**Video transcript: WACE 2015-16 – Vocational Education and Training**

Vocational Education and Training is a valuable option for students. It engages them in work-related learning that helps their transition into a broader range of post-school opportunities.

This may be for university, further training and/or the workforce.

This video focuses on the significant changes for VET for students achieving the WACE from 2016.

VET operates through nationally endorsed training packages and nationally accredited courses.

It is quality assured under the VET Quality Framework and the Australian Quality Training Framework, a set of nationally agreed standards that ensure the quality and consistency of VET throughout Australia.

Delivery, assessment, and the certification of VET qualifications are the responsibility of Registered Training Organisations – RTOs.

All RTOs, and the qualifications and statements of attainment they certify, must meet the VET Quality Framework standards or the AQTF essential conditions and standards.

To cater for differences in students’ interests and preferred educational pathways, the WACE can include a mixture of WACE courses, VET and endorsed programs.

There are a number of significant changes from the current recognition arrangements for VET in the WACE.

Most importantly is the requirement that a student must be eligible to achieve an ATAR or complete a VET Certificate II or higher.

This means that students who are not studying at least four ATAR WACE courses would need to enrol in and complete at least one Certificate II to achieve their WACE.

Even then, it may be advisable that students at risk of missing out on an ATAR should also enrol in a Certificate II course to be sure of meeting this requirement.

It is imperative that students leave school with either an ATAR or a VET certificate that could lead potentially to further training and/or a career pathway.

VET credit transfer programs are qualifications that contribute towards the WACE as unit equivalents.

Unlike the current arrangements where credit for this type of VET is based on a total of the nominal hours allocated to the VET units of competency, the allocation of unit equivalence in the WACE from 2016 will be based on the completion of full qualifications – students will no longer be awarded credit for partially completed Certificate I and II qualifications.

Qualifications at Certificate III and higher will be treated differently. More on that later.

From 2016, up to a maximum of eight unit equivalents may be contributed from VET credit transfer programs.

Regardless in which academic year the VET qualification is completed, unit equivalence is shared across both Years 11 and 12.

This means that part of the recognition of achievement for a VET credit transfer program is either retrospective or projected credit, depending on the year in which the qualification is completed.

From 2016, a total of two Year 11 unit equivalents will be awarded for completed Certificate I qualifications where student achievement in units of competency is equal to or greater than 110 nominal hours.

Certificate I qualifications with student achievements in units of competency that are less than 110 nominal hours in total will not be awarded any unit equivalence towards the WACE.

Students may therefore enrol in additional electives to ensure the total of nominal hours reaches 110.

For completed Certificate II qualifications, a total of four unit equivalents or two Year 11 and two Year 12 units will be awarded where student achievement in units of competency is equal to or greater than 220 nominal hours.

A student who achieves a Certificate II qualification with units of competency that is less than 220 nominal hours in total will meet the minimum Certificate II qualification requirement. However, the qualification will contribute only towards the WACE as two Year 11 unit equivalents.

As mentioned previously, students may enrol in additional electives to meet the minimum number of nominal hours.

Lastly, a total of six unit equivalents – two Year 11 and four Year 12 units – will be awarded for completed Certificate III or higher qualifications.

As indicated earlier, students may be awarded unit equivalence for the partial achievement of a Certificate III or higher and deemed to have satisfied the Certificate II minimum qualification requirement if they are enrolled to complete, in the current year, the equivalent of at least four course units – 220 nominal hours – from Year 12 VET enrolments only.

The partial recognition of a Certificate III qualification or higher requires that a student is enrolled in the relevant qualification in Year 12. That is, no credit will be allocated for a partial Certificate III or higher from achievements from previous academic years.

Students who are enrolled in a Certificate III or above and who meet these requirements are eligible for four units of credit towards the WACE – two Year 11 units and two Year 12 units – and will satisfy the minimum VET qualification requirement – the completion of a Certificate II or higher – for the WACE.

Students who achieve VET qualifications before Year 11 are awarded unit equivalence as projected credit according to the Year 11 and 12 VET equivalence structure.

Currently, VET can contribute to the WACE as a course through the 10 VET Industry Specific courses.

While these courses will remain, from 2016 they will no longer be identified as List A or List B and will not contribute to the breadth requirement in the WACE.

The Board of the Authority believes that a student’s study program should include a broad range of learning and not be limited to a particular focus.

The VET Industry Specific courses include a full qualification and workplace learning as endorsed by industry and contribute towards the WACE as a General WACE course, instead of unit equivalence. This also means that students may choose to use their allocation of unit equivalence for additional VET qualifications or endorsed programs.

There will be 10 VET Industry Specific courses available in 2016, with the introduction of an Engineering VET Industry Specific course and more options within the creative industries.

Vet credit transfer is not graded, however each unit equivalent reduces the number of course units in which a C grade is required. Up to a maximum of eight unit equivalents may be substituted by VET credit transfer.

Course unit credit for VET Industry Specific courses is awarded as ‘completed’ and as having met the C standard for each VET Industry Specific course unit. The achievement descriptor ‘completed’ contributes in the same manner as a C grade for all other General course units.

Courses that are not part of a nationally endorsed training package do not automatically provide students with credit towards the WACE. To contribute towards the WACE, an accredited course must not duplicate WACE courses or other Authority developed programs.

The Authority reserves the right to refuse recognition of an accredited course should it be deemed to replicate or compromise the standard of existing curriculum or WACE outcomes.

In the revised WACE, qualifications within the suite of Certificates of General Education for Adults (CGEA) accredited courses will not be recognised for WACE 2016 contribution.

We encourage teachers and school administrators to register for the eCircular to keep up to date.