TAFE college, and then apply it to this project."
Initially, there was some concern by the CES office that young people with skills such as might be developed by the proposed course would be impossible to place. But after a detailed course proposal had been worked out, it met with approval. Students were to complete a project which would involve erecting steel-framed partition walls and suspended ceilings, and constructing simple furniture. The end result would be a useful teaching area. In the process, students would have experience of basic measurement, cutting and welding, steel fixing, wall cladding and painting. There would also be some woodworking.

This new course may have seemed like a very considerable departure from the pattern which had been set earlier in the life of the program. But in fact, although there was a shift of emphasis, this did not represent any abandonment of the fundamental aims of the program. The new coordinator's position was a very pragmatic one, which recognised the need, in a hardening political and educational climate, to acknowledge the importance of directly relevant job skills.

"The course has to be about jobs, basically. Now I see it as being about much more than that, but DEIR have a particular brief, and so they see only one side of it. I'm interested in helping kids survive in a society where they mightn't get a job... They have to be able to deal with being rejected by society. They have to know where they are going to get fulfilment from where they are as people. So although I've got a set of priorities, an agenda if you like, which I believe in, for bureaucratic purposes I've got to present things in a certain way. TAFE is all about skills which are very directly job-related. We have a lot of people in TAFE who still see their job as being nothing more than producing an industrial workforce. PEP is bringing a little of the human spirit back into the system. But not everyone can see how important this is."

SELECTING STUDENTS

The first task was to select students for the course. This has always been a matter of close cooperation between the Coordinator, the Counsellor, and the local CES staff. And it has always been a problem according to the first program Coordinator.

"We've never been able to select kids. We've always been battling one way or another to get enough young people to fill courses, even though the unemployment rate is so terribly high."

In order to qualify for the Formal Training Allowance, which can be paid to students enrolled in Direct Step courses, a young person must now either be 16 to 24 years old and have been unemployed for six months of the preceding nine, or be considered at a special disadvantage in the employment market. The local CES Youth Officer is responsible for contacting individuals who appear to comprise the target group.

"My job is to make the first contact with people, using the register which we
keep. We need to get a letter out to everyone who is eligible for any of the four courses in our area. There are over 5000 cards in the file, arranged numerically by occupational code, and within these codes, alphabetically by name. So we have to go through the whole 5000, checking each one. We'll get a computerised file one day, and be able to do a better job. Anyway, we'll pull out say, 400 cards, and send a letter to all these people. We offer three options: ring us, write to us, or call in and talk to us about the courses. We're looking to fill about 70 places altogether. We know from previous experience that very few will respond. After two weeks, we'll telephone everyone who hasn't yet responded. 'Selection' is probably the wrong word for what we have to do. We're recruiting, and it's hard work. We often find that the few people we do pick up are ineligible, because they've had work which we haven't known about... I'm the third person to do this particular job this year..."

Despite the considerable efforts of the CES office to contact interested young people, additional means of locating prospective students have had to be used. Both coordinators have had to use their private and professional contacts in the community, and have had to distribute leaflets and posters. Sometimes even this has not been enough:

"I've actually driven up and down the beachfront talking to young people, saying 'This is a great program, you ought to come and have a look at it'. Kids would sometimes say 'Oh yeah, we got a letter about this... but we never read what CES send us - we just chuck it in the bin'. That's happened time and time again."

Although unorthodox methods of recruitment to the course have been necessary, it is not quite the case that selection has not occurred. The practice which developed during the tenure of the first coordinator (and which is being continued) was to arrange for all prospective students to have an informal session with the staff, and sometimes with former students, at the course site. CES officers now take part in this exercise too. During this session, the general objectives of the program are discussed, and some idea of the activities which were part of earlier courses is given. Video material produced by previous students is used. An initial contact form is filled in, not implying any commitment to the course, but serving to facilitate the next step. This is a personal interview with the Coordinator and Counsellor, offered to all those young people who are still interested. Some will 'select themselves out' at this point, and interviews often become educational and vocational counselling sessions.

"Because we believed that kids ought to be where their needs are going to be best met, we sometimes redirected maybe 14 or 15 kids to other courses or programs. CES thought we were crazy, sending people elsewhere when they knew that getting enrolments wasn't easy, when they were fighting to get kids in here. Once we were talking to a young guy who turned out to be really interested in horticulture. So we told him about the TAFE horticulture course, which he liked the sound of, and then we rang and arranged for him to be interviewed and so on. Well, he got into the course and a couple of weeks later his mum rang to thank us. He was happy, and he was learning things. His needs were being met... he was a changed kid."
Difficulty in filling the course persisted into 1986. Perhaps this was inevitable. According to the program's counsellor:

"Many kids see [the course] as just more education, and our target group is kids who by and large found the education system a drag. The problem is built in. We're trying to reach kids who have been turned off."

On the Friday before the 1986 first semester course was due to start, only one student had been enrolled, despite some weeks of effort. CES staff had written to hundreds of prospective students, and had spoken to dozens. They had promoted the course through other CES offices, hoping to attract unemployed young people from other areas. The Coordinator had publicised the course through local youth groups, churches, schools and colleges. Posters had been distributed. But it seemed that the course would not proceed...

"So I put an ad. in the Sunday paper, in the appointments column. It said something about training for employment, and it said that people would be paid. I listed the CES name and number, and my name and the CYSS number. I didn't tell anyone I was going to do this, because I thought it probably wouldn't have been approved. Well, the ad. worked OK and the calls came in."

As a result of this strategy, eight students were enrolled: enough to begin the course on a part-time basis. Within a week, the enrolment was 17, largely as a result of the original students having contacted people they knew who were eligible and likely to be interested.

COLLEGE SUPPORT

A new requirement for the program was an effective working relationship with one of the nearby TAFE colleges. It was proposed that the students receive some systematic instruction in the techniques which they would need to apply in order to complete the construction project. Circumstances were right for such a step. Firstly, there had been a change of senior administrative personnel at one local college. This was important because it was well known that the previous administration had taken the line that it was not in the interests of 'mainstream' TAFE programs for such students to be on campus. The contrasts, the strains, were too great. But it seemed likely that the new administration would not hold to this view. Secondly, the program's new Coordinator had previously taught at the College, and was known to most of the staff whose cooperation he would have to seek.

"I have an ad hoc arrangement with Tech [the College], I just ring directly the Heads of the particular teaching departments that I need help from. I just say, look, I want so many hours of this or that for my kids. They're very cooperative. I know most of these guys. They give me the time if they have it, or sometimes we have to pay - that's if none of the lecturers have uncommitted time. I know from experience that there was once very strong
opposition to any 'transition' group being in the college. I believe things have changed, but I don't know what the official College policy is, because I don't work at that level..."

One TAFE lecturer was asked to take the group for four half-day sessions in order to give them enough experience of special welding techniques to be able to work with internal steel wall frames. He did this without knowing initially that the group was from the Direct Step course: he assumed that they were carpentry apprentices or trade students who needed to be able to do occasional steel work. He reported them to be an excellent group; purposeful, responsive to instruction and advice, and cooperative in the general business of the workshop. He also commented on the unusual group cohesiveness: "They tend to help each other out a lot...". This was apparent during observation, when although there were very different levels of competence being demonstrated, this seemed to cause none of the usual difficulties. More capable students offered help, and less capable students accepted it. One declared aim of the course had been "...to encourage students to work together towards the development of personal and social skills". Perhaps success was being seen in the College workshop.

COUNSELLING SUPPORT

Valued TAFE support for the program in 1986 came through the Counselling Service, as before, but with an unfortunate and significant difference. Funding reductions became effective at the beginning of the year, and the time which the Counsellor could make available to the program was reduced. The style of counselling support had to change.

"This year I've exactly half the time available for community-based courses as before. I've tried to get down to the course to run group sessions and then to follow up with individual counselling as required, which is what I used to do. But what's actually happened is I've been down a few times to be on hand for kids, I've spoken to various people, superficially, and I've done a few low-level welfare sorts of things - phoning people and so on. I've done a goal-setting exercise with the group, and I've taken them in to Head Office for some vocational work, but I haven't been able to offer much real professional support. There's a much closer person-to-person contact in PEP courses, and kids are much more likely to bring their worries out, and to share them with the rest of the group. There has been a qualitative change in my input to the program because of the funding cuts. What I'm doing is not less of the same. It's different. The style of operation is different."

THE PROGRAM IN 1986

The vocational skills component of the 1986 course comprised about 12 of the 28 timetabled hours each week. Students would either be at the TAFE college for instruction, or at the program site, working on the construction project under the Coordinator's supervision. Part-time staff organised a variety of craft
experiences, including some very successful ceramics sessions. (Several students continued with ceramics work independently, in their own time). Copper embossing and calligraphy were also well received by students. Three hours of communication skills were taken by a part-time staff member whose contribution to the program has long been valued. The non-availability of a counsellor on a scheduled basis meant that social and life skills had to be handled by the Coordinator alone. Students were exposed to a wide range of recreational activities, and work experience was available.

At the end of the course, the results of the construction project (a useful teaching area, a small office, and a large work/storage area) were officially opened. At the same time, the eight students who had completed the course were presented with certificates where the skills which they had practised were listed. A community newspaper representative, a member of the State parliament, an employer, TAFE, CYSS, and CES workers and half a dozen parents attended. Students attached some importance to this occasion. In the days preceding it they had expressed concern lest some detail be unfinished. They seemed to have taken on group ownership of the project, and the care with which they approached some of the less attractive tasks was quite apparent. The Coordinator had always spoken of the project as something which the group was providing for the benefit of other young unemployed in the area something which would benefit future students of the program. The behaviour of students indicated that they had taken on this notion. In the Counsellor's view...

"One of the really good things about these courses is that we get a chance to do something about the alienation process: the process that can set in when you're at home doing nothing all day. Or you're out in the street with nothing better to do than think about maybe pinching a car... Now one way to reduce this alienation is for kids to feel that they can put something into the community. They generally feel that they're not getting much respect from the community, but then they're not getting much of a chance to give anything which could make them feel valued..."

Sharing premises with the CYSS project has worked to mutual advantage. Resources other than the physical space have been shared without great difficulty, and PEP students and CYSS clients mix easily. There are none of the problems which were associated with sharing a TAFE site: there is no conflict of values or priorities, and the target groups are virtually the same. A most significant difference is the contrasting degree of commitment demanded by each scheme: this seems to add a sense of purpose to enrolment in the Direct Step course. Both PEP and CYSS staff reported feeling mutually supported. It seems to be a very natural alliance.

**HOW HAVE STUDENTS BENEFITTED?**

Official records of student destinations have not been kept, but Coordinators have always taken an interest in 'life after PEP'. Sometimes post-course support has been organised in the form of a subsequent part-time course for ex-students who have not been moving into a structured environment: either employment or
education. It seems likely that because of the close links with CYSS (students in the most recent course know the CYSS project officers, and are familiar with CYSS activities) part-time 'follow up' courses will be unnecessary. Throughout the life of the program, few students have left a course for reasons other than their having found employment, and this probably reflects the care which both Coordinators have taken to be clear with students about what they were being offered, and what they could expect.

When students have been asked to reflect on their course experience, they have rated it highly. They report an awareness of personal development, which they value, and about which some have been quite articulate. They judge the course in terms other than simply of skill acquisition. These course evaluation comments are unrepresentative of those of other 1985 students only in that they are rather more eloquent than most.

"....classes were fun. Although I had a better education in Maths and English than most, I learnt a lot because both were geared to help us in the real world, not like in school.

My biggest lesson however, was learnt outside these classes. In Personal and Social development, on camp, and in all those times we were supposed to be working but didn't. At first it was difficult to trust anybody, but after a couple of weeks trust came easily. People went out of their way to make me feel welcome, even though I often, and still do, say no to joining in... When this trust did come, it came in bulk. I trusted every single member of the group. I knew they wouldn't hurt me.

I realised that the whole world didn't think of me in the way I thought of myself. I realised just what I had going for me. I began to believe that being me wasn't so bad after all and I started to like myself and I know I'll continue to grow, learn, and experiment, because I have already become more confident, more relaxed, and more willing to try.

Although I'm sad that the course has finished, I'm not only able to cope outside, I am eager to find out what else life has to offer. I'm going to work on my shyness with self-assertion training at Tech. I'm scared to take this step, but I've got enough confidence to try, and the commitment and stubbornness to stick with it."

Interviews with students from the 1986 course, and with some of their families, suggest a very similar enhancement of self-awareness and confidence, and a valuing of personal insights which are attributed to experiences which the course provided. Work experience, and the development of basic vocationally related skills, were acknowledged as useful, but of lesser importance.

But if students benefit from such a program only in ways which might be seen as being indirectly related to their working life, can such a program be justified? One view - expressed here by the program counsellor, is that it certainly can:
"People who see the aim of these courses as just getting a job sometimes criticise the programs as expensive, saying the cost-benefit ratio isn't acceptable. I believe the answer is it depends how serious we are about the equity issue. These courses were set up to provide equity, to offer something to people who so far haven't got much out of the system, because the system hasn't been responsive to their needs. But if you look at the resources per student which go into TAFE mainstream, or the university or CAE sectors, then they're not so expensive. The difference is that our kids are just not going to be the high level operatives in society: not accountants, or graphic artists or whatever. But they are no less deserving. And they are different as a result of their experience. For 16 or 18 weeks they've been thinking about what it's like making decisions, thinking about issues in their lives, getting along with people, working together with a common aim. It changes them - not overnight - but it changes them."
ELIZABETH COLLEGE OF TAFE
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

by

SUSAN C BRUNNER

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INTRODUCTION

"Why do you think the program works here?" That question was posed by the evaluator to most of the TAFE college personnel* she interviewed for this case study. Frequently, an adjunct to that question was something like "What do you have to overcome (personally, as a Section, as a College) to continue to make it work?"

Elizabeth College of TAFE was identified by the Department of TAFE's central Participation and Equity Program (PEP) Unit as having one of the most successful Introduction to Trades for Young Women (ITT) programs in the State. That Unit's measurement of "success", as initially related to the evaluator, included integration of the ITT Coordinator into the School of Technical Studies which houses the program, and a record for filling the course's complement of 12 students. Responsible for one of the first ITT offerings in the State,1 Elizabeth College has run one or two ITT programs annually since 1983. Its program evolved along with the Commonwealth PEP guidelines. That is, as the PEP guidelines were introduced, Elizabeth College accepted into ITT females up to the age of 24. It sought to identify the program with the College community and, in particular, with the School of Technical Studies through staff development, support networks for females in trade training, and through regarding ITT as a bridging experience into further tertiary study.

In addition, this College's immediate catchment area is considered "a sociologically disadvantaged area". That area contains "a high proportion of youth, unemployed, single parents, migrants and women"2 - groups who, according to CES as well as PEP guidelines, should be encouraged to improve their employment opportunities by enrolling in TAFE's Access programs. ITT is one such program.

Part of the rationale for inclusion of a series of case studies in the national evaluation of PEP was to portray the variety of responses to PEP, and to document achievements.3 Given this background, Elizabeth College seemed to the evaluator to be the ideal TAFE college for this study. Interviews with relevant Department staff and students have confirmed that belief. The purposes of this particular case study are to:

• give credit to this program, within its own State TAFE system, for its accomplishments;

• "illuminate", (to use the terminology of the national evaluation team) for TAFE colleges across the country "the complexity of decisions, ideas and resources that determine" those accomplishments;4

*To achieve anonymity of courses, those interviewed are neither identified by name nor, at times, by sex, nor by their position within the College or the Department of TAFE (SA).
respond to the PEP guideline calling for program evaluation;\textsuperscript{5}

help realise Elizabeth College's own "goal" of reviewing its programs "to ensure that the principles of participation and equity are applied".\textsuperscript{6}

The Aims and Objectives for ITT, according to the Department of TAFE (SA), are given in full in, respectively, Appendices A and B to this case study. Both lists describe a trade course whose purpose is to introduce young women to what, stereotypically speaking, would be non-traditional trade areas. End-of-course level of proficiency to that expected at the completion of the first year of apprentice training is not intended. ITT is a 12 week course comprising approximately 420 hours of instruction in five or six trades. Completion of the course results in the award of a Statement of Achievement and a Certificate. Within this Department, it falls under the Vocational Preparation umbrella.

Beginning with five colleges in South Australia in 1983, the program is offered now at ten colleges. The latter figure accounts for nearly 50 percent of the TAFE colleges in the State. (It is anticipated that only Elizabeth College will be offering ITT twice in 1986; the rest will offer it once).\textsuperscript{7}

Since this is the only introductory trade program specifically for PEP-targeted females* offered by this Department, it was heartening to the evaluator to find that so many colleges have invested human and physical plant resources in ITT.

For source material for this study, the evaluator relied primarily upon documents furnished to her by Elizabeth College and the Department's central PEP Unit as well as on the notes gathered from interviews with 24 members of the Department's staff or the CES and with 11 students. For the sake of contrast, staff at a second TAFE College, Croydon Park, were interviewed regarding their ITT program. While that College too, had hosted a pilot ITT effort in 1983,\textsuperscript{8} its program had developed differently and with less positive outcomes. There the program has been offered only intermittently since that time, and its most recent Coordinator has not been integrated with her trades education colleagues.

Everyone interviewed had the right of amendment on his/her notes. In addition, the first draft of this case study was sent to each interviewee for comment. Where differences of opinion existed among those interviewed, they are so identified within the text. Finally, the evaluator gained impressions from observing ITT instruction at Elizabeth College in eight different areas.

Returning to the pivotal question for this study - "Why do you think the program works here?", staff and students gave several reasons. Fundamental to question

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{*}This program is not exclusively for such females. At times, an enrolment "top-up" is achieved by admitting females aged between 15 and 24 years who do not meet the unemployment criterion. This occurs when an insufficient number of females meeting all of the program's criteria are enrolled.
\end{quote}
and reasons was how the phenomenon of "working" or "success" was defined. Those definitions are given below:

THE COURSE IS SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE IT FULFILS ITS OBJECTIVES - STUDENT VIEWPOINT

When interviewed individually, members of the current ITT student cohort were shown a list of the course objectives and were asked to respond to the objectives of their choice. These responses revealed part of their measurement of the program's success. (Seven of the nine students enrolled contributed to this assessment. The remaining two were unavailable on either of the days set aside for student interviews. The number of each objective is shown beside the statement.)

The Department stated that "on completion of this course the student should be able to":

1. "make an informed choice when pursuing further studies, or seeking employment"

The evaluator observed the class being given further study information. Stated one student,

"you don't really learn enough to get employed. But it just makes you more informed. At least you know more about what the trades are all about so that if you want to, you can go into an area."

This student was confident that the work experience placements in the last two weeks of the course would result in offers of apprenticeships to some of the cohort.

2/12/13. "carry out safe working procedures"
(To the students, these objectives were variations on a common theme. Refer to Appendix B for complete wording.)

Sensibly, one of the students related her safety training to her ability "to make an informed choice" about a trade. Bothered by the safety angle in lathe work, she now knows not to go into the metal trades. The students appreciated the thoroughness with which safety was covered, as they were using machinery and power hand tools they had "never worked with before".

Several students suggested that safety could be improved by Elizabeth College furnishing safety gloves which better suited the size of their hands, and by installing brighter illumination in the arc welding bays.

3. "demonstrate the ability to read and interpret drawings and sketch simple problems...."

 Students gave mixed reactions. Some felt the time allocation was too short
to permit thorough instruction. This led to a low confidence level in their skill acquisition. One area of this objective which received a positive response was in regard to the methodology of combining the theoretical and the practical. That response is summarised by this student's remarks:

"we did learn basically how to present drawings for fitting and turning. We had to copy what was on the instructions. We knew how to read it, and we also knew how to draw a few up".

4. "demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively..."

"The ability to communicate" was interpreted primarily as relating to verbal interaction between students and staff. Six of the seven students interviewed mentioned communication problems they had, or had witnessed other students having, with one member of staff. The crux of the difficulty seemed to be that lecturer's impatience. As one student saw it, it was difficult for the class to improve their communication skills when good skills were not modelled.

These statements do not mean that the students were dissatisfied overall with their communication with staff. On the contrary, as is recorded later in this case study, individuals as well as the lecturing staff as a whole were identified as being "patient", approachable, and as offering pastoral care when students were stressed.

5./8. "display an awareness of a selected trade family..." and "identify various alternatives to employment"

The students tended to relate these objectives to objective 1, although one young woman specifically stated that she now was capable of considering a range of skills and occupations within a trade family. As a result, she was aware that the opportunity existed for her to "become proficient in" a particular aspect of a trade.

6. "assess herself in terms of her capabilities..."

The confidence expressed by some of these students endorsed the Department's and the College's belief that this ITT program is a success. For example, speaking of her recent apprenticeship examination, a student stated,

"if I didn't do this course, I wouldn't have applied for it (to do the exam). In this course, they show you that you've got the ability and the potential to do it".

7. "demonstrate the ability to apply job-seeking and interview skills"

Generally, the young women felt this ITT program had given them these skills, or had enhanced their existing skills. One student would have liked "a
bit more practice" in interviewing, particularly with people who were "strangers" to the cohort, and who therefore would have given the cohort a more realistic idea of interview situations in industry.

9. "progress into an appropriate pre-vocational course"

Of the seven students interviewed, four were planning - at the time of their interview - to enter a Pre-vocational program; two were not yet sure. Of the four making such plans, two were hoping to get into programs which followed on from the non-traditional trade areas studied within ITT and a third wanted to do computing; the fourth intended to choose her specialisation once she got into a Pre-vocational Business Studies course.

In addition two students were intent on gaining apprenticeships in non-traditional trade areas covered within this ITT program. Because of their financial obligations to their families, they needed to obtain that training through securing an apprenticeship. One of them speculated that she might be able to handle the situation financially if the Pre-vocational trade program of her choice was empowered to give her a reasonable allowance. Of the two students unavailable for interview, one was going through an apprentice selection process for an auto mechanic. Just before this study commenced, a student left the course for non-apprenticeable, trade-related employment.

Thus this program is successful in helping young women gain the necessary information and confidence to make the progression to Pre-vocational study. As there are no mid-year Pre-vocational program intakes at Elizabeth College in 1986, and as mid-year intakes at other TAFE Colleges in the State occurred after the deadline for this case study, it was not possible for the evaluator to record how many of this particular ITT cohort completed the progression by being accepted into a Pre-vocational course.

Some indication may be gained, however, by considering the preceding ITT class. The report on the class of Semester 2, 1985, recorded that five out of the nine students who completed ITT at this College applied for a non-traditional trade Pre-vocational program. Three were accepted. Another student gained an apprenticeship. This represents 44 percent of that class. As this Report was submitted to the central PEP Unit by the end of that calendar year, it is possible that more of the graduates subsequently secured employment or gained places in tertiary education programmes related to their ITT study.

10. "understand the impact of technological change"

Only one of the seven interviewed knew what this phrase meant. This student had gained that understanding in part from her involvement in a previous PEP funded course. When the evaluator explained the phrase to the rest of the cohort, she found that none of them were able to relate specific examples from their ITT experience. It is possible that as the program presented these students with machinery and processes which - for the most part - were new to them, they had no basis for appreciating the
The evaluator found it significant that the student who was familiar with the phrase saw "the impact" as sex-specific. She stated that the course had "help[ed]" her "to understand that women are changing their roles".

11. "demonstrate a positive attitude to work"

Those who responded to this objective used discipline within the ITT "classroom" as their basis. Reflecting on her own experience, a student declared that;

"in the trades, you've got to have a really positive attitude. If you show a negative attitude towards any person or what you're doing, they jump on you right away".

Several students complained of the poor attitudes, meaning the low level of self-discipline, of some of their classmates. Such attitudes were labelled "distractions".

14. "demonstrate basic skills and procedures pertaining to... the modules chosen"

All of the students expressed confidence in their skills in some of the modules within this program. The evaluator's observations of the cohort within their lectures and practical work convinced her that their confidence was well founded. These young women had learned to use tools, follow task instruction, and operate machinery safely and with some competence.

THIS COURSE IS SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE IT STRIVES TO FULFIL THE PEP GUIDELINES

In its Guidelines for PEP, the Technical and Further Education Council (TAFEC) outlined program characteristics which it believed would increase the participation of "disadvantaged groups" in tertiary education and would increase the equity of those groups' participation. Selected characteristics are cited below and are described in regard to the ITT program at Elizabeth College. (These characteristics are the framework for the information gathered by interview from that college, Croydon Park College, and a CES office. The ordering of these factors does not imply a priority hierarchy.)

a) "The funds available for PEP in TAFE will be best used...[for] funding courses for the most disadvantaged groups"9

ITT is part of the Department of TAFE's (South Australia) effort to increase the number of females who are aware of, and receive educational opportunities for training and employment in the traditionally male, skilled trades. (See Aim 1 of the Course Aims in Appendix A.) As a senior member of staff at Croydon Park College explained, young women are among the most disadvantaged in terms
of participation in employment in this State. Bridging programs such as ITT seek to alleviate that situation. They also serve as Access Programs, providing an entry point to tertiary education for youth who may not have completed 12 years of formal schooling ("a full secondary education", according to PEP).

It takes more than the setting of a Department program, of course, to achieve a successful course for "the most disadvantaged". A TAFE employee with a perspective on PEP, derived from experience in Colleges and in the Central Office, believes that ITT is successful at Elizabeth College in part because;

"the Principal...is quite visionary... For some staff, it's a place to develop and try new ideas... There's an ethos here about future directions and keeping abreast of social and economic trends".

An administrator at the College reflected that;

"we have a history of working with young people... We're prepared to emphasise it. We believe strongly in participation and equity and always have, and the College Council do, too. We've built up the impression that youth is one of our major activities".

The evaluator was advised that unemployment in this College's catchment area is approximately 60 percent of the females under 20 years of age. Given the "social and economic trends" which that statistic represents and given the assertive nature of Elizabeth College in regard to the tertiary education of youth, it seemed fitting that a staff member advised the evaluator that this College "needed no prodding from head office" to get behind ITT.

The administration of the School of Technical Studies credited the careful selection procedures for ITT, managed by the ITT Coordinator and the local CES, as one of the reasons for the program's success. This point of view was generally accepted by the Sections within that School. Staff favouring a change mentioned improved assessment of an applicant's motivation for trades training as a particular strength of the selection procedures. Yet, as one of them stated, it's easier to assess the effectiveness of the in-take process from "hindsight". One of the lecturers who was in favour of introducing Section representation on selection panels was of the opinion that the attitude of ITT students towards work and education was "on a par" with that of pre-vocational students or apprentices.

Elizabeth College is active in soliciting students for this program. When fulfilling her counselling responsibilities within the School of General Studies, the ITT Coordinator advises likely young women of the ITT alternative to the more traditional female career paths. Two students on the present course were attracted to ITT by the means just described. (The Counsellor and the ITT Coordinator cover the local EPUY, Foundation, and CYSS programs.)

For the past three semesters, a composite profile of a "likely young woman" for this program at the College would be as follows: a single woman, aged 18.5 years, who has been unemployed long enough to receive the Formal Training Assistance for Youth allowance (FTAY). She left school after completing Year
11 and had taken 10.5 years of Maths and had two years of Technical Studies instruction in secondary school. She will complete the ITT course and will apply either for employment or further tertiary study in a non-traditional trade area.\textsuperscript{11} Most of all, she will have convinced the Coordinator at the interview stage that she had "commitment" both to trade training and to completing a twelve-week course which adheres to industrial conditions such as an 8 a.m. starting time.

The Coordinator likes to allow at least one week to elapse between the information session at the local CES office and the interviews, as a test of that commitment.

"The reality is that they're going into a non-traditional area. If they roll up for an interview, I know that they've worked things out and they're worth the opportunity."

The phrase "worth the opportunity" reveals the Coordinator's own commitment to this type of training program. Having lived in this College's catchment area a good deal of her life, she is aware of the limited choices young women in that area have and of their need for "a skill" that is marketable if they want a career.

The local CES too, maintains a "fairly high standard of matching" for the course in terms of "personal qualities and education". This is done because of the technical nature of the training and because these women will be breaking new ground. They will have to contend not only with moving into a male-dominated area in which they, as women, may have few skills but will have to handle the family and peer group pressures to stay with "safe, traditional areas". It is the latter pressure which has resulted in some of these students going to the College Counsellor for support.

b) "The funds available for PEP in TAFE will be best used if applied... with a view to increasing the accessibility and suitability of 'mainstream' TAFE for the target group;"\textsuperscript{12}

c) "The Council believes that courses should be devised which aim... to develop accreditation, assessment, credentialling and course credit arrangements which give a range of options and ensure recognition for achievement"\textsuperscript{13}

Both of these points relate to "ownership": the extent to which, and the enthusiasm with which, a college assumes responsibility for a PEP-funded program. When a college considers that a course is part of the "mainstream", it accepts ownership of that course regardless of its funding base. It is no longer a "marginal" or a "one-off" initiative but rather an integral part of the curriculum of a particular School.

Integration of ITT in the College

The evaluator was given information that indicated that Elizabeth College is nearing this level of ownership. For example, a lecturer who has undertaken staff development within this College believes that it would be a mistake to...
approach staff from the point of view that ITT was "a special case". Staff there are "now" accepting the training of these young women "as part of the normal program of the College". A senior member of staff declared that ITT is "a mainstream course" because has been;

"properly trialled and proven. The curriculum documents have been properly established. And it's been given the due recognition by the Department and attracts its own separate funding and, hopefully, staffing".

Finally, a lecturer in another School believes Elizabeth College staff "would make sure they ran ITT somehow" if Commonwealth funding for the program was cut. This belief was based on the program's "community support" both within the College community and within the larger catchment area community. As evidence, this lecturer cited the "very supportive" efforts of the local CES on behalf of the only TAFE bridging course devoted to "open[ing] up trade training to young females" who have endured "long-term unemployment".

This College's administration supports the funding distribution changes initiated by the central PEP Unit for 1986. Central office staff termed this "a fundamental shift in the success of Colleges' handling the PEP funded program". It was a tactic, then, for encouraging local ownership of courses like ITT. Beginning in Semester 1 of 1986, the ITT budget allocation for Elizabeth College was channelled through, and administered by, the usual Departmental procedures for Technical Studies courses within colleges. Previously, that process had been delegated to the local ITT Coordinator. A Department staff member with several years experience with ITT supported that tactic as a means of signalling the end of isolation for the local Coordinator. His/Her* program's budget receives College - rather than Central Office - coding and is administered just like the budget of any mainstream program.

At Elizabeth College, the Deputy Head of School allocates ITT funding to the various Sections of the School according to the expenses they incur in teaching segments of ITT. Hourly Paid Instructor (HPI) money is transferred from that funding to the School's total HPI funding pool. A proportion is retained by the Coordinator for such expenses as transport to Lifeskills and trade training field trips. She uses the College's coding and sends expenditure requests of this nature to the School's administration for approval.

Another indication of the move towards mainstreaming, or the College owning ITT, is the fact that ITT curriculum is the responsibility of almost every Section of the School of Technical Studies. In Semester 1, 1986, staff from five of the six Sections devoted between 44 and 56 contact hours to teaching the first ten weeks of the course. In addition, staff from that School provided contact time for Lifeskills tuition. The syllabus included: Automotive, Woodworking, Electrical, Fitting and Machining, Engineering Drawing, Metal Fabrication, Computing, Mathematics, Lifeskills.14

*In South Australia, men as well as women can, and do, serve as ITT Coordinators.
Within the guidelines set by the Department's curriculum document, each Section has, as a Senior Lecturer was pleased to report, "virtually full control over the curriculum". Staff have taken advantage of this by introducing the ITT student cohort to Pre-vocation or first-year apprentice-level training. In the Engineering Drawing classes observed by the evaluator, the lecturer advised that ITT used the same textbook as the apprentices. In consultation with the Coordinator, the Senior Lecturer for that Section had increased the number of hours devoted to this subject in ITT "because the drawing skills acquired there are universally applicable" to a range of trades. He mentioned specifically the trades computer-assisted drafting, automotive engineering, and clothing design.

In sympathy with this point of view, the Drawing lecturer said that he tried to bring these young women - as a group - up to the level "of a school kid", referring to the fact that many apprentices have taken Technical Drawing in secondary school. With the tuition ITT students receive, those who are able to visualise three-dimensional drawing should be able to hold their own with first-year apprentices, if they gain an apprenticeship. As a further example, in anticipation of ITT graduates gaining apprenticeships, a lecturer in another Section sets homework.

The evaluator interviewed as a group three lecturers from the same Section of the School. Like their colleagues in other Sections these men were interested in ITT graduates succeeding, if they chose to go on to Pre-vocational or apprentice training. They were more concerned than any of the other lecturers interviewed that care was taken with the curriculum in ITT and in Pre-vocational because of the lack of "competence" females had in their teaching area, compared with young males. They were concerned that, despite this difference in background knowledge, ITT graduates "still... [are] fighting for a place against the guys". This Section attempted to "help as much as we can" to alert young women to the realities of Pre-vocational study and to make their experience within that program successful by doing the following:

- giving the 1985 ITT students apprentice-level work;
- revising the Pre-vocational curriculum in 1986 to give an emphasis on theory acquisition in the first term in order to "even up" the information which female and male Pre-vocational students have when they enter the program.

At Croydon Park College, a senior administrator advocated "training [in ITT] that emphasises quality of work and pride in skill attainment". His years as an educator have taught him that "attitudinal values and intellectual skills [are] picked up doing anything worthwhile". In addition, within ITT, staff should concentrate on imparting to young women "skill transfer - and getting a feeling of competence and confidence" that they can take to whatever discipline they choose to pursue.

Assessment in ITT

The Lecturer's handbook for this program, which was written by two
Coordinators, urges lecturers to assess students' performance and includes a form relating to both skill and attitudinal factors. Categories for assessment concentrate on attitudes rather than on proficiency in a trade area. This is fitting for, as the handbook explains, "the course is an introduction" to trades and to coping with training and working in what for many females is a non-traditional environment:

"... the course ... does not look for a set standard, but rather whether the students have the:

- basic skills and knowledge
- confidence
- ability to pick up information
- ability to follow the complete instructions
- motivation
- social skills
to manage Pre-vocational training."15

This assessment philosophy was reflected in the statements of a lecturer whose Section has a particularly fine reputation, within Elizabeth College and the central PEP Unit, for staff development in relation to ITT.

"Objective assessment cannot be used in this instance, because we're not about training for high skill proficiency. We're about making people aware; giving them the confidence they need in themselves to be able to succeed; building in the appropriate attitudes to make them succeed; giving them a feel for what it's like to work in this environment to enable them to make a choice. To place them in a social setting where co-operation, reliance, friendship, healthy competition can be developed."

The evaluator interviewed staff from two Sections of the School of Technical Studies who favoured objective or skill-based assessment. Thus they evaluated ITT students on much the same level as a first-year apprentice. A number of arguments were offered in support of this approach:

- The ITT Coordinator felt that such assessment according to apprentice standards gave the ITT females "confidence". They know what the standards are for Pre-vocational and apprentice training programs, and they know they can satisfy some of them.

- Assessment against a standard accepted by trade lecturers - whether that standard was designed for apprentices or for ITT in particular - is also important in that it gives the ITT cohort a means of measuring themselves. Students may be "set up for failure" if they cannot, after all, handle the skill and theory introduced in ITT.

- The Coordinator believes that if any student does fail, it is preferable that failure occurs within ITT so that she can then direct the student into a more appropriate program.

- Finally, assessment against a standard is important because the ITT cohort
is breaking new ground. A senior member of staff stated, "they've got to be good quality material, to set an example".

Another senior staff member believes that assessment should be used by staff as a means of becoming familiar with the capabilities of ITT students in anticipation of their proceeding into Pre-vocational programs. The handbook states that students' assessments "should be made available to the interviewing panel" when the young women apply for Pre-vocational courses. Thus it is important that lecturing responsibility for ITT not be spread too thinly across a Section.

This familiarity takes on added importance in regard to selection to the Pre-vocational program in that the Department has stated that those who complete ITT successfully do not have to sit for the Pre-vocational selection examinations. The Department's ITT curriculum document states;

"Relationship with other courses:

The context of this course provides the first part of a continuous educational programme. Students are able to proceed from a PEP course into a mainstream course by-passing both formal educational pre-requisites and any entry test/examination".

The heading of this paragraph and the statements "continuous educational programme" and "proceed from a PEP course into a mainstream course" indicate that the Department intends ITT to use the words of TAFEC - as a means of "increasing the accessibility... of 'mainstream' TAFE for the target group". Satisfactory completion of ITT means exemption from a testing procedure required of all others. Thus the exemption is a type of "course credit arrangement" which "ensure[s] recognition for achievement". Such arrangements were encouraged by TAFEC in regard to PEP-funded courses.

None of the lecturers interviewed had a negative reaction to the exemption. In fact, one of them stated that it was a means of granting "credit" and of showing an "equal opportunity" commitment on the part of the Department. Another speculated that the exemption "makes them [ITT graduates] feel better equipped" to handle 'Pre-vocational' in that they probably believe Elizabeth College has faith in the skills they acquired during ITT. Lecturers from yet another Section declared that it was the Pre-vocational selection interview - and not the exam - which "determines whether they get into Pre-voc or not".

In anticipation of ITT students applying for apprenticeships, the Coordinator gives them practice in industry selection examinations.

When interviewing the 1986 student group, the evaluator found that they appreciated continuous assessment in that it gave them an opportunity to find out how much they had learned and, in one Section, it prompted the lecturer to tell them how pleased he was with their progress. Generally, methods of assessment were considered "fair" or "just". One student stated that she appreciated that the marking was "hard", because she hoped to be making her
living from the skills she learned. A few students remembered being shown the assessment sheet referred to earlier in this report. There was some confusion about, and dissatisfaction with, the assessment in some Sections. Factors which seemed to form the root of these problems include:

- Staff were not always willing to give partial credit for projects the students hadn't been able to complete. It was a shock to a few of them to find that they received no credit at all, although they had attempted a task. They thought that this type of assessment criterion, should have been explained to them before work commenced.

- Dealing with staff from several different Sections within the same week, and because those staff were not readily available for consultation, some students were unable to discuss their assessments with them.

- That an undue number of marks were lost by students (or by their classmates) because of their poor attitude. There is a bind here for staff and students. The assessment form in Appendix D clearly emphasises attitude and approach to work, and staff and students alike were aware that skill proficiency was not the goal of the course. In addition, most of the seven students interviewed were disappointed that poor student attitudes at times disrupted lessons. Yet some students still felt that attitude should have been a secondary consideration for assessment, compared with quantity and quality of project work.

d) "The Council believes that courses should be devised which aim... to develop more appropriate counselling, advisory and support services for those in the target groups"\(^{18}\)

Elizabeth College responds well to this TAFEC interpretation of the PEP guidelines for 1985 and 1986. Senior administration has accepted that ITT should function as a "segregated group", as its students "need a time to overcome their concerns before they go into the mainstream studies". As a group, they receive "counselling, advisory and support services" within their Lifeskills tuition. A variety of methodologies is used by the Coordinator to give them information and practical experience in such areas as Women's Studies, Self-awareness, Assertiveness, and Health and Care. One of the goals of this "service" is to prepare the young women for studying, working, and competing within a male-dominated environment. Hopefully, it will help them to "go into the mainstream studies" alongside young men.

The CES too, supports this segregated introduction to trades, as some of its officers have observed another trades bridging course at this College. In that class, the females were a small minority and were harassed by their male classmates. These officers deduced "so you're still running into that block that there's a role for women and a role for men". ITT, as presented at Elizabeth College, provides an atmosphere in which young women are encouraged to break that "role" allocation through acquiring skills and confidence.

Young women who enter ITT at Elizabeth College also enter a support system
for women. That system is especially sensitive to women - students as well as
staff - in a non-traditional area. For Term 1, 1986, there was one female staff
member of the School of Technical Studies and 73 females enrolled full-time or
part-time. Students were distributed across the School as follows: apprentices -
four; Pre-vocational - seven; ITT - nine; New Opportunities for Women - 15; other
programs - 38. Half of the School's Sections have female apprentices and
two-thirds have females in their Pre-vocational programs.

Spearheading this support group are the Head of the School of General
Studies, the Counsellor, the Head of the local PEP Unit, some public servants,
and some lecturers in the School of General Studies. These women and their
female colleagues make it a point to introduce themselves to a student in a
non-traditional training program, and to advise her that they are willing to give
moral support and vocational advice. The group also organises an annual
meeting of all females who are going into Pre-vocational trades courses as a
sign of solidarity and a means of giving them a reference point. The ITT
Coordinator has what one woman termed "a lot of respect from her colleagues"
in both Schools, and she receives, as well as gives, support within this network.

Some of the women interviewed also stated that they knew their efforts had the
full support of the Principal. The evaluator took these factors to be an indication
of Elizabeth College's commitment to what TAFEC termed "support services for
those in the target group".

There are similar efforts being made on other campuses within this Department.
What "makes the program work here" (to return again to the core question of this
study) is that the women who are the motivating force for the network are
uniquely skilled in equal opportunities, tertiary education, PEP, and Department
processes. Stated one of these women,

"I think we are unusual in that way. ...It means that the climate is different
because all of us are here. And simply the way we operate makes a
difference".

Male lecturers also have "made a difference" for the ITT cohort. All students
from the 1986 class who were interviewed for this study related anecdotes about
support which their lecturers had given them. Pastoral care was given in the
form of listening to students' personal problems and to difficulties with aspects of
their training. One student reported that prior to coming to Elizabeth College it
has been "drummed into" her "that girls can't do trades". As a result of the
attitude of her lecturers, she's decided "I'm really going to go for it". This student
particularly appreciated the fact that she had a female as well as male lecturers.
She found that being taught the trades by both sexes "gives you a boost in
confidence, because then you know either sex is not against you because
you're doing a trade".

Another student was emotionally touched to find that her lecturer noticed she
was being annoyed by another male while on campus. He offered her both his
protection and his support in taking the matter to the administration. Because of
the strength she drew from confiding in him, this young woman was able to sort
out the problem on her own.

The evaluator was impressed with two Seniors who spoke of the "need" young women in their Sections had to spend time discussing careers and personal matters with their own sex. Stated one, "we want to foster" that type of networking; stated the other, if only one female was a likely applicant for his Pre-vocational course, he would recommend a second as well to give the first a companion on the course.

The administration is keen to demonstrate to these young women that they are part of the Elizabeth College community. The Principal attends one session of every Access programme on-campus, and it is the Deputy Head of the School of Technical Studies who presents ITT graduates with their Certificates. Finally, an ITT graduate who is now a Pre-vocational student is one of the Student Representatives on the College Council. As an administrator stated, this college aims "to build up an atmosphere" which is "conducive to more than study: it should be conducive to a collegiate solidarity".

Some the personal problems which ITT students discuss with the Counsellor are the result of difficulties involved in training in non-traditional areas. Parents as well as partners are threatened by this training. According to the Counsellor, these difficulties often become;

"course-related in that they miss classes because they're too stressed... The course is so important to them. That's why they're in such a turmoil."

To date, no ITT student has come to her for literacy or numeracy support. The group does receive tuition in those areas within their program, as the goal is to reach Year 11 standard in Maths and to be able to comprehend reading material in texts selected for apprentice study. The ITT graduates interviewed for this study who are now in Pre-vocational or apprentice programs at Elizabeth College all stated that they were aware of this support service and would use it, if they needed to.

The evaluator found that literacy and numeracy abilities are a prime concern of the School of Technical Studies. Staff across the School reported arranging special materials for students with difficulties in these areas, setting up exercises in the workshop especially to detect these difficulties, and working with the Coordinator, their Seniors, the Counsellor, and the Adult Literacy Unit on campus to identify and assist those in need. An ITT student reported that early in the course the Coordinator assessed each student's competencies in order to determine the level at which her instruction should start. An ITT graduate now enrolled as a Pre-vocational student explained that a weekly night session is held in her Section for any student who is experiencing problems keeping up with the curriculum. One of the Sections has a lecturer who works within the Adult Literacy Unit as part of his contact-hour allocation.

According to a handbook on Elizabeth College's counselling service, this type of intervention is considered part of the College's equal opportunities role. "Students with specific learning difficulties" should be given "special
consideration in examinations, lessons and assignments". Usually within the first week of enrolment at Elizabeth College, every State 1 apprentice is given a battery of assessments in literacy, numeracy, and general intelligence. That assessment is administered by the Counsellor and is College policy. Thus the ITT students who progress to apprentice training at the College would be so assessed.

The purpose of this support service is to give lecturers an understanding of each student's capabilities in specified areas. It is intended that the assessment identify:

- "slow learners";
- students with "specific learning difficulties".

In the case of the former, remediation might be achieved by students attending extra sessions run within the School of Technical Studies. The standard curriculum materials for the course may be used. In the case of the latter, additional assessment is given in order to identify, as clearly as possible, the "specific nature of that difficulty". The student concerned, staff from the Adult Literacy Unit, the Counsellor, and staff from the School of Technical Studies then work together to handle the difficulty within the classroom. The Counsellor has found that "lecturers will bend over backwards" to assist students.

e) "The Council believes that courses should be devised which aim... to develop appropriate skills in those TAFE teachers who will be teaching PEP courses and to develop a better understanding of the target group amongst TAFE teachers generally".

The Department's curriculum document for ITT stipulates that "generally" the course should be;

"taught by full-time teaching staff who meet the requirements for appointment to lecturer status in one of the trades offered."

In addition,

"Staff need to be educated about PEP and perceive this as worthwhile and credible. Staff need to be committed to the philosophy of PEP".

Interviews with staff convinced the evaluator that the School of Technical Studies has endeavoured to use the type of staff specified as frequently as possible in ITT; and that staff within the School have been involved in on-going staff development in regard to PEP-funded programs in general, and ITT in particular. Their efforts in this regard have been assisted since early 1985 by the fact that the course has the same Coordinator and the program has been offered annually.

This situation has enabled the School to allocate workshop space and lecturing time to the program months in advance of each offering's commencement date. As a result, few staff at Elizabeth College reported that lecturers were assigned
to ITT primarily because of their Section's timetable. Instead, they were selected on the basis of the suitability of their personalities and of their trades and teaching experience.

The situation was different at Croydon Park College. Given its intermittent scheduling of ITT and therefore the short amount of time the current Coordinator had been on the staff, workshop space and lecture time were allocated to ITT courses in second semester 1985 and first semester 1986 at the beginning of each of these semesters. This situation probably would not have occurred in Semester 1 of 1986 had not the college unexpectedly had funding difficulties with the central PEP unit which made it a matter of speculation as to whether the promised course actually would be run.

Perhaps it was these factors which resulted in a permanent member of staff, who lacked trade training and experience in industry, being given a major lecturing responsibility in the program. An administrator of the Croydon Park College told the evaluator that s/he supported equal opportunities for women in trades training and appreciated the program as a means of young women making "a conscious decision as to whether they would like to get employment" in a trade. Yet the College's commitment to ITT was hampered by a combination of funding and staffing difficulties.

The evaluator interviewed a Senior at Elizabeth College who well remembered the early days of PEP funded courses. He had been determined to support these courses through proper staff development. He concentrated on building a staff "team" which involved every team member teaching as much as was possible across the Section's range of programs, from PEP funded to post-trade qualifications. His "general strategy" was that "every lecturer must become conversant with all aspects of our training, and I include all the bridging courses". His point of view was that "only the better lecturers" were suitable for the PEP-funded classes. This made it a "very positive thing, as far as our lecturers were concerned".

This was borne out by one of his lecturers who reported that such "flexibility" was a mark of "professionalism in lecturing". The Senior also considers it a hedge against the day that funding for any program offered in this Section could be cut. A drop in the HPI funding, for example, could be accommodated by permanent staff taking up responsibility in any of the Section's programs. He reported with some satisfaction that he and his staff were approached "on an informal basis" for methodology advice regarding ITT.

Another Senior reported that he used permanent staff exclusively in ITT. His point of view was that;

"it's a subject that's under our cloak, and we prefer to do it rather than someone coming in from outside... We have some people here that care about what happens, and we see it as our duty to teach these girls and to teach them correctly".

After several years of teaching the PEP targeted group, staff in this Section have
developed their skills to the point where this Senior could say with confidence that three-quarters of his staffing complement could be placed in an ITT class. Two other Seniors stated that until 1986 they too, utilised only permanent staff in ITT in order to maintain standards "as close to Stage 1 apprentice as we can get them", as one of them phrased it, and to ensure the proper approach to an all-female class in non-traditional areas.

Seniors in every Section were sensitive to the need for appropriate lecturers, in part because of Elizabeth College's history of involvement with senior secondary students and with Transition Education programs. As one stated, the only real adjustment was that now the young women were on-campus full-time.

Staff representatives in most of the Sections expressed their frustration in finding suitable people to serve as Hourly Paid Instructors, as they had to be appropriate for the client group and the trade training and had to be available to teach in the daytime. In 1986, Elizabeth College received funding for 1980 HPI hours (up 80 hours from 1985). A staff member stated;

"the Department tells us 'Don't worry about staffing these courses; there's plenty of HPI money' ... But there are not the appropriate people to take the money".

On behalf of his colleagues, he explained;

"we'd like to see recognition by the Department, to the point where they supply permanent staff for these courses. I think they deserve it ... It would give continuity of lecturers. If there were permanent staff in the Section, the young women would be under the influence of a particular lecturer or perhaps two lecturers. Then if they got a position on the Pre-vocational course to follow on, they could possibly have the same lecturers and be familiar with each other's expectations".

He made these remarks within the context that he - like his colleagues - likes "to see people succeed" in whatever trade training they undertake. As an alternative to increased permanent staffing, another lecturer suggested that a pool of suitable HPI people for each trade be established by the Department. They then could be rotated around the Adelaide metropolitan colleges as the need arose.

Some Sections have asked the Head of this College's PEP Unit to advise HPI personnel on the curriculum and methodology likely to be most successful with ITT. A lecturer from one of these Sections reported that he knew he could draw on her experience as well as on the experience of his colleagues in the Section if he felt the need for additional support. The ITT Coordinator was a visible resource for every lecturer. She shares an office area with her colleagues from the School and uses the School's staff room. Several lecturers - including Seniors - said that she is the first step-in-line management that they approached with questions about the program or its students. In addition, the ITT Coordinator attends teaching sessions as a role model for the students and/or as an adjunct to the lecturer.
A Senior reported that the Counsellor was a key support person for him and his staff: "she's a good resource person - well trained, well qualified". Another lecturer credited the Deputy Head of School for his efforts to keep staff development current in regard to the PEP-targeted cohort. For example, he has been encouraging "all" staff to enrol in the Department's Counselling and Interviewing workshops.

In early 1985, the central PEP Unit organised a major staff development program for trades lecturers teaching in ITT. That program was presented by a person who had a unique combination of skills and characteristics. The person:

- was on the staff of the Staff Development Centre;
- had "the right sort of sympathies";
- had worked with ITT programs;
- was a trade lecturer;
- was a male.

Some of the staff at Elizabeth College were appreciative of the fact that this type of male was used to lead inservice for members of the School of Technical Studies. The half-day workshop concentrated on:

- identifying on-campus resource people;
- clearing "hidden agendas";
- clarifying ITT's aims and objectives;
- explaining the subjective nature of the assessment;
- clarifying counselling responsibilities;
- describing student pathways - pre- and post-ITT;
- delineating the role of the Coordinator.

The Role of the ITT Coordinator

When staff at Elizabeth College and representatives of the local CES were asked "Why do you think the program works here?", the Coordinator was always singled out for credit. Stated one of her colleagues,

"she's just been an ideal role model. She has a low-key approach, is down-to-earth, is comfortable with her role, and is living what she's trying to achieve".

Apparently, it was a real break-through at this College just to have the ITT Coordinator frequent the staff room which, until then, had been all-male. One of the male administrators perceived that as a signal to the other lecturers that she was comfortable within "their inner sanctum" and expected them to come to regard her as a colleague. He, too, brought up the importance of role modelling:

"through her everyday example, she's been able to show what ITT is all about - young women going into non-traditional areas".

She has been willing to learn the ins and outs of the bureaucracies of both the
Department of TAFE and the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations (DEIR). She has made herself - and this College has encouraged her to make herself - a "very, very valuable member of staff", as a colleague stated. For example, within Elizabeth College, she;

- coordinates the ITT program and lectures within it in Computing, Maths, and Lifeskills;
- teaches Computing to Pre-vocational students in two Sections of the School of Technical Studies;
- teaches Lifeskills in a Pre-vocational trade program;
- teaches Maths, Computing and Career Skills in a mixed-sex trades bridging course;
- sets up field placements for students in ITT as well as in one other introductory trades program and in one introductory program in the School of General Studies.

Through its own modelling, the administration of the School of Technical Studies has encouraged the ITT Coordinator to integrate with her colleagues and has contributed to the success of the ITT program. Interviewed jointly, two of these administrators advised the evaluator that they have reinforced the idea that ITT is one of the "permanent, mainstream offerings of this School". That is, ITT students are the students of the School of Technical Studies and the ITT Coordinator is a member of the School's staff. They believe that "this integration is essential to the success of an ITT course at any TAFE College". To this end, the Coordinator is included in all of the School's senior staff meetings; and each year, she becomes a member of a different Section of the School. This identification with various Sections is intended to give her experience across the School and to give her male colleagues experience working with a woman staff member. The identification also focuses attention on ITT as a component program of each Section.

These administrators (as well as a member of the overall College administration and senior staff at Croydon Park College) believe that ITT Coordinators should enter colleges with a three-year contract. This would allow the Coordinator to grow in the job as a person, as an educator, and as an administrator. It would allow fellow staff members to establish a working relationship with her or him. It would add to the program's profile as an "on going" responsibility of the College and the School. Finally, a stable Coordinator position would give the students "a reference person" to whom they could return for academic and/or vocational counselling.

The type of person who should be awarded a three-year contract was described by various staff members at Elizabeth College. S/He must have;

- a willingness to "take risks" on behalf of the ITT student cohort and be in a position to do so;
- a "proven ability to work with a range of people";
- a "philosophy towards equal opportunity";
- a "range of teaching skills";
- an approach which is "firm" but "reasonable";
• "maturity through life experience";
• the skills to work through things, to try different strategies";
• technical expertise".

The consensus was that without a fair number of these qualities, the person would find it difficult to gain "respect" and "credibility" within an educational organisation which "reverses its hierarchy" and responds primarily to industrial training needs. The evaluator deduced that the staff interviewed at Elizabeth College and at the CES office felt that the current Coordinator had what one lecturer termed "the absolute right mix" of these qualities.

Attitude change to females lecturing, studying, or seeking employment in non-traditional areas still has a distance to go within the Department of TAFE and within the community. Thus the evaluator was cautioned that regardless of the skills of the local College Coordinator, support must be forthcoming from central office. Their short-term contract situation and their placement within a trades area could result in Coordinators feeling isolated. Since 1984, the Department has had a central appointment of Project Officer, Support Services for Young Women. Later, the phrase "In Non-traditional Trade Based Courses" was added to that designation. The responsibilities of this position include supporting staff and female students involved in Pre-vocational and ITT programs. Those staff would be males and females, lecturers and Coordinators. The Department is in the process of devolving "responsibility into the field" for ITT. Central office would like "Coordinators to arrange their own support within their own colleges", and this had been achieved at Elizabeth College. Yet the message from Elizabeth College and from Croydon Park College was that the need remains for a central reference and resource person with a responsibility for trades training for females. Such a person would represent the Department's commitment to equal opportunities in training for females generally and for females within the PEP-targeted group.

f) "The Council believes that courses should be devised which aim ... to evaluate the progress achieved under the Program"23

A number of measures of "progress" were mentioned by the individuals interviewed for this study. As was recorded earlier, Elizabeth College's draft "Corporate goal" document states a commitment to evaluation "of all College programmes and general College practices to ensure that the principles of participation and equity are applied". Further, Elizabeth College is sensitive to the interest of the DEIR in the number of ITT graduates who move on to Pre-vocational trade and apprenticeship training programs. These and other measures of "progress" are now discussed. An administrator at this College reported that "nearly every one of the female apprentices and Pre-vocationals we have did the ITT". He took this as evidence that it is necessary for young females to complete this bridging course "just to get them there". All four of the ITT graduates interviewed by the evaluator who are among those graduates now in Pre-vocational or apprentice training at Elizabeth College were certain that they would not have been able to achieve their level of training without ITT. Yet not a great number of ITT graduates at this College or TAFE system-wide in
South Australia make this particular progression.*

The evaluator discovered that at Elizabeth College this progression was considered only one measure of the program's success. Stated an administrator,

"we pick from a targeted group. We're given the guidelines that they come from a targeted group ... They're being paid a training allowance. So I interpret that as, if we can give them employment in any area or we link them into an education system and can channel them into a career path - it might be anything. Most of them have never come to TAFE before. Never knew what TAFE offered. I think that a measure of success".

It was pointed out to the evaluator that in the early days of ITT, students were "hand-picked" compared to today's guidelines. For example, they were expected to have completed Year 11 Maths. Now, the Government is intent on enrolling the long-term unemployed.

Thus "the progress achieved under the Program" can rightly be "evaluated" according to these criteria mentioned by staff of the Department of TAFE and the CES:

- obtaining non-apprenticeable employment in an area related to their trade study. This is particularly relevant for females who enter the program when they are 20-24 years old, the maximum age limit set by the program's Federal guidelines;
- learning "more vocational skills";
- becoming "a more mature person because she's gone through ITT"; . gaining "confidence - a lot more confidence";
- earning a Statement of Achievement that can be presented to potential employers and shown to persons significant to the graduates;
- enabling the students "to make an intelligent sort of decision" about their careers. (One Pre-vocational student actually did change her trade specialisation as a result of the experience gained in ITT.)

An administrator at Elizabeth College was of the opinion that the course was well worthwhile in that it changed attitudes within the industrial sector, to women taking on trade training and employment. An ITT graduate who has gained an apprenticeship reported that her employer would "prefer girls who've done ITT or a Pre-voc". The company thought ITT gave her, for example, "an idea of what I wanted to do". So, perhaps the barriers are not as impenetrable as they used to be. Another administrator informed the evaluator that ITT graduates do find it difficult to get an opportunity for apprenticeships over Pre-vocational graduates. Government departments have been directed to take on Pre-vocational program graduates as apprentices over other applicants. Private industry tends to follow suit. This is another argument for considering progression to apprenticeships "too restrictive" a measure of the program's success.

4Unfortunately, it is not possible to cite statistics; the Department of TAFE has not maintained up-to-date data on the destination of ITT graduates.
Two factors which inhibit the progression of ITT graduates into Pre-vocational training are financial considerations and community prejudices. As stated earlier in this study, the community still has a distance to go in accepting females in trades; and these prejudices were felt by some members of the 1986 ITT cohort. In addition, some of them stated that they could not enter a Pre-vocational program unless they received a reasonable allowance. Here, the Federal guidelines cause some problems.

The evaluator interviewed an ITT graduate who is now in a Pre-vocational program and a member of the present ITT course, both of whom did not receive the training allowance because they had not been unemployed long enough before their course commenced. Once that financial pattern was established, these students were prevented from receiving any incentive allowance within Pre-vocational, even though they were training in non-traditional areas. Both of these young women felt disadvantaged financially, and one of them felt guilty about the strain her dependence put on her parents. Yet they were avid trades students who decided to bear this hardship in order to get their training. A representative of TAFE's central office stated that s/he would prefer a more "affirmative action program" in regard to such young women. That type of program would allow the enrolment - without financial penalty - of school leavers.

POSTSCRIPT

The evaluator's final involvement with this program - at least within the confines of this evaluation - was her attendance at the work experience feedback session. All nine of the ITT students met the program Coordinator to turn in the work reports given to them by their on-site supervisors, to share their experiences, and to advise on their future plans. Of the nine, two have been accepted into Pre-vocational Business Studies programs and three are preparing for interviews for places in trade-related Pre-vocational programs. With another eight months to go (as at June 1986) to the next in-take for Pre-vocational trade programs at Elizabeth College, it is possible that additional members of this class will apply for places in this, their local TAFE College.

The Coordinator commended the youth on their reports and advised them to append copies to their applications for further study or for employment. All had been able to work alongside males and had not felt that work had been specially selected for them because of their sex. A few of them did find varying degrees of "discouragement" from some workmates and supervisors, including comments about "women's place" and reluctance to provide answers to questions about work procedures. The consensus was that the two-week industry placements did help them decide, as one youth put it, "if you really want to do that trade or not". As a result, for example, one student has altered her interest within a trade family from one area to another.

As part of their verbal appraisal of the ITT program, they suggested that the two weeks placement be split, allowing future students to make the choice between;
undertaking separate one-week sessions at the same industrial site, and

undertaking placements at two different sites for one week each.

It was further suggested that the first one-week session be held in mid-course and the second at the end of the course. They felt that these benefits would mean:

students could receive on-site experience in more than one trade;

the pressure of working in the field for a two-week block could be spread across the program;

if an industrial area suddenly experienced an economic down-turn during the course, the student would not be given the impression that she and the employer were merely filling in time. (This situation did occur for one of these young women.)

those students whose workmates and/or supervisors were somewhat hostile would not be confined to such an environment for their entire work experience. (As stated previously, this was the experience of a student.)

The Coordinator said she would take their suggestions into consideration in planning the 1987 offering. She speculated that changes also would eventuate from the comments they made in their written evaluation of the course in regard, for instance, to staff selection.

Later that morning, the students received their Certificates. Earlier in the week, they had been sent their Statements of Achievement, which cited their academic record of subjects and their assessments. These papers, along with the work experience reports, are intended as private testaments to each young woman's efforts and as public documents to be evaluated by potential employers and tertiary education providers.

By the last week of their 20 week course, five of the nine students already were using their ITT experience to their advantage in regard to employment and study. Returning to the core question for this case study, the initiative of the young women who enrol is yet another factor which makes "the program work here!".
END NOTES


2 Elizabeth College of TAFE. *The Role of the Counselling Service*. 1986. p.3.2.


4 Ibid. p.22


6 Elizabeth College of TAFE. "Corporate College Goals". 14/5/86 (draft). p.4.


8 DTAFE. *ITT: curriculum document*. op.cit. p.5.

9 CTEC. op.cit. p.4.

10 As at April 1, 1986 applicants for ITT must be females between the ages of 16 (upwards from 15) and 24 years who have been unemployed for, at least 6 (upwards from 4) consecutive months out of 9 (down from 12) immediately before the course begins. The allowance comprises a living component, which is the same as the unemployment benefit rate, plus a training component. This allowance is called Formal Training Assistance for Youth. Students also receive a $98 (up from $30) Clothing and Equipment Allowance for such items as safety shoes and goggles, coveralls, and personal tools.

In addition, the CES will give

"special eligibility for someone who's disadvantaged in the workforce - sole parents, disabled persons. For any person who's disadvantaged in any way that we would consider would make it difficult for them to find employment, we can waive the eligibility... so that they can go on the course".

11 This profile is a composition of 32 students who enrolled in Elizabeth College's ITT programme during the first and second semesters of 1985 and
the first semester of 1986. Information was gleaned from the Coordinator's Reports for 1985 as well as from interviews with members of the 1986 student cohort.

12 CTEC. op.cit. p.4;
The Department of TAFE in this State considers that teenage females;

"are disadvantaged in comparison with males of equivalent ages in the areas of employment, the subjects undertaken at school (limitations in maths, science and technical subjects), and insufficient career awareness relating to trade and technician areas".

Further, it considers that;

"with the advent of technological change in business and commerce there has been a rapid decrease in opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled employees. More persons (regardless of gender) with better qualifications are needed for the workforce. In some instances employers have indentured young males less qualified than young females mainly because of community prejudice and the young females' lack of direction into non-traditional areas of employment.

It is essential, therefore, that young women be given direction, guidance and the opportunities for preparation so that they can compete realistically for career opportunities in a far wider field".


13 CTEC. op.cit. pp.4 & 5.

14 ITT Coordinator, Elizabeth College of TAFE. "ITT programme 11986."

15 DTAFE. ITT: Lecturers' Handbook. op.cit. p.27.

16 Ibid. p.28.


18 CTEC. op.cit. pp. 4 & 5.

19 Elizabeth College of TAFE. The Role of the Counselling Service. op.cit. p.24.

20 CTEC. op.cit. pp.4 & 5.

21 DTAFE. ITT: curriculum document. op.cit. p.4.

22 DTAFE (SA). "Workshop report: Support Services for Young Women in Trades". Information Seminar. 20/11/85;
DTAFE (SA). “Duty statement: Project Officer, Support Services for Young Women in Non-traditional Trade Based courses - level 1 secondment to 1.4.87”. 5/86.

23 CTEC. op.cit. pp.4 & 5.
APPENDIX A

COURSE AIMS

1. To encourage young women to enter the less traditionally female areas of employment in skilled trades by making them aware of career and educational opportunities.

2. To provide young women with:

   (a) an awareness of the problems encountered when moving into a working environment which is traditionally male dominated.

   (b) support in coping with community prejudices, family and peer pressures.

3. To encourage and support young women through their course of entry into non-traditional trade areas.

4. To assist young women to develop skills in career planning, improving life skills, confidence building and other relevant aspects of personal development.

5. To teach young women some basic knowledge and skills in non-traditional trade areas, to give them more confidence in their abilities and to assist them to seek and find employment or apprenticeships, or gain positions within pre-vocational courses on their own merit.

6. To give young women "hands-on" experience and basic knowledge of a broad range of vocational skills previously unfamiliar to them.

7. To assist in the development of student awareness of self and others in a dynamic framework.

8. To clarify the concept of work and related responsibilities.

9. To develop personal management skills relevant to work and the wider social environment.
APPENDIX B

COURSE OBJECTIVES

On completion of this course the student should be able to:

1. Make an informed choice when pursing further studies, or seeking employment.

2. Demonstrate the knowledge and ability required to carry out safe working procedures when working in industry.

3. Demonstrate the ability to read and interpret drawings and sketch simple problems as required by industry.

4. Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively by verbal and written means.

5. Display an awareness of selected trade family and occupations and select from them that which is personally satisfying and suitable for the individual to pursue.

6. Assess herself in terms of her capabilities and attributes, and develop strategies for job seeking and life outside work.

7. Demonstrate the ability to apply job seeking and interview skills.

8. Identify various alternatives for employment.

9. Progress into an appropriate pre-vocational course.

10. Understand the impact of technological change.

11. Demonstrate a positive attitude to work.

12. Demonstrate the correct safety precautions required for various hand and power tools, and their correct usage.

13. Demonstrate a knowledge of, and the ability to carry out safe working procedures when working with or near electricity.

14. Demonstrate basic skills and procedures pertaining to the use of equipment and processes allied to the modules chosen,

   e.g. Introduction to Automotive Electrical Trade
        Introduction to Carpentry and Joinery
        Introduction to Automotive Mechanics

   or   Introduction to Building Wet Trades
        Introduction to Electrical Trades
Introduction to Furnishing Trades

or

Other modules selected:
Introduction to Electronics
Introduction to Painting and Decorating
APPENDIX C

ROLE OF THE ITT CO-ORDINATOR

1. To coordinate all activities relating to the program.

2. To be involved in the initial student recruitment, selection and counselling procedures.

3. To liaise with CES.

4. To negotiate with school/schools in the college to arrange a suitable program.

5. To liaise with Head/Head of Schools and senior staff to implement the program, mediate and monitor its purpose.

6. To be directly responsible to the Principal through line management.

7. To perform lecturing duties relevant to their area of expertise relating to the program.

8. To institute remediation where necessary (special emphasis on maths).

9. To act as a resource person for staff lecturing on the program by providing information, support and ideas.

10. To authorize and be responsible for the budget.

11. To document a systematic record of the progress of the program for evaluation.

12. To select and recruit part-time instructors.

13. To be a key person, to supply a support system and ongoing counselling for young women training in non-traditional areas.

14. To arrange industrial visits to complement the program.

15. To arrange and monitor on-the-job training.

16. To carry out publicity and community liaison, including speaking at schools.

17. To report the progress and development of the program to the Project Officer responsible in the Participation and Equity Programme Unit.

18. Other duties as directed.
Introduction:

There were two major foci for the local case studies:

1) to produce for the national evaluation: an illumination of what happened in different sites; reflection on the diversity of ways in which institutions reacted to the injection of PEP funds; and a set of guidelines which allowed for some variety of interpretation;

2) to produce a conceptual overview of the impact of PEP across the chosen sites, which contained statements about: a) outcomes for students, teachers and institutions, b) ways in which PEP programs and courses were undertaken, c) decision-making and associated structural and organisational factors which affected implementation, and d) the influence of PEP funding and guidelines on the three preceding aspects.

Aims:

The general aim of the studies was to give an account of each program, focussing on its positive achievements. More specifically, the studies aimed to:

- describe the development of each program as seen by various participants;
- describe the ongoing life of the program (including interaction with the State administration);
- describe changes which were encouraged by PEP or to which PEP contributed;
- identify any specific outcomes which might be attributed to PEP.

This broad framework was derived from two sources. The first was experience in the round of visits to institutions undertaken in 1985 during the planning stages for the national evaluation, taken together with literature about PEP which was collected at that time from schools, TAFE institutions, and systems. The second was the general literature on educational change, particularly that which relates to decision-making and implementation.

In order to take account of changes over a period of time, the collection of data on the development of PEP at a site was regarded as an important aspect of the study. It was anticipated that the major foci would be on the life of the program
during the period of the case study, and its achievements as perceived by those involved in it.

**Data collection:**

Local evaluators spent about twelve days (one day per week on average) in each site during the period April to mid-July, 1986. Data were collected through interviews, observations and document analysis. Perceptions of all major players or representatives of major groups of players were sought.

The broad framework allowed portrayal of the particular 'flavour' of individual sites and choice of emphasis. In addition, local evaluators were asked to seek information on specific aspects of the development and implementation of PEP at the site for the purposes of the overview. A suggested list of areas, with a rationale for each, was distributed.

The area of 'changes which were encouraged by PEP or to which PEP has contributed' was acknowledged to be complex. Given the difficulty of establishing causal relationships and the fact that change is a process, rather than a single event, local evaluators were asked to look for 'indicators' of change at the individual student, program, and institutional level. The following general headings were used; they were accompanied by a list of suggested indicators:

**Changes in the program and institutional level:**

1) structures  
2) 'climate'  
3) curriculum  
   - policy level  
   - program level  
   - teaching/learning

**Changes in students:**

1) attraction (for TAFE sites principally)  
2) retention  
3) feelings about school/the course/the college/education  
4) options for the future

(It should be noted that although the same general headings were used for both school and TAFE sites, the suggested indicators were frequently different).

**Principles of procedure:**

Local evaluators and key people at the sites were given a copy of the principles of procedure for the national evaluation, which covered negotiation of accounts and undertakings regarding confidentiality. The case study reports were negotiated with respondents for accuracy, fairness and relevance before being submitted by local evaluators to the evaluation team. The evaluation team then gave sites the choice of being named or not in the final publication, and all
agreed to be identified.

Management of the case studies:

Procedures for the case studies involved four phases: a) a briefing meeting in March for local evaluators and members of the evaluation team, b) conduct of the site studies up to July, c) a debriefing meeting in August, and d) editing of the case studies and preparation of overviews in September and October.

Prior to the briefing meeting held in March, local evaluators were sent details of the proposed case study methodology. By this time, at least some of the evaluators had made initial visits or phone calls to the chosen sites. At the briefing meeting, some common understandings were reached and points of procedure and intention clarified.

The twelve case studies were carried out by seven local evaluators, one of whom was a member of the national evaluation team. In the five states where two studies were undertaken, both were carried out by the same person. This was determined principally by the need to keep the cost of bringing local evaluators together for briefing and de-briefing meetings within a limited budget.

During the four to five months period of field work, contact between the evaluation team and the local evaluators was maintained by the issuing of bulletins (which tested out ideas, conveyed news of individual progress, made suggestions etc.); relatively frequent phone calls; and the sending out of a progress check-list about half way through the period.

A two day debriefing meeting was held after the final accounts were prepared. The meeting served a number of purposes: the evaluation team was able to gather additional information which was not necessarily included in the relatively short reports; local evaluators were able to elucidate points made in their accounts; commonalities and differences between the sites were explored and some tentative generalisations tested out. The latter formed the basis for work on the overview papers.

The final stage was editing of draft cases and this involved some interaction between the evaluation team and local evaluators to check that meanings in the case studies were not altered in the editing process. Also, overviews of the studies in schools and in TAFE were prepared. Again, local evaluators were consulted for their reactions to the draft overviews.
APPENDIX 2

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF SITES FOR LOCAL CASE STUDIES

Overall considerations:

Following a preliminary study in 1985, a Design for a National Evaluation of PEP was prepared by the Centre for Program Evaluation.1 In this report, it was suggested that selection of sites for local case studies in a national evaluation of PEP should take account of the desirability of including:

- programs from each State and Territory
- programs from each sector
- programs in metropolitan and rural areas
- a community based program
- programs considered by local authorities to exemplify each of the objectives of PEP in terms of achievements and target groups.

In the 'Design', PEP was viewed in part as a set of guidelines and financial allocations interacting with the context of each State or Territory, this interaction occurring within three relatively separate sectors, government schools, non-government schools and TAFE. Given this approach, the desirability of including sites in different States, Territories and sectors was self-evident.

The desirability of including both metropolitan and rural (later more appropriately defined as non-metropolitan) sites was based on two notions. The first was a belief that factors such as access to information, distance from administrative centres, and the existence of different post-school options might affect the nature of PEP in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. The second was a concern to include sites, other than metropolitan sites, which might well be overlooked in national studies.

The initial suggestion to include a community based program reflected the emphasis placed on non-institutional programs in the guidelines.

A focus on the stated objectives of PEP and the target groups at which it was aimed was necessary in terms of the overall aims of the case studies ie to focus on the achievements of PEP.

The 'Design' included a notional matrix of sites based on the above criteria. Practical considerations such as matching local evaluators with sites, and limitations on financial resources to bring local evaluators together meant some alterations to the original matrix. The amended matrix is given in Table 1.

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### TABLE 1

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<th>TAFE</th>
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**Breakdown of distribution:**

- **Sectors:** Govt. schools: TAFE: Non-govt. schools 5:5:2
  Schools (govt and non-govt): TAFE 7:5
- **Sites:** Metro: Non-metro 9:3
- **Schools:** Metro: Non-metro 5:2
- **TAFE:** Metro: Non-metro 4:1

**Selection criteria and negotiation process:**

The rationale for inclusion of a series of case studies in any national evaluation of PEP was that it was a valuable means of portraying the different responses to PEP, and of indicating some of the achievements of the Program. The small number of case studies which it was possible to conduct within the financial resources of the evaluation could not, and was not intended to, portray the great variety of responses to PEP. Nor could the sites be representative of different types of programs. Given these restrictions, criteria needed to reflect the intentions of the Program, and lead to the selection of a credible range of sites.

Three main factors were considered in developing a set of criteria for selection of TAFE PEP programs. The first was a need to reflect the main priority of TAFE PEP as outlined in the guidelines; that is, provision of courses which assist access to employment, or to further study which will enhance employment prospects. The second factor was the five elements mentioned in the guidelines...
as essential components of PEP courses, ie basic skills acquisition, vocational orientation, specific vocational skills acquisition, work experience and personal development. The emphasis placed on each of these elements varied in different courses.

The third factor relates to the particular groups which TAFE PEP was designed to assist. The document 'Program Proposals for 1986', states that the principle target groups should be long-term unemployed youth, with particular attention to those suffering additional disadvantage; specific disadvantaged groups should be adequately represented overall in the total array of courses.

It seemed essential that different types of courses and different target groups should be represented in any selection grid. In regard to types of programs, we examined the various ways in which States categorise (or make distinctions between different types of) programs, and information from some States about the emphasis placed on each of the five elements mentioned above, in different types of courses. The spectrum which we aimed to capture is described by Kemmis et al as that between the extremes of vocational intent and personal development, or between education for work and education for life. In regard to target groups, we examined program and course outlines again to determine the groups at which courses were most commonly directed.

In order to ensure diversity of cases, we decided to include Colleges with a number of courses, as well as single courses. A number of practical considerations meant that the 'community based' program finally selected was initiated by a Department of Education. The small number of TAFE sites does not allow anything like the whole range of PEP courses to be represented. We believe however that the grid in Table 2 below gives as broad a spread as possible within the limits imposed by the decision to select five TAFE PEP programs for study.

We consulted local PEP administration in the States and Territory where it was planned to conduct TAFE case studies. From these consultations, an informal short list of sites was drawn up and a final decision was made after the sites had been contacted to seek and gain their co-operation. It is worth noting that all Colleges and programs contacted agreed to participate.

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