GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of
Education
and Training

PATHWAYS TO APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINEESHIPS FOR PEOPLE FROM CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

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Executive Summary

Western Australia is experiencing a substantial shortage of skilled labour.

The State Government is committed to increasing participation in the workforce across the board, through schemes such as the *Plans 4 Jobs*, especially because of the current severe skills shortage in the economy.

The State Government is also committed, through the four principles of civic values, fairness, equality, and participation enshrined in the *WA Charter of Multiculturalism*, to promoting the full participation of all groups in all aspects of our community – social, economic, and civil – and to removing any systemic barriers to full participation. This commitment is also embodied in the multi-departmental *Policy Framework for Substantive Equality*.

Aside from equity, denying equal opportunity also engenders resentment and hostility within our community, diminishes human value, and denies the state the full benefits of all its members' talents. The cost of discrimination accrues to those who are denied opportunity and to the society which tolerates discrimination.

Members of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) communities in this state, in particular those from new and emerging communities, do not currently participate in apprenticeships and traineeships in significant numbers; this is regrettable and it is recommended that measures be taken to remedy this.

The Western Australian Department of Education and Training (DET) commissioned this report to investigate barriers to apprenticeships and traineeships confronting people from CaLD backgrounds, and to recommend strategies to improve their participation in apprenticeships and traineeships. The project was undertaken by the Australian Academy of Race Relations (AARR) at Murdoch University, for DET, during the period July – November 2005.

DET has many good programmes to promote apprenticeships and traineeships, including to members of CaLD communities. However, the array and complexity of these can be daunting, resulting in a lack of awareness of all the programmes available.

Project methodology

The project sought information from a variety of sources:

- A review of Australian and international literature on participation of people from CaLD backgrounds in vocational and technical education;
- A series of focus group discussions with members of CaLD community groups;
- A series of semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders; and

- Telephone interviews with a stratified random sample of people from a CaLD background who are currently completing an apprenticeship or traineeship.
- The project team consulted several times with a Reference Group, and greatly benefited from the Reference Group's expertise and networks.

Key findings

- Limited existing research available, particularly with regard to programme evaluations.
- Those from different CaLD backgrounds have differing rates of participation, and success in, vocational education and training.
- Training programmes need to be flexible to accommodate the needs of new migrants.
- Recognition of existing skills and experience is difficult to accomplish and limited pathways are offered to employment after assessment.
- Access to information is difficult for new migrants, who also have limited cultural knowledge of Australian workplaces, including how to access employment, which is critical to obtaining an apprenticeship or traineeship.
- Difficulty finding employment. New migrants may not know how to access employment and may also face discrimination by employers.
- Reluctance of employers to hire new migrants. Due to their limited cultural knowledge they are seen as requiring more work and their existing skills and experience are undervalued, leading to discrimination.
- Parental expectations of university studies and professional careers prevent second generation CaLD people from viewing apprenticeships and traineeships as options. This is linked to the lower status of the occupations associated with these pathways, which is mirrored in the general community.
- Social and workplace networks are important in gaining placements for existing apprentices and trainees, who have been able to overcome the major barrier facing new migrants; obtaining employment.
- The majority of those from CaLD backgrounds currently in apprenticeships and traineeships seem to be well integrated into the mainstream community, with 90% of those interviewed having attended an Australian secondary school, and are therefore likely to have access to community networks, and knowledge of the Australian education and employment systems.

Recommendations

Four major recommendations emerge from this project. These recommendations are consistent with the State Government's current emphasis on addressing the shortage of skilled labour. They are to:

1. **To support diversity in the community and the workplace by promoting diversity through public campaigns, ensuring materials promoting apprenticeships and traineeships are targeted appropriately for different communities, and developing mechanisms to make the pathways to apprenticeships and traineeships more accessible for members of CaLD communities.**

- Implement strategies to inform members of CaLD communities about apprenticeships and traineeships

- Develop promotional materials which address the needs and perceptions of different CaLD communities
- Utilise existing community networks in the production and dissemination of information

2. **Ensure greater coordination and dissemination of all information about programmes, organisations, research, and other information pertaining to apprenticeships and traineeships, pursue greater cooperation and communication between and within Federal and State Government departments, and ensure that current and new sources of information about apprenticeships and traineeships are well promoted and easily accessed by members of CaLD communities.**

- Consider establishing a 'Clearinghouse' for all information relating to apprenticeships and traineeships
- Provide a centralised point of access to information, where responsiveness to cultural diversity is strong
- Offer promotional material and website information in diverse language translations

3. **Add new and emerging communities from CaLD backgrounds to the list of priority-funded groups under the Group Training Scheme funding model, and seek other such mechanisms to increase participation and retention of people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships.**

4. **Facilitate the participation of people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships through sustainable target programmes.**

- Develop vocationally specific English language programmes
- Pursue existing efforts towards a more practical and flexible skills recognition process, and further develop and promote pathways to employment after skills recognition
- Improve access to facilitated work experience placements
- Offer trade 'tasters' with vocationally specific English language training
- Work with leading members of CaLD communities to develop knowledge and skills of apprenticeships and traineeships in order to utilise them as a resource for their own community
- Explore increased opportunities for part-time apprenticeships and traineeships

Each recommendation is accompanied by further suggested implementation strategies expected to contribute to increased access, participation and retention of people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia. These implementation strategies are detailed in Section 6.

It is noteworthy that members of CaLD communities increasingly express discontent about being over-researched, and that many perceive no positive outcomes from having

participated in earlier research. It is imperative that the current report produces some benefit for members of CaLD communities.

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Abbreviations

AMEP	Adult Migrant English Programme
AMES	Adult Migrant Education Services
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
ATEC	Access Training and Employment Centre
CaLD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CAVSS	Certificate of Applied Vocational Study Skills
CFMEU	Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union
DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training
DET	Department of Education and Training (WA)
DIMIA	Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
ESL	English as a Second Language
GTC	Group Training Companies
GTS	Group Training Scheme
ITAB	Industry Training Accreditation Board
ITC	Industry Trade Council
LLNP	Language, Literacy and Numeracy Programme
LoTE	Language other Than English
MESB	Mostly English Speaking Background
MESC	Mostly English Speaking Country
NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
NOW	New Opportunities for Women
OMI	Office of Multicultural Interests (WA)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OQU	Overseas Qualifications Unit
OTMESB	Other Than Mostly English Speaking Background
OTMESC	Other Than Mostly English Speaking Country
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SAL	School Apprenticeship Link
TAFE	Technical and Further Education college
TAC	Training Accreditation Council
TRA	Trades Recognition Australia
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WELL	Workplace English Language and Literacy

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Project

The intention of this project was to understand barriers to apprenticeships and traineeships confronting people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds, and to develop strategies to improve their participation in apprenticeships and traineeships. The project was undertaken by the Australian Academy of Race Relations (AARR) at Murdoch University, for the Department of Education and Training in Western Australia (DET) during the period July through November 2005.

1.2 Context of the Research

Opportunities presented by community diversity are immense and can be captured in government, business, and community services. However, the State's ability to capitalise on its diversity is hindered by unemployment and lower participation rates in training and development by those from CaLD backgrounds.

People from CaLD backgrounds have relatively low participation rates in apprenticeships and traineeships locally and nationally, which may lead to restricted access to employment in certain fields (Jupp, 2001). DET statistics indicate that people in Western Australia who speak a language other than English at home represent just 3.3% of apprentices and 8.8% of students currently in traineeships, despite those from CaLD backgrounds making up 17% of the population (OEEO, 2005).

In response to these low participation rates, DET sought a consultant to:

- Research and identify barriers to participation in apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia for people from CaLD[1] backgrounds (including attitudinal, academic, systemic and structural barriers);

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[1] There are significant problems with the naming of categories of migrants – standard terms include *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD)*, *English as a Second Language (ESL)*, *Non-English Speaking Background (NESB)*, speakers of *Languages other than English (LoTE)*, *ethnics*, *migrants*, or identification by national grouping. All labels have problems associated with them. Collected data and research often collapses migrants under broad categories such as CaLD, or "Overseas Born", or "Mainly English Speaking Background/Other Than English Speaking Background", or by geographical location such as Middle Eastern, and at times by particular language groups such as Arabic. Such categories fail to acknowledge the

- Identify successful practices utilised by employers and group training schemes to recruit, support and/or retain apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds;
- Recommend strategies to address identified barriers, which include successful practices utilised by employers, as well as structural and systemic changes.

In order to meet these stated objectives, the project:

- Collected data using library research, face-to-face interviews, focus groups discussions, and telephone interviews;
- Analysed the collected data;
- Evaluated options available to the Department considering the values and needs of key stakeholders.

The outcomes of the project have particular relevance to both government and non-government sectors, as participation in development, training, and employment is an important issue for social well-being, cultural cohesiveness, and the economy.

Key stakeholders of the project include:

- Apprenticeships and Traineeships Directorate (WA Department of Education and Training);
- Overseas Qualifications Unit (WA Department of Education and Training);
- Apprenticeship and Traineeship Support Network (WA Department of Education and Training);
- Career Development Directorate (WA Department of Education and Training);
- Vocational Education and Training (VET) Teaching and Learning Directorate (WA Department of Education and Training);
- Catholic Migrant Centre;
- South Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre;
- Multicultural Services Centre;
- Industry Training Advisory Bodies;
- Office of Multicultural Interests;
- Job Network agencies;
- Ethnic Communities Council;
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- Chamber of Minerals and Energy;
- New and emerging communities suffering from underemployment, unemployment, and occupational downgrading;
- Community organisations representing diverse cultural profiles;
- The Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs;
- The Substantive Equality Unit of the Equal Opportunity Commission;
- The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity.

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diversity of minority groups in terms of race (itself a social construction often used to categorise people in hierarchies based on biological factors, and in keeping with the official Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's jargon, the term race is used here to refer to racialised groups), culture/religion, and language which characterises Australia's population, and make statistical comparisons difficult. A related problem is the lack of collection of useful statistics isolating different migrant groups, which indicates the lack of recognition of this as a serious concern by government (Castles , Morrisey & Pinkstone, 1989). Throughout this report we have used the categories used in the research we are referencing, but with reservations. As far as possible the distinctions within broad migrant communities are retained and the terms CaLD or "ethnic minority" are used.

1.3 Project Methodology

The project included a literature review; a series of focus groups and consultations with people from ethnic communities, including young people and parents; a series of semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders, including employers, Group Training Schemes (GTS) and Registered Training Organisations (RTO) from a representative sample of industries, and people who service the needs of migrants and/or young people; telephone interviews with apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds; and a synthesis of findings to bring together results of the earlier stages into a single report. The project team benefited from the expertise of its Reference Group, which met four times and provided feedback on discussion papers and earlier versions of the report.

The major research questions included:

1. What are the issues and barriers facing people from CaLD backgrounds accessing apprenticeships and traineeships?

2. Among people from CaLD backgrounds, what is the level of awareness of apprenticeships and traineeships, what are the perceptions of the value of such training, and what are the perceptions of occupations resulting from such training?

3. What strategies could be used to enhance the level of awareness of apprenticeships and traineeships among people from a CaLD background? What strategies are being used already?

4. What are the reasons for low representation of people from a CaLD background in apprenticeships and traineeships in some industries and occupations? Do those communities see this as a problem?

5. What are the effective practices currently being used by government, employers and group training schemes to recruit, support and retrain people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships?

6. What strategies could be employed by government, employers, group training companies and other organisations to increase recruitment and retention of apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds?

7. What systemic and structural changes are needed to increase participation and completion of apprenticeships and traineeships by people from CaLD backgrounds?

Sources of information

A targeted 'snowball sampling' technique (Babbie, 2005) was used to identify a wide range of interested parties or 'experts' for inclusion in the research. Individuals from CaLD communities known to the research team were approached and asked to recruit members of their community and to conduct the focus group. Focus groups were held with young people and parents from CaLD communities. Members of the Reference Group initially provided contacts for interviews with stakeholders, with subsequent interviews yielding further relevant key informants for consultation. Where the research team noted particular gaps in the representativeness of consultations, cold calling was also used. Site visits were made to schools and industries, to document effective approaches to promoting participation and models of best practice.

The semi-structured focus group and interview schedules were designed to address a number of key research questions, including the issues and barriers facing people from CaLD backgrounds accessing apprenticeships and traineeships; current and potential strategies for enhancing the level of awareness of apprenticeships and traineeships among people from CaLD backgrounds; and effective practices currently being used to recruit, support and retrain people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships.

A series of consultations with people from ethnic communities were undertaken. There was deliberate oversampling of new and emerging communities, due to their greater 'at-risk' state and poorer employment outcomes. However, it was felt that, given the consensus that existed in issues raised within the discussions, the inclusion of more CaLD communities would not uncover new barriers, or strategies to overcoming these, beyond what had already been found. The team adopted a multi-layered approach to the consultation process, conducting focus groups with:

a. Young people from CaLD backgrounds (to identify the level of awareness of the apprenticeship and trainee opportunities available, and perceived barriers to participation); and

b. Parents/Community members from CaLD backgrounds (to identify the level of awareness among CaLD community members, and particularly parents, of the apprenticeship and trainee opportunities available, and perceived barriers to participation).

The project team also conducted a structured survey of 60 trainees and apprentices from CaLD backgrounds to identify pathways to apprenticeships and traineeships, and the influences on their decision to undertake such training, and their experiences in the field. This survey aimed to address both barriers to access and completion for apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds. The sample was randomly drawn from DET's Training Records System (a database of all current apprentices and trainees in WA), provided they met the following criteria:

a. Those born overseas who spoke a language other than English at home

b. Those born in Australia who spoke a language other than English at home

The research also included a series of consultations with key informants designed to incorporate the perspective of those outside of CaLD communities, with particular emphasis on those involved in providing apprenticeships and traineeships and those who provide information about VET to both new migrants and the children of migrants.

A semi-structured interview method was employed to access information from 54 key informants from three broad categories:

a. Those who work with new migrants and young people including:

   i. Teachers/careers counsellors and TAFE psychologists (to address the extent to which traineeships and apprenticeships were recommended to students from CaLD backgrounds, both new and second-generation migrants, and the reasons, if any, for lower levels of recommendations and promotion of these options to these groups);

   ii. Migrant Resource Centres (to investigate both the needs and barriers to participation and retention of those from CaLD backgrounds);

   iii. Organisations working with disadvantaged young people, including Indigenous people and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (to identify existing strategies used to address the needs and barriers to participation and retention in apprenticeships and traineeships of people from these groups);

b. Those involved with providing apprenticeships and traineeships (to investigate, within specific industries, current levels of participation of people from CaLD backgrounds; possible barriers to access and completion; current programmes or practices which addressed these barriers; and potential solutions to these issues). These included:

   i. Group Training Schemes

   ii. Other employers

   iii. Registered Training Organisations

c. Those involved with facilitation of apprenticeships and traineeships, and the needs of CaLD communities within Government (to identify current and planned initiatives within these areas, as well responsiveness to possible strategies arising from the research).

Focus groups and interviews took between 30 and 90 minutes. Data was transcribed and analysed according to the conventions of thematic and content analysis. The survey of current trainees and apprentices was undertaken by telephone, and statistical analysis of quantitative data was conducted.

Ethical issues in research

The project was undertaken with the approval of the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee, under strict guidelines that include gaining informed consent from all participants, working through issues of privacy, confidentiality, anonymity, and potential disadvantage or harm to the participants. A particular concern was to ensure that the research was not viewed as punitive towards departments, agencies or ethnic communities. The project team worked to ensure that the review generated positive outcomes.

The complexity of equity targeting

The research team is aware of the limitations of identifying and targeting single equity groups, such as those from CaLD backgrounds. This risks overlooking the considerable diversity within such groups, and the possibility of overlap between such groups (Golding & Volkoff, 1998; Miralles, 2004; Volkoff, 2004). Structural factors such as ethnicity, socio-economic status and gender play a vital role in accounting for educational and occupational aspirations, expectations and achievements (Athanasou, 2003). People from CaLD backgrounds may belong to more than one equity group, compounding the barriers they may face in entering into and successfully completing an apprenticeship or traineeship (John, 2004; Volkoff & Golding, 1998b; Watson & Pope, 2000). For instance, using a category such as 'African' grossly overgeneralises, as there are major cultural, linguistic and religious differences between people from different parts of Africa. It is crucial that such 'cross group' factors, which include socially and economically problematic characteristics such as long term unemployment or poor literacy skills, are recognised (Volkoff, 2004). Indeed, researchers such as Watson and Pope argue for the identification of at-risk sub-groups (e.g., women, lower socio-economic status, those with disabilities, those from refugee backgrounds) within larger equity groupings, which may impact on both training and employment opportunities and outcomes, across cultural groups. The current research has sought to acknowledge such differences.

Limitations

All research has limitations, and the current project is no different (Babbie, 2005; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1995). Some, such as the compressed time available in which to complete the project, are straightforward and common, and do not pose any particular threat to the validity of the project's conclusions. Others, such as the construction of the problem as a 'CaLD problem' and hence not directly involving non-CaLD issues, are thorny sociopolitical problems over which the researchers have no control. These do not fundamentally threaten the project's findings, but alter the context in which they should be interpreted. Finally, there are some constraints which do directly affect the quality of the conclusions, and we consider these briefly here.

First, there are many programmes around the globe which have been implemented and evaluated, with the aim of improving access of minority groups to apprenticeships and traineeships. Few of these have been written up and published. The same holds true for

local programmes. This makes the Literature Review presented in Section 2 somewhat limited.

Second, the project team encountered problems in accessing some CaLD communities. This means that the particular views and experiences of those communities are not represented in the research. However, the team believes that it is unlikely that significant views or experiences are not included, given the high levels of consistency in the views expressed. Similarly, some key stakeholders from government and industry were unavailable, and are similarly not represented in the report.

Third, there were some possible systematic biases in the groups which were accessed. Willingness to participate appeared to be related to language and to class. Thus, the report's conclusions may be skewed toward the views of those more comfortable with English and of the middle classes.

This issue connects with broader issues affecting all research with CaLD communities. Members of some CaLD communities increasingly express discontent about being over-researched. The discontent is especially strong among those who perceive no positive outcomes from earlier research, and who feel that they are contributing their time and information for no benefit other than the compilation of yet another report. It is thus imperative that the current report produces some change.

Members of some CaLD communities are also reticent to speak to researchers associated with the Government. It is unknown, and unknowable, what effect this has on the responses of those people. Perhaps related to this, participants seldom talked about their experiences of racism and discrimination, although they were somewhat more prepared to discuss discrimination generally. This is a phenomenon well documented in the social science literature on discrimination.

Finally, the report is only able to analyse what people have reported in interviews, group discussions, or surveys. It has not been possible to test the veracity of those claims. Likewise, members of CaLD communities may not be aware of current government initiatives and services available, so some of their comments and suggestions reflect that lack of knowledge.

Despite these limitations, the authors are confident that the conclusions presented in this report are fair and reasonable.

2   Literature Review

2.1   The Historical Context of Australia's Migrant Intakes

The representation of people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships in Australia is linked to historical patterns of migration and patterns of migrants' employment and unemployment. It is therefore appropriate to provide a brief background to movements of migrants to Australia and Western Australia.

Australia is a culturally diverse society where immigration has been the driver of population and economic growth. Migration has occurred in three waves – the first from the late 1880s to early 1900s saw migrants, predominantly from the UK and Ireland, arrive for the Gold Rush. The second wave occurred after World War II, prompted by the need for workers to build the rapidly expanding infrastructure of the developing economy. These migrants came from Eastern and Southern Europe, including Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Russia, Czechoslovakia and Croatia. Migration agreements with the Netherlands, Italy, West Germany, Austria, Greece, Finland, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Spain, Turkey and Yugoslavia, saw migrants arrive between the 1950s and 1970s, with large numbers from Italy, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia. The third wave of migration has occurred since the early 1980s, with a change in the profile of migrants to include more diversity, with greater numbers from Asia, the Middle East, South America, and more recently, Africa. This change may be attributed in part to changes in the composition of Australia's humanitarian immigrant intake.

Western Australia (WA) is a culturally diverse state, with more than one third of Western Australians being born overseas. This is higher than the national figure of about 20%. Of the working age population, 27% of those over 15 years old were born overseas, and of these one fifth are classified as 'new arrivals', having entered Australia since 1996. For example, in August 2003, 47% of recent arrivals were born in Asia, with 22% born in Europe and 14% born in Oceania and Antarctica. The remaining 18% were born in Sub-Saharan Africa (7%), North Africa and the Middle East (6%), and the Americas (4%). Of the recent arrivals, more were born in New Zealand (11%) than any other individual country (ABS, 2003).

According to the 2001 census, 590,000 of the total 1,828,000 WA population were born overseas. More than 170 different countries of origin are represented here, and more than 206,000 people in WA speak a language other than English at home (Appleyard & Baldassar, 2004).

Although WA has long been characterised by a high proportion of people from different cultural backgrounds, this level of diversity has significantly increased recently. However, it should be noted that the four main country-of-birth groups at the 2001 census remain

England, New Zealand, Scotland and Italy. By contrast, the humanitarian migration programme, although involving fewer numbers of migrants (around 12,000, compared to 70,000), has offered a vital route for migration for people from non-European countries. Among the Western Australians who arrived under this scheme are people from Vietnam, Lebanon, Eastern Europeans, Latin America, the West Indies, and Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan. Most recently, people from African countries have arrived under this scheme and form the fastest growing country-of-birth groups in WA, but this is due to proportionally high increases resulting from their relatively small numbers (Appleyard & Baldassar, 2004). These residents are less likely to have the high levels of proficiency in English and professional qualifications that characterise those arriving under the skilled migration scheme.

2.2 Migrants and Employment

Australia has historically taken a rationalist economic approach to immigration (apart from small proportions of humanitarian and family reunion entrants), restricting intakes to those whose labour and skills are expected to be useful in the current economy. This approach is illustrated by the intake of unskilled migrants from post-World War II until the mid 1970s (Jupp, 2002), or more recently, the intake of more highly skilled migrants who, since 1979, have undergone a 'points system' test. Both intakes favoured those with the 'human capital' relevant to Australia's economy.

This approach advantages younger immigrants with specific skills and qualifications, relevant work experience, and English language skills. This scheme is intended to "address skill shortages in Australia, and enhance the size, skill level and productivity of the Australian labour force… [through] the migration of people with qualifications and relevant work experience" (DIMIA, 2002). However, while the points system applies for entry, skills equivalency assessments are often an independent process undertaken after arrival, which may leave migrants unable to work in areas for which they are qualified.

Employment is the single most important aspect of migrant resettlement (Ager 1999; Iredale, Mitchell, Pe-Pua & Pittaway, 1996; Phillips 1989; UNHCR 1997; Waxman 1998; 2001), but employment outcomes vary by level of English proficiency; length of residence in Australia; educational qualifications and skills levels; and visa type (Jones & McAllister, 1991). Migrants have a marginally higher unemployment level than the Australian average, but this is primarily the result of the humanitarian and family reunion schemes, rather than the skilled migrant schemes (see Table 1). Such entrants have higher rates and longer duration of unemployment (Hugo, 2001; Jupp, 2002)[2].

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[2] These outcomes are likely the result of refugees not being carefully filtered for their human capital through the visa points test (Castles et al., 1992), meaning they may have on average lower levels of education and English language proficiency (Hugo, 2001; Jones & McAllister, 1991), and perhaps be older and have more health problems compared with those from other visa categories. However, they are apparently selected for their "resettlement potential" (Iredale et al., 1996), a phrase that indicates an informal application of similar human capital principles in the humanitarian stream. Indeed the broad rates of higher qualifications among people from selected humanitarian intake countries are high: Bosnia - 17.0%; Sudan - 26.2%; Ethiopia - 22.4%; Eritrea - 21.7%; Somalia - 13.6%; Iraq - 19.8% (ABS, 2002). The implication is that these qualifications and skills are being lost due to lack of recognition.

Table 1: Unemployment rates for various visa categories (principal applicants)[3]

Entry visa category	6 months after arrival	18 months after arrival
Business	8%	0%
Independent	8%	7%
Family	22%	13%
Humanitarian	71%	43%

In recent years, there has been an emphasis on skilled and professional migration, rather than family reunion and labour migration, with the former category now accounting for over 60% of all migrants (Commonwealth-Victoria Working Party on Migration, 2004). A majority of visaed immigrants to Australia have educational and vocational qualifications (Flatau & Wood, 1997) and Figure 1 indicates that employment outcomes for those with higher levels of educational attainment pre-arrival are better than for those without qualifications. However, the unemployment rate for those with graduate diplomas and certificates (8.8%) is unusually high and may indicate that such qualifications have not been recognised.
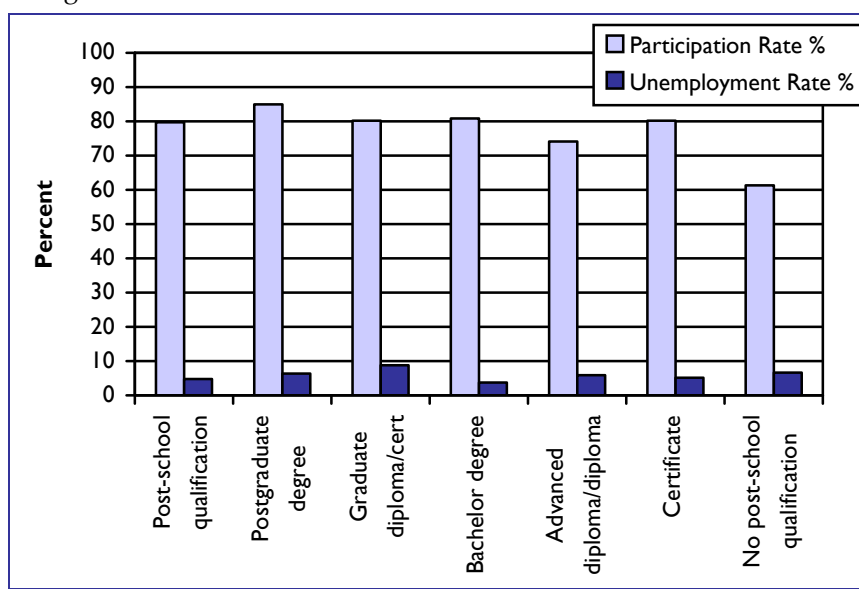
Figure 1: Current employment status of migrants by educational attainment before arrival, as at July 2005[4]

The large longitudinal survey of immigrants, known as the LSIA[5], found that the increasingly rigorous points system has resulted in much improved employment outcomes for those who arrived in 1999-2000, compared with a cohort arriving in 1993-1995 (DIMIA, 2002). This indicates a more refined engineering of migration intakes, designed to reflect labour market requirements. However, there are still numbers of migrants whose vocational skills are not recognised in Australia, or who require retraining or 'gap' training in order to be able to return to the type of work they did before arrival.

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[3] Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Facts Sheet 14 (http://www.immi.gov.au/facts/14labour.htm)

[4] Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Australian Labour Market Update,* July 2005

[5] The Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (LSIA) is a survey of Skilled Designated Area sponsored visa holders (including skills, independent, family and humanitarian streams) and former overseas students granted permanent residence. Cohort 1 arrived between September, 1993 and August, 1995, and Cohort 2 between September, 1999 and August, 2000. LSIA 2 migrants had significantly better labour market outcomes than LSIA 1 (e.g., at 6 months after arrival, 10% compared to 21% unemployed), and higher labour market participation rates.

Migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) have a higher rate of unemployment (7.1%) than those from English speaking backgrounds (6%) (DIMIA, 2002). Figure 2 indicates that in May 2005 those from Mainly English Speaking Countries (MESC) had unemployment rates of 4.5%, whereas those from Other Than Mainly English Speaking Countries (OTMESC) have rates of 6.8%. Migrants from particular non-English speaking backgrounds, such as those from some countries within the Middle East and Asia, may have unemployment rates of over three times the national average (DEWR, 2005a). Recent arrivals have higher unemployment rates (9.7%) than all migrants (5.9%) (ABS, 2004).
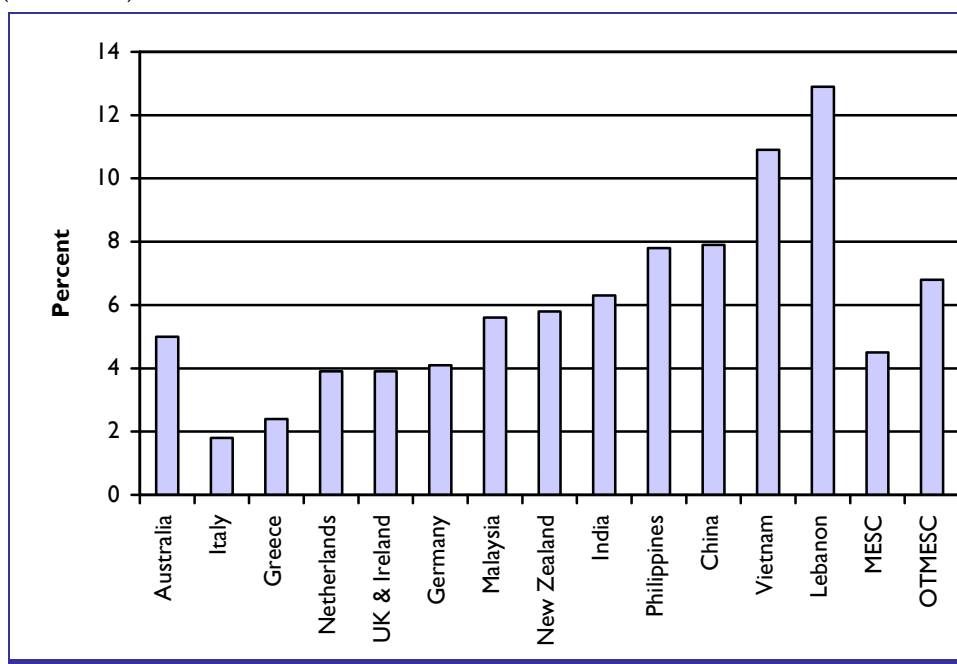
Figure 2: Unemployment rates by selected countries of birth, as of May 2005[6]

Employment also varies by educational attainment before arrival. Migrants who were employed in professional or trade occupations prior to arrival in Australia, and were employed in November 2004, were least likely to have changed their occupation since arrival (DEWR, 2005a). However, those who had changed their occupation group after arrival tended to demonstrate downward mobility, working as labourers and related workers (84.1%), doing elementary clerical, sales and service work (80.4%), or intermediate production and transport workers (71.4 %) (DEWR, 2005a).

Migrants differentially face social disadvantage in the employment and education markets. Those from Northern European and Asian backgrounds tend to have educational and occupational characteristics similar to or better than those born in Australia, whereas Southern and Eastern Europeans, and Middle Eastern migrants tend to rate lower on such characteristics (Makkai & McAllister, 1993). Reasons for differences between migrant groups include:

- Regulations and practices which prevent qualifications from some countries being accepted in Australia, and inability to access up-skilling or retraining;
- Issues in the country of origin such as a poor education system or civil war;
- Differences in the capital and human resources that migrants bring with them to Australia (migrants from some countries tend to be wealthier, better educated, have more English skills, have a better cultural fit etc. than others);

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[6] Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Australian Labour Market Update*, July, 2005.

- Racism and discrimination in hiring and firing practices in Australia (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2005; Quigley & Sankaran, 2005; Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission, 2004);
- Social and economic problems (poor housing, welfare, ghettoisation, lack of support), which prevent achievement for some groups (Van Krieken et al., 2000).

One way of ensuring better employment outcomes for migrants is to provide adequate assessment of skills and qualifications, and to provide opportunities for upgrading these. It is vital to consider the reasons for low participation of people from CaLD backgrounds in traineeships and apprenticeships, both for the benefit of the Australian labour market (in terms of effective use of skills and human capital), for the benefit of migrants (in terms of the broadening of training and employment options), and in terms of valuing Australia's diversity, and promoting social cohesion.

2.3   The Australian Education System

Education is seen as a lifelong activity in Australia. The formal education system includes schools, technical and further education colleges, registered training providers and universities. These may be private or publicly funded. Students must undertake at least 10 years of education (Years 1-7 in the first level, years 8-10 in the first stage of the second level, and Years 11-12 in the second stage of the second level). In WA, however, this is increasing to 12 years compulsory education in 2007. The Australia wide participation rate for post-compulsory education and training was 62.5% for 18 year olds in 2001, and 21.4% for 24 year olds (PC, 2003). Year 12 completion rates in 2000 were 67% (74% of females, 61% of males). Of all school leavers, 32% went to higher education institutions, with a further 25% attending TAFE colleges. Those who study until Year 12 are much more likely to undertake further study than early school leavers (71% compared to 37%) (ACYS, 2005). Participation in education and training is closely linked to participation in work. Young Australians without upper secondary qualifications are twice as likely to be unemployed as secondary school completers (ACYS).

Vocational education

While all education aims to increase knowledge, Vocational Education and Training (VET) is designed to provide skills and knowledge that are directly relevant to work-related competencies (PC, 2003). VET is a broad term which covers post-secondary learning that leads to qualifications within specific occupations, delivered by Registered Training Organisations (RTO). Apprenticeships and traineeships are included within the VET system; universities are not. There are both public (e.g., TAFE) and private providers of VET. Qualifications include certificates, diplomas and advanced diplomas and are awarded based on the fulfilment of specific competencies as outlined by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). Some examples of areas covered by VET include the trades (e.g., metals, plumbing, horticulture, automotives, construction, hair dressing); hospitality, community and health services (e.g., youth work, teaching and dental assistants, aged care, welfare work); information technology; business; visual arts; floristry; applied languages; animal husbandry; tourism and beauty therapy.

The National Training Framework

Australia's VET system is governed by the National Training Framework (NTF), which was originally developed by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA – which

was absorbed by DEST in July 2005). The comprehensive and consistent nature of the NTF means that Australia is considered a world leader in VET (Dyson & Keating, 2005).

The NTF has three distinct components: training packages, the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). The training packages are "nationally endorsed standards and qualifications for recognising and assessing people's skills" (DEST, 2005b). They are developed by Industry Skills Councils or by individual enterprises to meet their needs; however, they provide uniformity in the particular competencies and skills of people undertaking the same qualification.

The AQTF are "nationally agreed quality assurance arrangements for training and assessment services delivered by training organisations" (ANTA, 2005a, p. 2). In order to become a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), licensed to provide nationally recognised qualifications, training companies must comply with the regulations set down in the AQTF (see ANTA, 2005a; 2005b). The AQF provides a set of nationally recognised qualifications, ensuring quality, consistency and portability of vocational education and training, mainly through the standardisation evident within the training packages and provision of training through RTOs, under the AQTF.

Apprenticeships

In Australia, apprentices receive both practical experience and on-the-job training from their employer, and theoretical and practical training with a RTO. Apprentices are indentured to individual employers for the term of their training, between three and five years, depending on the specific industry and occupation.[7] Apprentices receive nationally recognised qualifications, which enable them to work as qualified tradespeople, and to pursue further studies. Apprenticeships are generally available in traditional trade areas; for example: plumbing, electricity, metal fabrication, hairdressing, jewellery making, commercial cookery and bricklaying.

Traineeships

In contrast to apprenticeships, traineeships involve a shorter period of indenture (usually 12 months of full-time training, but this may vary across industries and qualifications). As with apprenticeships, traineeships also involve on-the-job experience and practical training, and may also involve off-site training provided by an RTO. Traineeships are more flexible than apprenticeships in terms of hours worked and modes of training delivery. This has made them attractive to a wide variety of industries, leading to a proliferation of new traineeships in recent years. Trainees who complete their term may find employment in related areas, or pursue further educational or training opportunities. Traineeships are available in a range of areas including: business, retail, aged care, cleaning, hospitality, tourism and transport.

Participation in apprenticeships and traineeships

In recent years, apprenticeships and traineeships have experienced rapid growth. Currently, some 2.1% of Australia's working-age population is employed in a New Apprenticeship[8] (NCVER, 2001). The recent upsurge in numbers of apprenticeships (a 95% increase between 1996 and 2004; Toner, 2005) meant that 2004 saw the highest number of

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[7] GTSs take on all the responsibility for the apprentice, who then does on-the-job training with a relevant employer, but may not necessarily remain with one specific employer for the full duration of their apprenticeship. GTSs receive State and Federal government funding for employing apprentices and trainees, and payments from host employers, covering wages, recruitment costs etc.

[8] The Federal government refers to New Apprenticeships as a category that includes enrolments in both apprenticeships and traineeships. We retain the State government terminology.

apprentices since 1992. This growth is partly due to increased numbers of adult apprentices.

Vocational education is increasingly being articulated with high school education in Australia. Half of the students in Years 11 and 12 in 2003 were enrolled in a VET in Schools programme (ACYS, 2005). This initiative is co-ordinated by the Curriculum Corporation, funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) (until June, 2005 this funding was structured through the ANTA, which has now been incorporated into DEST). The VET in Schools programme is designed to improve the transition from school to further study or to work, and from work to further training, by providing students with a more realistic view of the work environment and its expectations, and a clearer knowledge of career opportunities and pathways, as well as increased self-esteem and job readiness.

Close to 95% of schools that offer senior secondary programmes also offer VET programmes, through the VET in Schools initiative. Rates of participation vary, ranging from around 23% in some states to a high of 60% in others (Curriculum Corporation, 2005). Over 185,000 Australian students, or about 44% of all senior secondary school students, participate in VET in Schools, in courses ranging from business to mining. This compares favourably to 60,000 in 1996. Over 7,000 of these students are undertaking part-time school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, which lead to qualifications recognised by industry throughout Australia. Of those students participating in VET in Schools programmes, 60% undertake workplace learning (PC, 2003). Schools are favouring courses in areas such as tourism and hospitality, information technology, and business services, as well as general education and training, including job seeking skills, and personal development and workplace communication.

Despite such initiatives, the proportion of youth apprenticeship commencements in traditional apprenticeships declined from 40% in 1997, to 33% in 2003 (ACYS, 2005). In 2000, 76% of 19 years olds completed Year 12 or a post-school qualification in that year, and 44% of 24 year olds held a skilled vocational qualification or higher (ACYS).

Backing Australia's Skills

Since 2002, DEST has promoted the Backing Australia's Skills programme (see DEST, 2005a for further details). This has included:

- Reinvigorating the Vocational and Technical Education System (funding, especially in areas to address skills needs in the traditional trades);
- The National Training System (aims to broaden young Australians options after school and attract mature aged Australians back to study, and provide them with specialised skills and pathways to new careers);
- Elevating the Status of Trades (advertising vocational qualifications as challenging, diverse, independent, and for many a lucrative, career);
- Rewarding and Encouraging Participation (investment in apprenticeships and traineeships is significant for both employer and trainee, hence the need to recognise this; extra places in trades offered via New Apprenticeships, pre-vocational training and school-based New Apprenticeships);
- Funding for New Initiatives to Reinvigorate the VET system (including Australian Network of Industry Careers Advisers; Australian Technical Colleges; Institute for Trade Skills Excellence; Tools for Your Trade; Trade Learning Scholarship; opening up eligibility; increased residential support; extending Youth Allowance; eliminating new apprentice poaching; extra places in the New Apprenticeships access programme; school-based New Apprenticeships through Group Training; and pre-vocational training through Group Training) (DEST, 2005a).

Independent bodies within Australia have also been working to raise the profile of vocational skills. WorldSkills is an international, non-profit organisation, founded in 1953, which aims to "raise the status and standards of vocational skills and training worldwide" (WorldSkills, 2005). WorldSkills Competitions are held every two years, with young people from 42 member countries or regions competing in over 40 trade skills areas. Australia has participated in every international competition since becoming a member in 1981. It is hoped that the status of vocational education and training within Australia can be raised by encouraging young people, and their teachers, trainers and employers, to attain world class skills standards. This in turn should demonstrate that such careers are valuable and exciting, particularly through the WorldSkills Competitions, which include interesting and diverse skill challenges (WorldSkills Australia, 2005).

2.4   Apprenticeships and Traineeships in an International Context

For many countries, apprenticeships are an important component of vocational education and training. They are unique in providing both a pathway from school to work, and a programme of training that assists people to successfully enter the labour market. In this section, we present a brief overview of some relevant international statistics and then some information briefly describing apprenticeship and traineeship systems in selected countries. Expectations of, and attitudes toward, the Australian apprenticeship and traineeship system are likely to be influenced by migrants' existing knowledge about the apprenticeship and traineeship systems in their countries of origin.

Australia now rates fourth in the world, behind Switzerland, Germany and Austria, in terms of coverage of the workforce by the apprenticeship system. Australia ranks well ahead of countries like Finland, Norway, the Netherlands, Denmark, France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America (see Table 2). As Gospel (1993) notes, participation in the apprenticeship system is higher in Australia than in any other English speaking country.

Table 2: International apprenticeship coverage, 2001[9]

Country	Percent of working age population (15–64) in apprenticeships
Switzerland	3.4
Germany	3.0
Austria	2.2
Australia	2.1
Finland	1.1
Netherlands	1.1
Norway	1.1
Denmark	0.9
France	0.8
United Kingdom	0.6
United States of America	0.2

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[9] NCVER (2001)

In comparison with other English speaking countries, the Australian apprenticeship system has demonstrated considerable resilience and recent growth, with the introduction by the Federal Government of a number of new initiatives under the title New Apprenticeships in the 1990s, and with the ongoing support of State and Federal Governments for the system. In contrast, in the United States, the apprenticeship system declined during the previous century, with immigrants being the source of skilled labour. Although the apprenticeship system was sustained in the United Kingdom well into the post-Second World War period, it has since experienced significant decline. Gospel (1993) notes, "the experience of these countries is in contrast to the German speaking countries where apprentice systems have grown in coverage and remain very strong to the present date." (p. 36). Under the German system, once compulsory secondary education is completed at age 16, young people are able to pursue an academic or vocational route. Nearly 70% choose to undertake vocational training (Brown & Evans, 1994). Gray and Morgan (1998) argue further that a key reason for the strength of apprenticeships within the German speaking countries is that they are united in endorsing a 'training culture', such that the government, employers and young people themselves hold the apprenticeship system in high regard, and place a high value on vocational training (see 2.4.1 for Germany profile).

Comparative data from non-OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries is more difficult to obtain. However, a brief review of the available literature on reforms in the vocational and training systems in a number of African countries (Araia, 2005) reveals a level of concern about the degeneration of traditional apprenticeship systems.[10] For instance, South Africa witnessed a significant decline in apprenticeships in the post-apartheid era – from 29,800 in 1986, to 16,500 in 1998. Recent reforms have been introduced to enhance the participation rates for people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, as part of a series of measures to address the massive levels of unemployment (61% for black South Africans between 16-25), and a country wide acute shortage of skilled workers (Bird, 2005).

Australia is a world leader in terms of its coverage of adult apprentices. This is in contrast to many countries where apprenticeships are primarily undertaken by young people. For example, the dual systems of Switzerland, Germany and Austria focus only on young people. In these countries, up to 70% of young people move from school to work through this system of apprenticeships (Doherty, 2004).

Internationally, systems of apprenticeship diverge according to their degree of integration into the educational system, the mechanisms of regulation, forms of government support, and industry commitment to the system. This review of national apprenticeship systems divides the national apprenticeship systems of industrialised economies into Anglo-Saxon and Northern European systems. Eastern European apprenticeship systems are currently experiencing a period of reform, and are not considered in this review. 'Traditional' apprenticeships, such as those that exist in many regions of Africa, may be contrasted with 'modern' industrialised apprenticeships (such as those provided by the Anglo-Saxon and Northern European systems), as they involve skills passed down between successive generations of 'masters', without an attendant vocational education system to impart standardised skills and competencies.

Anglo-Saxon systems are market-driven, where firms are not obliged to offer apprenticeship sponsorship (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005). Countries that follow a broadly Anglo-Saxon system of apprenticeship include English speaking countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Australia. Northern European systems rest on a social partnership between business and labour interests where industry

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[10] These are general observations only. For a more detailed account of the vocational education systems in various countries, please see the Country Education Profiles prepared by National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition, at http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/QualificationsRecognition/CountryEducationProfiles/Default.htm

consensus informs the supply of apprenticeship sponsors. Countries that adopt a Northern European system of apprenticeship include Germany, Denmark, and Switzerland. Since the economic transition in Eastern Europe, a number of Eastern European countries (e.g., Hungary, Lithuania and Slovenia) have reformed their formerly state-based systems of apprenticeship, which were reliant upon the obligations of large state-based firms to take on apprentices, and on their co-ordination with structured state vocational schools. This has been in part a consequence of the collapse of many of the state-owned firms, which were the traditional providers of on-the-job training for apprentices, and the accordant pressure experienced by the technical schools (Sharpe & Gibson, 200).

The extent to which apprenticeships are integrated into the secondary school system also varies. Under Anglo-Saxon models, apprenticeships are not as integrated into secondary schooling as they are within Northern European models, which have a greater emphasis on vocational education in secondary schooling. There is also arguably a more positive social attitude toward training and apprenticeship in countries following a Northern European system (Lauterbach, 2002). Further, the expected labour market outcomes for apprentices also differ according to the system of apprenticeship in place at a national level. There are distinct benefits for each system. Apprentices who have completed their training under a Northern European system tend to have a high likelihood of employment, but this tends to be in a relatively narrow range of occupations. By contrast, apprentices completing under the Anglo-Saxon system may have a wider range of employment options, as labour market entry into occupations is not as restricted (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005).

In the following section, we review the major features of apprenticeship systems in a number of countries and regions. Some countries receive more attention than others because of greater parallels with the Western Australian context.

2.4.1   Northern European

Germany

The German 'dual system' links general and vocational education, through providing training in the workplace and in vocational schools. This has been a model for other European systems such as Austria and Switzerland. The dual system has been called "the most comprehensive and detailed regulatory system for apprenticeship training in the Western world" (Raggatt, 1988). The positive outcomes of the German system include nationwide high levels of skilled labour, a positive culture of training, enhanced competitive advantage, and the amelioration of rising wage inequality (Acemoglu & Pischke, 1999).

The dual system of vocational training in Germany accounts for some 66%, or 1.6 million, of young people in training (only 27% are at Vocational Schools and 7% at External Training Centres), with this training being shared in partnership between a workplace or company and the state-run vocational school system (Dybowski, 2005; ILO a, n.d.; Putz, 2003). The training is usually for two to four years, depending on the chosen occupation, and apprentices are paid an allowance (Federal Foreign Office, n.d.; ILO a), with the system being jointly financed by the firms and the government (Dybowski, 2005; Putz, 2003). The dual system operates after the completion of compulsory full-time schooling at age 15/16 (equivalent to Year 10 in Australia) and combines on-the-job training with part-time vocational school work encompassing specialised theoretical as well as general knowledge/education subjects (Dybowski, 2005). Employers have a relatively high commitment to apprenticeship training, and unions are involved at all levels (Lehmann, 2005). There is also a national network of career counselling and employment centres, which provide links to the labour market.

In addition to widespread participation rates, there is also a striking degree of gender equity, compared to apprenticeship systems in other countries (Ryan, 2000). Unlike the US, UK and Australian systems, female participation in the German dual system now matches that of males (Schmidt & Zimmerman, 1996). Significant social status is associated with a completed apprenticeship (Steedman, 2001).

The training generally occurs at the *Berufsschule* (vocational school) though it has been noted recently that the number of training slots is declining with a slowing economy and that such schools have declining enrolments because of a drift to higher-status courses leading to university (Riley, McGuire, Conaty & Dorfman, 1999). This decline in vocational training is seen as cyclical (BMBF, 2003), but will only be reversed through increased investment in vocational training from business (Lehmann, 2005).

Martin (2002) argues that Germany is a "reluctant land of immigration" (p. 1), with a high correlation between social achievement and social and ethnic background. This reflects the segregation of the education system, based on skills level, from age 11 or 12 into three streams, geared towards university education (*Gymnasium*), white-collar work (*Realschulen*), or the trades (*Hauptschule*). However, it is claimed that Germany's short school days disadvantage immigrant children, who have little time for supplementary education, with those attending *Hauptschule* "being squeezed out of apprenticeship slots by students from *Realschulen*" (Migration News, 2002, p.1).

Recognising some of these issues, the German Federal Institute for Vocational Training advocates promoting vocational training for disadvantaged youth (Putz, 2003). To overcome the barriers faced by disadvantaged youth they suggest: delivering courses that are flexible, differentiated, individual and phased; shortening the period of training; providing support measures (socio-educational, school, training-attendant aid); changing examinations to make them more equitable; full social protection in 2-year training occupations; and strengthening feelings of one's own worth, social prestige and recognition amongst others.

Switzerland

In Switzerland, there are 400 recognised training occupations. Close to 80% of people enrol in some form of apprenticeship (Lauterbach, 2002). Like Germany, Switzerland has a dual system, with vocational education and training available at upper-secondary and tertiary level. As in Germany, vocational education is regarded highly by the community. Most young people opt to move straight from compulsory schooling to vocational education, rather than obtaining upper-school graduation, with 69% of 15-19 year olds in technical or vocational training (Hanhart & Bossio, 1998). Those aged 15 to 16 can choose between full-time vocational education or the widely preferred dual-apprenticeship model (alternate between education and work). Apprentices are paid for their work, as in Australia. Length varies from two to four years depending on occupation, and the apprentice must sit an examination to receive a Federal Proficiency Certificate within the relevant field. Only 7% of apprentices within the dual system fail this exam, with the majority of those passing on the second occasion, supporting the effectiveness of this approach (Hanhart & Bossio, 1998). The federal government (confederation), state governments (cantons), and professional organisations work in partnership to fund, organise and administer the vocational education and training system (OPET, 2005). Like Germany though, there has been a decline in the number of apprenticeships in Switzerland in recent years, with both less demand from young people, and greater reluctance from employers to spend time and money on apprentices (Hanhart & Bossio, 1998).

Denmark

The Danish vocational education and training system underwent significant structural changes in 2001(Van Landingham, 2005). The Danish system is considered to bridge the

German dual-system, which focuses on on-the-job training, and the school-based systems of Scandinavian countries, which emphasises more theoretical training in the classroom.

Education in Denmark is compulsory until the age of 16. Nearly all school-leavers continue to upper secondary education, with 41% attending vocational colleges and 53% attending a general upper secondary education school, with a further 6% leaving the system (Van Landingham, 2005). Vocational education is split between a 'basic course' and a 'main course'. The basic course is school-based and provides general education as well as foundation preparation for the main course, with this differing depending on whether the vocation is technical or commercial in nature. Students may choose a career field during the basic course. The main course includes 'in-company training' as well as additional subject-specific education. The duration is three to four years depending on the field.

Denmark has about 115 vocational colleges, roughly evenly divided between commercial and technical orientation with a few specialised or combined colleges (e.g., for agriculture) (Van Landingham, 2005).

2.4.2 Anglo-Saxon

Canada

Apprenticeships in Canada form part of the post-secondary education system. In 2002, there were 234,000 apprentices registered. Figures from 1998 indicate that apprenticeships form 13% of post-secondary enrolments, with this figure having declined in the first half of the 1990s due to recession but increasing after 1997 with stronger economic growth (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005). Apprenticeships are similar to those in Australia, where the apprentice exchanges labour for practical training in a workplace environment. The official duration varies by programme, but is generally three to four years. Apprenticeships are seen as an alternative form of education. Generally, this 'academic release' period is from four to eight weeks per year (Sharpe & Gibson).

Apprentices must find their own employers (or sponsors) to provide the workplace portion of the training. Some apprenticeship programmes also have previous learning assessment and recognition mechanisms, such that experienced tradespeople can demonstrate their knowledge of skills and receive exemptions from academic portions of the programme (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005).

Policy makers in Canada have been critically examining the system in view of labour market issues facing Canada. They are interested in finding "how apprenticeships can meet the current and rising demand for skilled, adaptable and mobile trades' workers in Canada" (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005, p.13). The federal budget of 2005 highlighted the apprenticeship system investing $125 million over the next three years and forming a Workplace Skills Strategy to strengthen the apprenticeship system. Interest in the apprenticeship system has two approaches. The school-to-work transition approach addresses high youth unemployment rates and difficulties faced by some disadvantaged youth. The second approach emphasises the role of the apprenticeship system in providing the economy with a skilled worker supply which could target training toward sectors facing imminent skills shortages and also emerging sectors (Sharpe & Gibson).

A comparative study of German and Canadian apprenticeship systems found that Canadian apprentices have limited knowledge of apprenticeship regulations and career paths, and that:

> skill development in Canada was limited by a focus on workplace-readiness skills and a lack of integration of what participants did at work and what they learned at school. It was concluded that rather than gaining an understanding of their rights and responsibilities in the workplace, they were learning to accept their under-privileged place in it (Lehmann, 2005, p.107).

Lehmann also found that employers in Canada have relatively low levels of participation in workplace training compared to Germany.

The UK operates under a market-driven apprenticeships system with apprenticeship programmes and vocational training not as formalised as in Germany or Denmark. There are age and residency requirements on trainees but no educational prerequisites. Little assistance is provided through schools of finding an apprenticeship, with most placements coming through group training organisations, who often provide training too (Steedman, 2001). Apprenticeships in the UK have been expanded, as in Australia, to cover other areas such as business administration, retail, hospitality and health and social care (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005). However, participation rates are still low.

Employers pay a wage and offer on-the-job training to allow the apprentice to meet National Vocational Qualification certification. As in Australia, assessment is on an outcomes, rather than knowledge, basis. This has been criticised as leading to training that is "employer-dominated, skills-based knowledge, rather than educationally-driven technical knowledge that allows employee mobility" (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005, p.30). As a result of the competency based model, almost all apprentices finished within less than two years, about one third inside one year (Steedman, 2001).

Completion of an apprenticeship may be a stepping stone to undergraduate study at a college or university, depending on the national and technical certificate earned (Van Landingham, 2005).

2.4.3   Africa

Apprenticeships in many regions of Africa may be deemed traditional, as opposed to modern, as they involve skills passed down between successive generations of masters. In a number of African countries, large modern-sector establishments may provide the kind of modern apprenticeship offered by industrialised economies, and supported by government; however, these are outnumbered by the number of traditional apprenticeships undertaken (Fluitman, 2002).

In traditional African systems, the majority of apprentices are between 18 and 25 years of age. There are fewer training opportunities for women. Those that exist tend to be in the 'feminine' trades, such as hairdressing, dressmaking, and food-processing. There are three major categories of apprenticeship. The first comprises skills for which an apprenticeship is a precondition for employment. These trades include carpentry, car engine repairing, tailoring, and radio/television repair. The second includes businesses which tend to be run by former apprentices, but who may or may not have their own apprentices. These include activities such as weaving, metalwork, leather-work and construction. The third involves activities where apprenticeships are not usually common and where entrepreneurs, usually female, rely on family helpers. These activities include soap-making, meat/fish-processing, and the running of restaurants, together with retail and wholesale activities. Those undertaking apprenticeships under the latter category, involving 'family labour' (often women), do not consider these workers to be 'trainees' (Fluitman, 2002).

For those in many sub-Saharan African nations, such as Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Ghana, VET is regarded as 'second-class' compared to university study. There are most likely several contributing factors to this belief, as there are in Australia. In particular, VET is linked with the colonial system, and as such, is seen as providing fewer opportunities for socio-economic mobility. It therefore becomes an option of 'last resort':

> Coupled with low academic standards is the negative attitude of pupils towards the
> technical and vocational subjects. The general attitude of many Ghanaians is that it is

those who are not academically sound who pursue technical and vocational education. (Bisiw, 2003, p. 10)

Many stakeholders, including governments, parents and the community at large, fail to support VET, leading to further declines in the system, which feeds back into people's negative appraisals. Most experts suggest that the status of VET relative to university needs to be raised, primarily by promoting the intellectual and productivity benefits of occupations resulting from VET, and encouraging the support of relevant stakeholders for the system, particularly through greater funding of technical schools (Bisiw, 2003; Imadojemu, 2003; Jalloh, 2003; Olu, 2003).

Tanzania

Since 1999, Tanzania's Vocational Education and Training Authority has been addressing the issue of bringing existing, traditional apprenticeships within a formal training system. While such traditional apprenticeships, where individuals learn informally from a master craftsperson, are common, there is huge variability, with no uniform training system, no contracts between trainer and trainee (sometimes leading to exploitation), and no recognised certification is received upon completion (ILO b, n.d.). Pilot programmes have so far targeted the master craftspeople responsible for providing training, including assessing their specific expertise and offering them training in business skills. However, many craftspeople are quite resistant, especially to receiving training in front of their own apprentices, and funding for such programmes in limited (ILO b).

UNHCR

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for running many of the world's 'refugee camps' for displaced persons no longer able to live in their country or region of origin. Within such camps, the UNHCR funds formal and informal VET for refugees, both of which are provided by Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) working within the camps (Lyby, 2002). Such training, while not likely to be recognised in nations with more formalised qualifications frameworks (like Australia) is seen as serving two important purposes. Firstly, it provides 'education for repatriation' (skills which can be used on return to country of origin, or that make them a more attractive prospect for other nations they may wish to immigrate to) and, secondly, as a way to 'keep them out of trouble' (with refugee camps offering limited recreational and vocational opportunities) (Lyby, 2002). The most popular fields within the camps in Western Tanzania, which mainly have Burundian and Congolese populations, are horticulture, crafts (e.g., blacksmithing, soldering), carpentry, simple plumbing, masonry, and small scale manufacturing (e.g., clothing, footwear, textiles).

2.4.4   The Middle East

The European Training Foundation (ETF) works on behalf of the European Union to support reform of vocational education and training in both member and non-member countries. They are currently undertaking numerous projects within the Middle East region, in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, and Gaza and the West Bank. They aim to create or improve VET within these nations through working with government and private and public training providers, to ensure that VET systems are responsive to labour market needs, and to create awareness of, and adherence to, best practice vocational education and training strategies, relevant to local needs and capabilities. Many of these nations are characterised as having low levels of support for VET, at the government, industry and community level. In addition, enrolments tend to be low, even when secondary education involvement is high: Algeria (2.7%), Jordan (6.9%), Lebanon (12.2%), Morocco (6.5%), Syria (9.9%), Tunisia (5.4%), with the exceptions of Israel

(20.7%) and Egypt (29.3%), where government support for and expenditure on VET is far greater (ETF, 2005).

Iran

In recent years, there have been considerable changes and reforms in the entire education system in Iran. At all levels of education, enrolment ratios have increased significantly over the past 20 years, as has the ratio of female enrolment at all levels of education. Participation is still quite low, with around 12% of students undertaking technical, vocational and agricultural education, which includes trade-based apprenticeships (Aziz-zadeh, 2002).

Lebanon

In Lebanon, the vocational and technical education system has been under development since the 1960s. There has been a significant shift in post-secondary education, from vocational education to higher levels of education. In 1954, 85% of students enrolled in post-secondary education were undertaking vocational and technical education. This proportion had dropped to 8% by 2000. Vio Grossi (2002) argues that reform of the vocational training apprenticeship system is urgently needed in order to "help the social integration of youth who have been active members of the various fighting militias" (p. 3353). It is hoped that engaging youth in such productive activities would have both economic and social benefits.

2.4.5 Asia

Malaysia

In Malaysia, the apprenticeship and vocational training system is experiencing considerable development. Currently, vocational secondary schools offer students practical training in individual trade skills. In the 1990s, only 7% of students opted for this form of training, although this figure is expected to rise significantly by 2020, as the Malaysian government addresses the need for skilled labour. Malaysian vocational schools are also being encouraged to foster stronger links with specialised industries in order to provide industry-specific training experience (Palma, 2002).

Singapore

In Singapore, at secondary level, students are streamed so that those likely to undertake post-secondary technical or vocational education acquire skills in English, mathematics and general computing. The Institute of Technical Education is targeted at the 25% of secondary students completing this stream. It offers two to three year courses that lead to the award of the National Trade Certificate-Grade 2. Those students who successfully complete at this level may advance to higher levels of training, which may lead to the award at certificate level in fields such as office skills and business studies (Yeoh, 2002).

Sri Lanka

A major challenge for the Sri Lankan system of education lies in addressing the significant gap between the needs of the mainly rural based population, and the urban, English educated, Western oriented elites (Ranaweera, 2002). Notwithstanding this challenge, Sri Lanka has a strong apprenticeship system. The National Apprenticeship and Industrial Training Authority provides training in over 200 industrial establishments to more than 11,000 apprentices in more than 150 categories of trades. These programmes have a built-in linkage with industry and the employment market.

2.5 Issues in Vocational Education for People from CaLD Backgrounds

The following section identifies several issues relevant to the broad area of vocational education and training in Australia, and to the specific area of apprenticeships and traineeships. At the outset it must be recognised that there is a dearth of research on issues for migrants in these areas of education, and on programmes designed to improve pathways for Australians from CaLD backgrounds. Where programmes have been run, few have been evaluated, and those that have been may not have made their findings publicly available. Likewise, the literature tends to cover the broad area of vocational education and training more often than the specifics of apprenticeships and traineeships.

Lian Sim and Zinopoulos (2004) and Miralles (2004) provide benchmark studies that begin to address this significant gap in the literature. As such, we draw many of our observations from their foundational analyses. Lian Sim and Zinopoulos (2004) take the unusual step of examining data from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) on participation and outcomes for people from particular CaLD backgrounds in 1997 and 2001, across a range of key variables. These include age, gender, prior educational attainment, recognition of prior learning, employer type and geographic location. Crucially, they also examine this data by reference to the ten non-English speaking background groups identified as comprising the majority of CaLD students within the apprenticeship and traineeship system. These language groups are Italian, Greek, Arabic, Spanish, Vietnamese, Macedonian, Tagalog, Croatian, Hindi and Chinese [sic]. The countries of birth examined are the Italy, Greece, Lebanon, Vietnam, the former Yugoslavia, Philippines, India, Fiji, Sri Lanka, and China. Miralles (2004) uses a qualitative method to understand the more general area of VET participation and completion among Arabic, Bosnian, Cantonese, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese speaking communities, based on interview data from 200 participants from New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

2.5.1 Assessment of Overseas Qualifications

Migrants generally need to have their overseas qualifications assessed to determine their appropriateness to Australian work environments. Assessment of overseas qualifications is a significant issue for migrant communities, leading to unemployment, or employment below skill level, and wastage of existing human capital (Castles et al., 1989; Central TAFE, 2001; Flatau & Wood, 1997; Miralles, 2004; Richardson et al., 2004; Wilding & Tilbury, 2004). Where assessments show migrants are in need of up-skilling or gap training, tailored apprenticeships and traineeships are appropriate, but may take considerable time and expense. Humanitarian and family entrants are less likely to engage in this process. Negative experiences with the assessment system may result in lower interest among potential CaLD trainees or apprentices in up-skilling or retraining, if earlier qualifications are found to be inadequate.

Accessing practical skills assessment can also be very difficult. While government bodies, such as the Overseas Qualifications Unit in WA, rely primarily on paper-based qualifications evaluations, skills assessments are available through Trades Recognition Australia (TRA) and specific industry regulatory bodies (DEWR, 2005b), although in practice these often tend to be paper-based as well, and in some cases conducted over the telephone with the assessors in other states. It also tends to be an 'all-or-nothing' approach; if the criteria are not met no recognition for existing skills is given. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is available through employers or RTOs, however, getting access to these is a problem for many new migrants (see Recognition of Prior Learning below).

Appropriate retraining, upskilling or supervised practice is vital for migrants, as work practices, trade terminologies, regulations, materials, climatic conditions and industrial

relations, as well as work culture, differ from countries of origin (Castles et al., 1989; Flatau & Wood, 1997), as does the level of skill required, in some cases. Without appropriate processes, migrants have been shown to work in occupations below their skill level, leading to lower incomes and self-esteem for the migrant, and an underutilisation of skills for the Australian economy (AMEP, 2005; Castles et al., 1989; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2005; Flatau & Wood, 1997).

The Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (LSIA) indicates that around 72% of migrants seek assessment of their qualifications, of whom about 70% complete the process (Richardson, et al., 2004). Around three-quarters of those assessed as needing further training had begun, or intended to begin, that training (Richardson, et al., 2004). Non-English speaking migrants take between two to six years to upgrade their qualifications, depending on language skill and course type (AMEP, 2005). Unsuccessful assessments are more likely for those who do not speak English as a first language at home (Miralles, 2004).

Those who do not have their qualifications assessed include people who do not intend to enter the labour force; change their career; or find employment without assessment, as well as those who are unaware of the procedures. The Building Diversity Project 2000-2001(Central TAFE, 2001) found that a large majority of women migrants who are aware of qualification assessment find out about the process through the Adult Migrant English Programme (AMEP) or TAFE, or secondarily through family and friends.

Flatau and Wood (1997) found that while close to 80% of LSIA Cohort 1 migrants under the Independent and Concessional visa category had sought assessment, less than 25% of all Preferential Family, Employer Nomination Scheme and Business Skills, and Humanitarian entrants had. Around a third of migrants are not using their qualifications frequently, with around a third to a half using them very often or often (this rises with length of residence). In a now dated study, Castles et al. (1989) found that there is a profound difference in perceptions of the adequacy of the system: the view from the top (officials of accreditation bodies and industry) is positive, but the view from below (migrants) is much more negative. They found inadequate provision of information on procedures and responsibilities, and haphazard referral. Such negative experiences, particularly when combined with an evaluation of earlier qualifications as inadequate, are likely to reduce the interest of potential CaLD trainees or apprentices in up-skilling or retraining. Some improvements in the system were noted by Flatau and Wood (1997), but they still found in half of those with post-secondary qualifications from their countries of origin there was 'occupational mismatch underemployment' (whereby workers' skills, experience and expertise are underutilised in current occupations). The likelihood of occupational mismatch underemployment is much higher for those with qualifications from NESB, and most serious for those arriving under the Family and Humanitarian schemes.

A new link on the Australian Education International site for Country Education Profiles[11] provides assessment guidelines to enable comparison of overseas qualifications and education to Australian qualifications. This gives detailed information about the structure and qualifications of a country's education system and enables comparison with the AQF. However, one must pay to access this online or purchase a printed copy.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The NTF recommends the use of RPL processes as a way of attracting people other than school-leavers to VET, and in promoting a lifelong approach to learning. RPL provide credit for:

> any combination of formal or informal training and education, work experiences or general life experience. In order to grant RPL, the assessor must be confident that the

[11] http://aei.dest.gov.au/Aei/Default.aspx

candidate is currently confident against the endorsed industry or enterprise competency standards or outcomes specified in the Australian Qualifications Framework accredited courses. This evidence may take a variety of forms and could include certification, references from past employers, testimonials from clients and work samples (ANTA, 2001, p. 9).

Such RPL processes would obviously be particularly valuable for those who require recognition of overseas qualifications and experience, although the specific kinds of evidence mentioned may not be available to new migrants, especially humanitarian entrants, who often have few possessions and limited paper-work. However, the AQTF does include specific standards for dealing with 'access and equity clients'. It also stipulates that RPL be offered to all applicants, and must be "valid, reliable, fair and flexible" (ANTA, 2005a, p. 10). However, an RPL assessment under AQF standards can only be conducted once the person has an employer or RTO; for many attaining employment in the first place, especially without recognition of existing skills, is a major barrier.

Recognising the overseas qualifications of refugees

Many other nations with large intakes of humanitarian immigrants face the same issues as Australia regarding the assessment of overseas qualifications. Normally, educational qualifications are evaluated on the basis of documents and information about education systems from countries of origin. However, in the case of refugees, such information may be unavailable. Unfortunately, some evaluations come to a stop when faced with these barriers. The result is that many refugees who could be contributing to the country and community in which they now reside are unemployed or underemployed, and obliged to restart education or training already completed in their home country (Phillips, 2000). This is disadvantageous for the individual, who often feels resentful, and the economy, due to underutilisation of the existing skills base. While refugees often face other barriers such as language and/or emotional trauma, there is also evidence that systems for assessment and recognition of certificates, skills, and knowledge can fail to offer refugees appropriate routes into employment or further education and training. The Lisbon Recognition Convention and, in particular Section VII on the recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons, and persons in a refugee-like situation, were created in an effort to address some of these issues (Phillips, 2000).

The Danish Refugee Council identified the main recognition related barriers faced by refugees as:

- Insufficient information and unclear procedures;
- Lack of provisions for various areas of assessment and recognition;
- Lack of procedures to deal with insufficient documentation; and
- Lack of financial support and bridging to mainstream education and training (Phillips, 2000)

Canada in particular provides a good example of these principles in action (e.g., recognising prior learning, persistence in determining equivalence of qualifications, accepting sworn statements of credentials, subsidising costs of evaluations, providing information about assessment process in multiple languages, and providing bridging and vocationally specific English programmes). However, this process is often applied unevenly, with differences by region, occupation and educational institution evident (Phillips, 2000). Canadian Bridging Programmes are very successful though, and are designed specifically for foreign trained professionals and tradespeople to enable them to transition more quickly into the Canadian labour market, by providing training that addresses specific needs and facilitates the recognition of foreign credentials. This includes training in occupation-specific language; Canadian workplace culture, practices and

communication; technical upgrading according to Canadian requirements; and work placements to gain Canadian work experience (ACCC, 2005). A team teaching approach is often taken, with both a skills specialist and a qualified ESL teacher instructing each class. Recognising that the initial basic ESL programme offered to new migrants was not sufficient to allow those with skills to function in professional occupations, vocationally-specific ESL programmes are also being developed, under the banner of Enhanced Language Training (ELT) (CIC, 2005). Both types of programmes are offered through both private and public training providers.

The Commonwealth Joint Standing Committee on Migration is currently conducting an inquiry into Overseas Skills Recognition, Upgrading and Licensing, which is tasked with reporting on current arrangements for overseas skills recognition and associated issues of licensing and registration for (among others) Skills stream migrants who obtain assessment prior to migrating, families of Skill stream migrants, Family stream migrants and Humanitarian entrants who seek assessment, registration and upgrading after arrival. They are also to compare these with skills recognition processes of other major immigration countries, and identify areas where Australia's procedures can be improved in terms of communication of processes to users, efficiency of processes and elimination of barriers, early identification and response to persons needing skills upgrading (e.g., bridging courses), awareness and acceptance of recognised overseas qualifications by Australian employers, achieving greater consistency in recognition of qualifications for occupational licensing by State and Territory regulators, and alternative approaches to skills assessment and recognition of overseas qualifications.

The WA Overseas Qualifications Unit (OQU) (located in DET's Career Services Directorate) is also currently funding a number of pilot programmes across a range of industries. These projects aim to investigate best practice models for recognition of overseas skills and experience, with the view to simplifying the recognition process and placing greater emphasis on the practical, rather than paper-based, assessment of prior learning, within both educational and workplace environments.

2.5.2   People from CaLD Backgrounds in Higher Education

Migrant communities are not necessarily achieving poor outcomes in education – their aspirations and achievements may simply be in areas other than vocational education and training, including apprenticeships and traineeships. However, outcomes vary according to arrival period and region of origin, with some communities accessing neither university nor vocational education.

Some communities achieve at high school and move on to university education. For example, Smolicz (1987) reports a number of studies that show higher retention rates of Australian children from CaLD backgrounds to Year 12 than mainstream children, and Anderson and Vervoorn (1983) found that migrant students have higher educational aspirations than locally born students. Similarly, research into young second generation Australians, by Khoo, McDonald, Giorgas and Birrell (2002), found that a higher proportion complete secondary school and continue on to university compared to both their Australian-born counterparts, and their peers born in other English-speaking countries, even though many come from comparatively lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Khoo et al., 2002, p. 46).

Marjoribanks (2002) reports that cultural background is significantly associated with the educational and occupational aspirations and expectations of young people. Adolescents from Asian, Middle Eastern and Southern European backgrounds have higher levels of educational aspiration than adolescents from other immigrant and Anglo-Australian

families. In a further longitudinal study of educational attainment, he found correspondingly higher levels of educational attainment for young adults from Asian, Middle Eastern, and Southern European families, compared to Anglo-Australian, English and other immigrant young adults (Marjoribanks, 2003). He also found that young adults from CaLD backgrounds with lower socio-economic status did not attain levels of education that were as high as those from middle socio-economic backgrounds.

In general, people from CaLD backgrounds are under-represented in post-compulsory education. However, people from NESB are also over-represented in the higher education system (university studies). Although the representation of people born in non-English speaking countries in higher education is slightly higher overall than their representation in the general population (14% vs. 13.2%, see Lian Sim & Zinopoulos, 2004), this apparently equitable level of representation masks the relative over-representation of people from particular cultural backgrounds (such as South East Asia and North Asia) and the under-representation of people from other cultural backgrounds (such as Italy, Greece, Lebanon and Germany).

Compared to cultural groups that commenced arrival prior to the early 1980s, those from more recently arrived groups seem to have less access to higher education (Khoo & Birell, 2002). However, it is encouraging to note that people who arrived in Australia during the last five years are more likely to participate in post-secondary education (55%) - including vocational training – than those who were born in Australia or have lived in Australia for more than five years (38%) (Morgan, Chiem & Ambaye, 2004).

Thus, although people born in countries such as Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Indonesia, India Vietnam and Malaysia are under-represented in the vocational education and training sector, they are by comparison over-represented in the higher education sector, relative to their share of the population of working age. People from China and the Philippines are also better represented in higher education than in vocational education and training. However, this does not hold for people born in countries such as Lebanon, Italy, Fiji, Greece and the former Yugoslavia, who are under represented in both the higher education, and the vocational education and training sectors (Lian Sim & Zinopoulos, 2004).

Status reproduction and status aspiration account for the over-representation of some migrant communities in university level education. Class theory clearly demonstrates that generations tend to reproduce the class position of their parents, and that education systems tend to reinforce this (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Connell, Ashenden, Kessler & Dowsett, 1982; Willis, 1977). For migrants who have arrived under the Skills stream, a high proportion of whom are professionals, it is likely their children will aspire to similar educational and occupational statuses – status reproduction. For migrants from lower class backgrounds (e.g., those arriving under family reunion and humanitarian programmes), the migration process tends to be one of increasing aspirations, with parents investing a great deal in the success of their children (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2003). Research into the aspirations of second generation Australians has found that their success settling into Australia relates to their ability to adapt and that:

> The future benefit of their children is often found to be a motivating force of the
> migration of the first generation. With this strong motivational background, it is
> perhaps no surprise to find that most second generation groups perform better in
> educational outcomes than the third generation (Khoo et al., 2002, p. 145).

For many, status aspiration attaches to professional rather than trade or vocational-based careers, and this may explain why some migrant communities are eschewing vocational education for university.

However, some communities appear to face disadvantage in accessing university or vocational education.

2.5.3 People from CaLD Backgrounds in Vocational Education and Training

People from culturally diverse backgrounds do not appear to be achieving equitable levels of participation in vocational education and training, with participation concentrated in certain subjects and certain levels. However, proportions are increasing, with those from NESB doubling participation in apprenticeships and traineeships in the period 1997-2001 (Lian Sim & Zinopoulos, 2004). But barriers still exist which are specific to those from CaLD backgrounds.

Within the VET system, people from CaLD backgrounds are concentrated in the highest (e.g., AQF Diploma courses) and the lowest levels (e.g., AQF Certificate I and II) of vocational education and training (Volkoff, 2004). They are over-represented in preparatory and access courses, but under-represented at higher levels (Miralles, 2004). They are significantly less likely, than the general student population, to be enrolled in AQF III qualifications, the level most common for apprentices and trainees. For those at the lowest levels of vocational education and training in particular, employment outcomes may not be as positive as those of non-CaLD graduates (Dumbrell, Finnegan & de Monfort, 2005).

This distribution pattern may be accounted for by consideration of the differing migration programmes under which people have arrived (Volkoff, 2004). Students who have arrived under the Skill stream programme have higher levels of English proficiency and existing qualifications, and may be concentrated at the higher levels of participation in VET. In contrast, people arriving under the Humanitarian stream may possess lower levels of English proficiency and skills, and may thus be represented in the lower levels of VET. Women from NESB also comprise a disproportionate number of this group.

When examined by state, NCVER data indicate that the proportion of NESB students enrolled in VET was equitable when compared to their representation in the population of working age for the ACT (13.6%), Queensland (7.4%), and Tasmania (3.9%) only. In all other states, including WA (9.4%), students from non-English speaking background countries were under-represented in vocational education and training (NCVER, 2005).

In terms of representation in apprenticeships and traineeships of people with languages other than English spoken at home, in 2004 only 460 of 14,016 Western Australian apprentices spoke a language other than English at home (215 Australian born; 245 overseas born). This represents only 3.3% of all in-training apprentices. A slightly higher proportion (8.8%) of Western Australian trainees spoke a language other than English at home (1,142 in total: 315 Australian born; 818 overseas born) (NCVER, 2005). Both these figures are considerably lower than would be expected, based on the percentage of people from CaLD backgrounds within the Western Australian population (17%; OEEO, 2005).

Table 3 indicates the breakdown of Western Australian trainees and apprentices by gender and age.

Table 3: Numbers of Apprentices and Trainees in Training speaking languages other than English at home, Western Australia, March 2005, by country of birth, gender, and age[12]

Place of birth	Gender	Age	Apprenticeships	Traineeships	Total	% of total
Overseas (68.4%)	Female (45.8%)	24 and under	27	69	96	18.6%
		25 and over	10	410	420	81.4%
		All ages	37	479	516	
	Male (54.2%)	24 and under	177	69	246	40.3%
		25 and over	79	286	365	59.7%
		All ages	256	355	611	
	Both genders		293	834	1,127	
Australia (31.6%)	Female (36.7%)	24 and under	43	75	118	61.8%
		25 and over	2	71	73	38.2%
		All ages	45	146	191	
	Male (63.3%)	24 and under	171	58	229	69.4%
		25 and over	18	83	101	30.6%
		All ages	189	141	330	
	Both genders		234	287	521	
All places	Female (42.9%)	24 and under	70	144	214	30.2%
		25 and over	12	481	493	69.8%
		Total	82	625	707	
	Male (57.1%)	24 and under	348	127	475	50.5%
		25 and over	97	369	466	49.5%
		Total	445	496	941	
	Both genders	24 and under	418	271	689	41.8%
		25 and over	109	850	959	58.2%
		Total	**527**	**1,121**	**1,648**	

From Table 3, we can see that of all Apprentices and Trainees in March 2005 who were categorised as LOTE (regardless of whether they were born in Australia or overseas), approximately twice as many were doing a traineeship as were doing an apprenticeship. However, this disproportion is due to almost eight times as many women doing traineeships than apprenticeships, whereas for men there are almost equal numbers doing apprenticeships and traineeships. Roughly speaking, these proportions persist for both those born in Australia and those born overseas.

Dumbrell, Finnegan and de Monfort (2005) note that nationally, people from non-English speaking backgrounds represent an increasing proportion of students enrolled in 'New Apprenticeships' – the term used by the Commonwealth government for traineeships and apprenticeships. In 1997, people born in a non-English speaking country represented only 3.8% of all commencements. However, by 2001, the number of students from non-English speaking countries had risen to account for 7.5% of commencements. Similarly, students speaking a language other than English at home accounted for 4.9% of those entering apprenticeships and traineeships in 1997. By 2001, this figure had risen to 9.1%.

Figure 3 indicates the increase in numbers Australia-wide of those born overseas accessing apprenticeships and traineeships.

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[12] DET WA data

Figure 3: Apprenticeship and Traineeship numbers by place of birth, 2002–2004[13]

2.5.4 Educational Background and Training Sectors

An increasing number of people undertaking apprenticeships and traineeships hold a tertiary or vocational qualification (NCVER, 2001). As well as being a function of mainstream Australians retraining, this growth is arguably due to an increasing number of qualified but under-employed people from CaLD backgrounds entering the VET system. In 2001, 3.5% of male, and 3.3% of female NESB apprentices and trainees reported holding a previous bachelor or higher degree (compared to 0.7% of all male and 1.2% of all female apprentices and trainees) (Lian Sim & Zinopoulos, 2004).

Conversely, the number of people undertaking apprenticeships and traineeships that have completed only the first few years of secondary education (Year 9 or below) is also rising. NCVER (2001) attributes this rise to a general increase in commencements by older people, who may have lower levels of secondary education than the general population. Lian Sim and Zinopoulos (2004) argue that this trend is particularly pronounced for people from CaLD backgrounds, for example, the number of NESB men commencing apprenticeships and traineeships with low levels of education increased from 3.6% in 1997 to 9.6% in 2001, while the number of NESB women commencing apprenticeships and traineeships increased from 4.6% to 10.6% over the same period.

The distribution of CaLD background employees in the labour market parallels their pattern of distribution among apprentices and trainees. In general, people from NESB are, relative to their share of the general population of working age, over-represented in the labourer occupations, and under-represented in the skilled trades (Lian Sim & Zinopoulos, 2004).

Reasons for undertaking vocational education

In order to understand the reasons behind under-representation of CaLD communities in vocational education and associated occupations, it is important to explore the motivations behind educational and occupational choices. The NCVER adopted a typology developed by DET, identifying seven mutually exclusive categories of motivation for undertaking training for the general population. These categories describe the reasons given by all former TAFE students for undertaking their studies (NCVER, 2003, p. 4).

- *Apprenticeships/trainees.* Training was undertaken as part of an apprenticeship or traineeship.
- *Self-employed people.* Training was commenced to either develop an existing business or to start a new business.

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[13] DET WA data

- *Labour market entrants.* Training for anyone under 25 entering TAFE with the aim of gaining employment, or under the age of 19 to seek a different career.
- *Career changers:* People over the age of 19 seeking to change careers; people over the age of 25 with the aim of gaining employment.
- *Skill improvers:* Training undertaken to gain a promotion or better job.
- *Bridgers:* Training commenced to access another course of study.
- *Self-developers:* Training enrolled in for personal interest or self-development.

Employment outcomes are strongly linked with these categories of motivation. Volkoff (2004) reports that, of the seven categories, skill improvers and apprentices/trainees have the strongest association with positive employment outcomes. People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are under-represented in such categories. Those categories of motivation that characterised the largest proportion of people from CaLD backgrounds are bridgers and career changers. These categories of motivation are associated with far less positive employment outcomes (Volkoff, 2004).

2.5.5   Apprentice and Trainee Completion Rates

Completing an apprenticeship or traineeship has a number of dimensions. The three steps are: completion of the formal off-the-job requirements of the apprenticeship or traineeship (obtaining the qualification); completion of the indenture period (remaining in the apprenticeship or traineeship for the full indenture period of the contract of training and meeting the on-the-job requirements as endorsed by the employer); once both of these requirements have been met, notification and provision of evidence to the State/Territory training authority of the successful completion of the contract of training (NCVER, 2002).

Overall, apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds do not complete at the rate that would be suggested by the number of CaLD apprentices and trainees entering the system, although this varies by age, ethnic group, certificate level, educational background, provider type and industry. Expectations, family and financial commitments, and cultural issues within the learning environment are significant factors in non-completions.

Lian Sim and Zinopoulos (2004) report that in December 2001, CaLD apprentices and trainees represented 6.5% of the total in training, but only 5.9% of completions. The rate of completion varies between particular CaLD groups. Thus, of the groups Lian Sim and Zinopoulos studied, a pro-rata share of completions did occur for apprentices and trainees from the Philippines, India, Fiji and the former Yugoslavia. The available data also suggests that apprentices and trainees from the emerging communities within Australia from Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Kuwait also complete at a pro-rata rate, although one should be wary of the small numbers in such groups, which affects the validity of such statistics (NCVER, 2003). However, a pro-rata share of completions does not characterise those apprentices and trainees from Lebanon, Vietnam, China, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Italy, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan (Lian Sim & Zinopoulos). Once again, such differences indicate the variability of outcomes across different migrant groups.

Completions also vary by qualification level. There is a higher rate of completions for all apprentices and trainees (CaLD and general) at Certificate III level. At certificate II level, however, people from non-English speaking backgrounds have lower completion rates (26.8%) compared to apprentices and trainees in general (32.8%) (Lian Sim & Zinopoulos, 2004; NCVER, 2001).

Mature age (45-54) apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds have a high rate of completion (18.5% of all completions) that surpasses their 8.5% share of contracts of training. This may be due to the high level of representation of this group in short-term

training contracts (compared to other apprentices and trainees) (Lian Sim and Zinopoulos, 2004)

The completion rates for people from CaLD backgrounds also vary by occupation and employer type. A pro-rata share of completions characterises people enrolled in labourer and associated occupations, and for those undertaking clerical, service and sales training. In contrast, those in intermediate production and transport occupations are not achieving a pro-rata share of completions (15.9% compared to 19% of contracts of training) (NCVER, 2001).

Completion rates may be further broken down by gender. Men from NESB had higher completion rates in the labourer and related occupations (24.8%), followed by the skilled trades (20.8%), whilst women from NESB had higher rates of completion in the intermediate clerical service and sales (46.5%), followed by the labourer occupations (24%) (Lian Sim & Zinopoulos, 2004). Completion rates by occupation also vary by specific CaLD background, for example:

> People from the Philippines had high completions in all occupation groups. Those from Vietnam figured prominently in completions for the para-professional, skilled trades, advanced clerical, sales and service and intermediate production and transport occupations. Completions were high for those from India in the clerical, sales and service occupations. Those born in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and in Greece were prominent in completions for the labourer occupations. The Italian-born achieved high completions in the para-professional and intermediate production and transport occupations. People from Germany and the Netherlands were prominent in completions for the professional occupations, and those from Japan comprised a high proportion of completions in the elementary clerical occupations relative to their pro-rata share of in-training contracts for the non-English speaking background country of birth groups in apprenticeships and traineeships in December 2001. (Lian Sim & Zinopoulos, 2004, p. 152)

Lian Sim and Zinopoulos (2004) also note that people from NESB comprise a significant proportion of cancellations and withdrawals in the clerical sales and service, and labourer and related worker occupations. There are also far higher rates of cancellations and withdrawals for people who hold tertiary academic qualifications. This may indicate dissatisfaction with the training, or it may be that they move on to employment instead.

General reasons for non-completions in vocational and technical education are multiple, with students often citing a number of reasons for discontinuing their training (McInnis, Hartley, Polesel & Teese, 2000). These include problems with employment (e.g., competing demands of part-time work); problems with the course (e.g., difficulties with the 'reality' of the course topic, or mismatch with expectations); health and chance events (e.g., unpredictable personal events, and health problems); institutional factors (e.g., factors unique to the institution, and its administration practices); financial problems; and, family and other commitments.

Three specific issues particularly affect CaLD apprentices and trainees:

Financial and family commitments. Trainees and apprentices with financial commitments to their families may work two jobs – the one associated with their apprenticeship or traineeship, and another to ensure they have an adequate income for their responsibilities. This may cause stress, and leave little time for study, leading some to drop out. Uren (2001) found that most students who discontinue their studies have work commitments, above and beyond those of the traineeship or apprenticeship (of which their employer may be unaware). Most of these are in areas not related to their training. CaLD students may work excessively long hours prior to, and after, attending their classes, and may discontinue due to exhaustion.

Expectations of training. It may be that CaLD communities have inappropriate expectations of training, including the type of learning involved, the level of English

required, and the culture of the training or work environment. These expectations may be due to inadequate information prior to uptake, "Making the wrong course choices may be attributed to the poor quality of information provided to prospective students, or lack of career counselling" (McInnis et al., 2000, p. 33). Miralles (2004) found that there may be low levels of understanding of the demands of VET programmes generally among CaLD communities.

Uren's (2001) study of strategies for improving completion rates for all Western Australian VET students found that a number of participants reported that their course workload did not meet their initial high expectations, in terms of the volume and content of the course work. Notably, these students were more likely to be either of younger age, or from a CaLD background.

Different learning styles and cultural differences. Cultural differences are relevant in many ways, including the culture of the classroom in terms of the various roles of students, teacher, and gender roles; the cultural values as reflected in courses and their adaptability, including culturally inclusive materials, explanation of workplace routines, professional jargon, the adaptability of tasks such as clothes manufacture, cooking, hairdressing, hospitality; and, the broader cultural values implicit in the courses (and the flexibility of these). Some practices amount to structural racism, and at least, a devaluing of the culture and experiences of CaLD participants.

In Miralles' (2004) study, cultural factors were seen not as a necessary cause of failure to complete, but a sufficient one when coupled with other difficulties such as transport or English problems. This was particularly an issue for Arabic, Turkish and Vietnamese speakers – those with more cultural distance from mainstream Australia than some other migrants groups.

A major finding of Miralles' study (2004) was that teachers play a vital role in the success or otherwise of CaLD trainees and apprentices (see also Central TAFE, 2002). Lack of intercultural competence of VET teachers, resulting in a lack of empathy for CaLD students and understanding of the challenges they face, has meant that some have left traineeships and apprenticeships.

2.5.6   Employment Outcomes for CaLD People

Once CaLD apprentices and trainees have completed their training, one might expect that they would find employment at the same rate as mainstream Australians. However, Dumbrell et al. (2005) report that, in general, employment outcomes are not as positive for VET students from CaLD backgrounds. Of all graduates, 73% report finding employment after graduation, but only 58% of those from NESB do. This may be the result of structural and/or individual discrimination. Equally of concern is that graduates from culturally diverse backgrounds also reported lower levels of satisfaction with their training.

As noted, it may be that awareness of these poor outcomes prompts those from CaLD communities to shun apprenticeships and traineeships.

2.6   Barriers to Access for People from CaLD Backgrounds

Many factors may act as barriers to access for CaLD participants in VET generally, and apprenticeships and traineeships specifically. Barriers and challenges are complex, often including a range of factors associated with the industry, workplace, training and personal issues (Harris et al., 2001). As in the cases of multiple disadvantage, many experience multiple barriers, especially those who are visibly different from mainstream Australians,

have limited English and/or come from cultures very different to Australia. As such, many of the barriers discussed are linked and serve to compound the difficulties of access, for example, lack of community networks, particularly those that include members from multiple cultural backgrounds, leads to lower awareness, poorer Australian cultural knowledge, and fewer opportunities for accessing informal pathways to employment, including apprenticeship and traineeship placements. Major issues for those from CaLD backgrounds include: migration experience, issues of systemic and individual discrimination, lack of information, language proficiency, community attitudes, financial and family pressures, gender, length of time in Australia, and age.

2.6.1 Factors Associated with the Experience of Migration

Settlement takes many years, and there are a number of settlement issues that affect the relative success in VET programmes of those from CaLD communities (Hannah, 2000; Jayasuriya, Sang & Fielding, 1992; Miralles, 2004; Ward et al., 2001; Wilding & Tilbury, 2004). These include:

- Issues of culture shock (resulting from cultural, social and economic dislocation);
- Language problems ;
- The struggle to gain sufficient material resources;
- Low socioeconomic status, or loss of socioeconomic status following migration, (often the result of lack of recognition of professional qualifications);
- Unemployment;
- Housing and transport issues;
- Work-related injuries arising from unsafe work practices and poorly remunerated jobs;
- Racism and discrimination;
- Isolation, due to disruption of family networks and support and separation from social, religious and cultural networks;
- Intergenerational struggles, family tensions and violence to women reflecting unequal gender arrangements;
- Traumatic experiences or prolonged stress before or during immigration (as in the case of refugees).

In their study of the impact of the migration experience, Richardson and colleagues (2002) found that, in general, migrants reported higher than normal stress levels. Twenty six percent of migrants, compared with 8% of the general Australian population, reported higher than normal stress levels. Among migrants entering under the Humanitarian Scheme, 50% reported higher than normal stress levels. For women, factors such as isolation, lack of extended family and social support networks, and difficulties with finding childcare add to difficulties of access (Central TAFE, 2001; Miralles, 2004; Tilbury & Rapley, 2004). Of course, such factors will be more relevant for some migrant groups than others.

These difficulties may affect the likelihood of uptake and success of any form of further training or education.

2.6.2 Systemic and Discrimination Barriers

People from CaLD backgrounds face social disadvantage as a result of systemic barriers and individual discrimination (Castles et al., 1992; Essed, 1991; Wilding & Tilbury, 2004). Racism and discrimination in hiring and firing practices in Australia has been demonstrated (Birrell & Hawthorne, 1997; Booroah & Mangan, 2002; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2005; HREOC, 2004; Quigley, 2004; Quigley & Sankaran, 2005). These may be

more blatant forms of racism (e.g., employers refusing to hire an African or Vietnamese, due to racial difference) or more subtle forms (e.g., employers preferring a mainstream Australian apprentice as they will 'fit in' better). Discrimination based on accent, language ability, appearance, name, Muslim background, cultural and racial stereotyping, perceptions of the 'lack of cultural fit', and perceptions by employers of an inability to 'hit the ground running', is relatively common (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2005; HREOC, 2004; Quigley & Sankaran, 2005). It is likely that similar processes occur as barriers to access to apprenticeships and traineeships for those from CaLD backgrounds.

There seems to be clear evidence that there is a perception among trainers that trainees or apprentices from CaLD backgrounds may be more 'trouble' or require more work, than those from mainstream backgrounds. In their 1998 study, the NSW Department of Education and Training report barriers among host employers and GTCs. They note that:

> Another factor placing a barrier in the way of selection may be the company belief that NESB applicants will generally take more time and effort to place and take care of than ESB applicants. In such a situation their bicultural and bilingual skills may not be taken into account or considered as positive characteristics (McDermott, Baylis & Brown, 1998, n.p.)

Concerns about dealing with cultural differences in the workplace have become common excuses for employers to ignore responsibility for ensuring equitable outcomes for diverse groups in Australia (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2005; HREOC, 2004). This is itself an incidence of discrimination and represents a huge barrier to apprenticeships and traineeships for those from CaLD backgrounds.

Miralles (2004) found that VET students from CaLD backgrounds were disadvantaged due to differences of learning styles and cultural differences. These included different understandings of the roles of students and teachers, and gender roles, expectations of didactic forms of instruction as opposed to collaborative forms, different workplace cultures, difficulties with understanding professional jargon, and the significance of cultural values embedded in different courses. She found these practices amount to structural racism, and a devaluing of the culture and experiences of CaLD participants.

Among others, systemic barriers include:

- Regulations and practices which prevent acceptance of qualifications gained overseas;
- Complex and culture specific mechanisms for accessing up-skilling or retraining;
- Lack of information in languages other than English, and through a wide range of forums, which are culturally appropriate;
- The importance of informal networks for accessing training and employment associated with training; and
- Lack of extra support for employers and apprentices or trainees from CaLD backgrounds, in recognition of the extra time and resources which may be required for training.

As we have seen for those who do access VET, employment outcomes are not as positive for those from CaLD backgrounds. This may be the result of structural and/or individual discrimination (Dumbrell, Finnegan and de Monfort (2005).

2.6.3   Awareness of Apprenticeships and Traineeships

There are generally low levels of awareness of VET among CaLD communities, and little understanding of opportunities associated with such programmes (ATEC, 2000; Castles et al., 1989; Central TAFE, 2001; Miralles, 2004). Some communities are more aware than others. Information dissemination about VET may best be distributed through community networks rather than through schools.

The Access Training and Employment Centre (ATEC, 2000) found that people from CaLD backgrounds had only the most rudimentary and limited knowledge of Group Training Companies (GTCs, known as Group Training Schemes, GTSs in WA), and of the apprenticeship system in general. The generalisability of this finding is supported by the findings of research conducted by the McDermott, Baylis and Brown (1998) who found similarly low levels of awareness of GTCs, and about apprenticeships and traineeships, among members of CaLD communities in NSW. The ATEC (2000) also found, in a South Australian context, that there was little targeted marketing information – through either the mainstream or via local community media, or community support workers and labour market programmes – for people from CaLD communities. On the basis of these findings, the ATEC concluded that this lack of clear information affects the awareness levels of both prospective apprentices and trainees, and potential employers.

Lack of awareness is directly related to low levels of participation by CaLD communities. Enrolment is closely linked with an understanding of the variety of programmes and outcomes available. Castles et al. (1989) found that uptake of further training was influenced by a lack of experience and difficulty accessing courses, and Miralles (2004) suggests that there is limited understanding of the demands, range and portability of VET programmes and the multiple purposes for training. Central TAFE (2001) found that family and friends were vital sources of information about courses of study, particularly for migrant women undertaking TAFE courses. Certain communities have higher levels of knowledge than others. Miralles (2004) found that, of the groups she studied, Bosnian and Cantonese speakers had the highest levels of understanding, and Vietnamese and Arabic speaking groups the lowest.

For parents of school children, low levels of English proficiency have been associated with lower levels of awareness of apprenticeships and traineeships compared with families from English speaking backgrounds (Volkoff & Golding, 1998a). While secondary schools represent a key avenue for the promotion and dissemination of information about apprenticeships and traineeships, a number of factors discourage families from culturally diverse backgrounds from accessing this information, including the lower levels of confidence that CaLD parents may have both in their English skills and in their status as part of the school community. Together these factors may effectively exclude CaLD parents from attending information and careers guidance sessions. An obvious solution is to provide translated information to parents.

CaLD employers may also be unaware of the possibilities of apprenticeships and traineeships, which may present a further barrier for prospective CaLD employees and new businesses (Collins, Sim, Zabbal, Dhungel & Noel, 1997).

2.6.4   Proficiency in English

Proficiency in English is widely regarded as crucial for both training and employment, and also for access and retention (DIMIA, 2005; Miralles, 2004; Misko, 1997; Pennycook, 2001; Saville-Troike, 2003; Watson & Pope, 2000). Proficiency affects migrants' ability to access information about training, and access to the training itself. Migrant communities tend to prefer English language education to be integrated with vocational education and training. Language proficiency is not only an issue for new migrants, but also for some who have been here for awhile.

Members of immigrant communities report that lack of English – along with a lack of local networks and work experience – is a major barrier to securing employment (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2005; Richardson, Robertson & Ilsley, 2001), with between 50% (LSIA Cohort 1) and 90% (LSIA Cohort 2) of those who reported English speaking ability as 'not well' or 'not at all' on arrival in Australia remaining unemployed after 18 months (DIMIA, 2005). It is likely that this difficulty also holds true for access to training opportunities, and once in training there is often little English language support (Miralles, 2004). Miralles (2004)

found a strong preference among the communities she studied for vocation programmes that have integrated English language support. While Wapshere (1996) found that migrants performed at a lower rate in vocational and technical education, than their English speaking background Australian counterparts, Miralles (2004) argues that migrants feel it is possible to complete training programmes with moderate English, as long as language support is provided as an integral part of the training programme.

It must be acknowledged that English language proficiency may vary considerably, even among NESB populations. Overall, one fifth of people born in NESB countries report low levels of English proficiency. Further, this is not a difficulty restricted to older immigrants. Some 13% of people under 24 from non-English speaking backgrounds also report limited language proficiency (Volkoff, 2004), and 12% of Australian born children from Indo-Chinese backgrounds have poor levels of English proficiency, compared with six percent from other non-English speaking backgrounds (DIMIA, 2001). Some groups, for example those from Eastern Europe and Indo-China, have slower rates of acquisition of English language skills, and higher rates of retention of use of native language (DIMIA, 2001). It is these groups who are most likely to suffer in VET access and achievement, as a result of this.

As noted, programmes that teach English as a Second Language (ESL) are important to provide pathways and linkages to vocational education and training (Miralles, 2004).

Zuvich's (2003) research into the determinants of successful VET study for migrant students found that proficiency in English, while important, was only one element, and awareness of and ability to operate in a different educational culture, was seen by a group of successful migrant students as the principal factor.

2.6.5 CaLD Community Attitudes Toward Apprenticeships and Traineeships

In general, people from CaLD backgrounds may hold negative attitudes towards vocational education and training (McDermott, Baylis & Brown, 1998; Miralles, 2004), with many seeing it as 'second rate' and others seeing it as not leading to employment (Miralles, 2004). Such attitudes may be important in accounting for the significantly lower levels of participation in vocational education and training, particularly for young NESB people (Volkoff, 2004). Attitudes may vary across migrant groups, depending on the relative status of apprenticeships and traineeships, and related occupations, in their countries of origin.

A study conducted by the Multicultural Education Unit of the New South Wales Department of Employment, Education and Training (1995) found that the majority of NESB respondents viewed vocational education and training as lower in status than university studies. However, this may not hold equally across all groups. A report by the Department of Premier and Cabinet in Victoria (2001) argues that low regard for vocational education and training is predominant in migrants from former socialist countries of Eastern Europe. This is contradicted by Miralles' (2004) findings that Bosnian and Cantonese speakers were the most likely to be aware of, and to recognise the value of, such training, seeing it as different from, though not necessarily inferior to, university education.

Given the considerable diversity of the cultural backgrounds of migrants, and given the varying levels of positive regard and status with which apprenticeships and traineeships are held in various countries around the world, it is likely that migrants' attitudes toward vocational education (and, by comparison, university education) will also vary. Although no attitudinal research has been conducted on this topic, a number of studies attest to the variability of the status of vocational education and training, internationally (e.g., Allen, 1992; Robinson, 1999).

Some communities have become disillusioned by the lack of linkage between training and employment, and this may become 'folk knowledge' within the community, which results in negative perceptions of the value of traineeships and apprenticeships as a pathway to employment (Miralles, 2004).

Negative perception of trades and vocations is arguably also an attitude held by the English speaking population, yet participation among CaLD communities is proportionately lower. Government appears to be aware of this status issue and one of the key stated objectives of DEST (2005b), in their latest programme on revitalising the VET system, is to "elevate the status of trades".

2.6.6   Financial and Family Pressures

Migrants tend to have family financial responsibilities requiring them to achieve an adequate income for support, and are therefore more likely to choose other employment over apprenticeships or traineeships, to ensure immediate financial stability (Central TAFE, 2002; Castles et al., 1989). This imperative often leads migrants to take whatever jobs are available (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2003; 2005). Migrants and their children may also see the purpose of training as being primarily a means of entry into the employment market (Miralles, 2004). If they have already found a job, however menial, they may not consider training as an option (Castles et al.; Miralles). For CaLD students, training costs, either through fees, or indirect costs through lost earnings, may be a significant obstacle to participation and completion (Miralles, 2004).

2.6.7   Age

Age is a factor influencing likelihood of uptake of apprenticeships and traineeships among migrants with some level of qualifications, with younger migrants more likely to seek retraining than older migrants (Castles et al., 1989). This is not surprising, as older migrants might feel they are too old to learn, or that it is too late to start again (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2003). It may also be partly the result of different levels of confidence, with older people more likely to underestimate their skills and knowledge, whereas younger people are more often overconfident (Miralles, 2004). Younger people may also learn English more quickly, particularly those who undertake Intensive English Language training in high school, where they are also more likely to come into contact with information about vocational education and training. However, it may also reflect the fact that younger people generally, and from migrant communities in particular, are vulnerable to poor labour market outcomes (Quigley, 2004) and therefore may recognise the need for vocational education and training. It also may reflect the general perception that the VET system is for younger people, among both the community and employers. Employers may see older migrants as more difficult to work with and less 'trainable' than younger people. Mature-age apprentices and trainees, while usually having shorter durations of training, cost more in wages than younger people, which may make employers in some industries more reluctant to hire them.

2.6.8   Length of Time in Australia

The acculturation process, which occurs as migrants become used to their new country and its culture, is known to influence successful settlement outcomes (Iredale et al., 1996; Pedersen, 1995; Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001; Wilding & Tilbury, 2004). Length of time in Australia is a key factor in considering the 'fit' between people from CaLD backgrounds and the vocational education and training sector (Miralles, 2004). Volkoff (2004) argues that this is due to the following five factors, which facilitate a smooth transition into, and through, the training process:

- Proficiency in English language;
- Establishment of community support networks;
- Reduction in stress levels associated with migration;
- Awareness of the VET system, and of potential outcomes associated with various training options; and
- Confidence in accessing support services.

Some of the variability in access and outcomes of the different migrant groups may be attributable to such factors. An additional factor is the perception among some migrants that they will return to their homeland (usually more common among those who have been here for a shorter duration), and who therefore do not see the need to retrain, and who are simply 'waiting out their time' by working in jobs below their skills levels (Miralles, 2004).

2.6.9   Other Specific Barriers

Apart from these barriers, specific groups within CaLD communities may experience further access barriers. The participants in Miralles' research (2004) felt that some young people, women, workers who went straight into the Australian workforce without access to any training, people from rural backgrounds, and those with low educational qualifications, faced further difficulties.

Another issue is resources and support available to trainees and apprentices. These include support within the home, such as parents or other family members being able to provide help with study or transport to and from work and off-the-job training, as well as in the workplace. If workplaces and training providers are unaware of the needs of those from specific cultural backgrounds, small misunderstandings can become big issues if, for example, work and training activities are culturally inappropriate, or learning materials are highly technical when the apprentice or trainee has limited English (Miralles, 2004). People may be reluctant to seek help if they are struggling, because of issues of 'face' or because they are concerned they may lose their job (Essed, 1991). In the event of discrimination or harassment, due to either status as an apprentice or as person who is culturally different, they may not know how to get help, making it easier just to quit. It is important that support services be available to all apprentices and trainees, such as the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Support Network, and that they have some understanding of the difficulties faced by those from CaLD backgrounds. Such support services should also be publicised.

2.7   Overview of Programmes Designed to Create Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships, and General Employment

There are a number of current initiatives to improve pathways to vocational education and training. While many of these focus on mainstream young people, or those from other equity groups, the principles behind some of these initiatives are eminently adaptable to CaLD communities. Other programmes are aimed more at obtaining employment generally, either expressly for new migrants or those from other disadvantaged groups. Such initiatives could be adapted for access to apprenticeships and traineeships specifically.

VET Priority Places Programme (VPPP)

This programme (which is no longer running) was a joint initiative with the Australian government, and the NSW DET. Its goal was to increase vocational education and training opportunities and improve outcomes for people with a disability, older workers and parents entering or re-entering the work force. The VPPP assisted clients in the Priority Target Groups to obtain a qualification in the hope that they would be able to participate more effectively in the labour market. The programme assisted people on low incomes, and allowed a RPL component. Training places of up to 12 months duration were provided under the programme, resulting in a nationally recognised Certificate II or higher qualification.

Under a recent reform to the WA DET's funding model of GTSs, they will now only receive funding when providing placements in trades identified as 'areas of need' at the State level, or for members of particular underrepresented groups (currently women in non-traditional trades, people with a disability and Indigenous people). People from CaLD backgrounds are not currently a priority category under this funding model.

New Apprenticeships Access Programme (NAPP)

DEST administers the NAPP which provides job seekers who experience barriers to skilled employment with tailored pre-vocational training, support and assistance to obtain and maintain a New Apprenticeship. Alternatively, a job seeker may be supported into employment, further education or training. The NAPP provides training in areas where there is evidence of market need. The training is a mix of generic and technical skills (e.g., specific industry competencies and generic skills such as workplace communication, occupational health and safety, and teamwork), and is linked to a New Apprenticeship pathway. The NAAP seeks to help participants determine what they need to be 'job ready'; train participants in the basic skills needed for a particular industry (this training is nationally recognised and linked to a New Apprenticeship pathway); support participants by helping identify job opportunities, CV and interview skills; and provide general support. Employers are encouraged to use NAAP job seekers because they have the basic industry skills to get them started; some experience in the workplace; general work skills and habits; motivation to work in your industry; a good understanding of what an employer wants; and help with settling in during the first 13 weeks of their New Apprenticeship or employment.

New Apprenticeships Centres also provide information about New Apprenticeship options to employers, New Apprentices and other interested people; promote New Apprenticeships; administer New Apprenticeships support services including processing payments for Commonwealth incentives; work with State and Territory training authorities to provide streamlined support services for employers and New Apprentices; and liaise with other relevant providers.

Structured Workplace Learning (SWL)

SWL is a component of a VET in schools programme that is situated in a workplace and provides supervised learning activities leading to an assessment (either in the workplace or post-work placement) of competency and the achievement of outcomes relevant to the requirements of a particular Training Package or other AQF VET qualification. Senior high school students throughout Australia are offered unpaid competency-based structured learning in work placements. Businesses provide on-the-job training and mentoring to develop both the technical and generic employability skills. The skills are assessed, usually following the work placement, by a RTO and the VET qualifications are recognised nationally by industry and education systems.

Pre-apprenticeships

Pre-apprenticeship courses are available in a range of areas and are provided by TAFE. They provide a Certificate I level qualification, which demonstrates to employers that the potential apprentice or trainee already has some skills in the area. However, they do not guarantee employment, with the individual still needing to locate an employer to take them on. TAFEWA offers pre-apprenticeship courses in furnishing, general construction (bricklaying, carpentry, family of mortar trades, painting, tiling, plastering, wall lining), and roof plumbing. They also offer a pre-traineeship in customer service. Courses are full-time for six months.

AMEP Pathways

The Adult Migrant English Programme Pathways courses, whilst not a direct way to gain an apprenticeship or traineeship, provide a route to employment options.

AMEP is funded through DIMIA and allows up to 510 hours of basic English language tuition to all migrants from NESB. The Special Preparatory Programme provides a further 100 hours additional teaching prior to starting AMEP for refugees and humanitarian entrants. Level of English competence is assessed when registering for classes if this was not done prior to coming to Australia; this insures participants are placed in the appropriate learning programme (AMEP, 2005). As well as learning basic language skills, participants learn about Australian society, culture and customs, and receive personal and career guidance from AMEP psychologists

After completing the AMEP, participants may study further English, enter into mainstream vocational courses if they feel confident, or access AMEP Pathways courses, which are mainstream courses with English language support (Central TAFE, 2003). The AMEP Pathways, run through Central TAFE are designed to fast-track new migrants through vocational training within specific fields, including Certificates in community services (aged and child care), information technology, laboratory skills, and a bridging course to enrolled nursing. Each course includes vocationally-specific English and work experience components, and uses a team teaching approach. A study on the nursing programme indicated that it was particularly successful to moving migrant women into work (Central TAFE, 2002).

Partnership Outreach Education Model Pilots (POEM Pilots)

These pilot schemes are run by DEST and were developed as a result of the Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce Report *Footprints to the Future* released in May, 2001. They provide opportunities for young people who are disconnected from mainstream education to engage in accredited education in supported community settings. The long-term goal is to help participants to develop the education, life skills and employability skills they need for an eventual return to mainstream education or further training or employment.

POEM Pilots facilitate the development of local partnerships involving youth and community agencies, schools, other education and training providers, government agencies and local employers to support participants in their education. The pilots:

- Deliver accredited education and training to "disconnected young people" in settings that are supportive and comfortable for participants and conducive to learning;
- Use flexible delivery arrangements in consultation with individual participants which take into account subject choices, preferred learning styles and cultural, social, physical and current needs;
- Identify issues affecting young people and provide the necessary support for them to work through these;

- Develop sustainable local support networks for disconnected young people that include protocols for joined up service provision;
- Assist participants to plan and achieve (when they become ready) successful re-engagement with mainstream education (school, TAFE, university) or where this goal remains out of reach, with other training, employment or community participation opportunities. Due to a complexity of issues, this process takes time for most participants, therefore there is no arbitrary time limit on a young person's participation in POEMs and each project aims to maintain flexible entry, re-entry and exit points.

Jobs Pathway Program (JPP)

This programme, run by Centrelink, helps 'at risk' young people make the transition through school and from school to further education, training or employment. Although not directly associated with VET, the programme attempts to link participants into vocational training. The JPP delivers personalised assistance to meet individual needs. Assistance may include the provision of timely information and guidance on options, choices and consequences to help participants make key decisions about their future. The JPP includes the development and implementation of a locally appropriate Transition Plan, and may also include motivation, problem solving, skills development, mentoring and assistance to access education, training and employment opportunities. Participants can access literacy and numeracy support. The JPP also provides ongoing support for participants as they move through school and into post-school destinations. The target groups include young people who have literacy or numeracy skills inadequate for the purposes of making a smooth transition, those from a language background other than English (including those whose parents were born in a country where a language other than English was spoken), and those with "a significant personal barrier".

Career Planning (CP)

This Centrelink-run programme helps people to establish or redefine their employment, education and training goals and to develop career management, research, and decision making skills. Career planning involves professional counsellors, informed about labour market opportunities, actively assisting unemployed people set or redefine their employment, education and training goals. Transition to Work, Green Corps, Work for the Dole, Jobs Placement, Education and Training and Job Network providers, as well as Centrelink, are able to refer eligible clients direct to the CP.

Three steps to getting an apprenticeship or traineeship

The WA DET recently launched this new campaign to promote apprenticeships and traineeships, including media advertising and an updated website.[14] The website provides simplified and comprehensive information to people looking to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship. It provides information on every training programme available in WA, including the exact title of the qualification (and in some cases a course outline of specific modules), what the job involves, time period, what attributes are needed, what the working conditions are like, and what is likely to happen after completion (for traineeships) and how the trade certificate is awarded (for apprenticeships). In some cases there is a link to another website which provides longer descriptions of what the job involves. Links are also available to online career planning services, such as Myfuture.[15]

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[14] http://www.apprenticeships.det.wa.edu.au

[15] http://myfuture.edu.au

Information about School-based Traineeships and the School Apprenticeship Link programme are also available, as are contact details for GTSs and RTOs. People are encouraged to contact the Apprenticeships and Traineeships Support Network for further information. The website also contains information for key stakeholders, such as employers and RTOs (e.g., AQTF, relevant forms, information about obligations), and statistics from the State Training Records System database (including numbers of apprentices and trainees by age, gender, region and occupation) and NCVER, plus relevant policy documents.

However, as with almost all government websites in Australia, it is only available in English, and would require both computer and English literacy to access and utilise the information and services provided.

2.8 Reviews of Best Practice in Australia

DEWR

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, in their 2003-2004 Annual Report (DEWR, 2004), recognised the need for special targeting of unemployed people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Job Network providers are encouraged to refer NESB job seekers to various training initiatives, such as the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Programme. They also funded a humanitarian/refugee entrant pilot programme under the Employment Innovation Fund to inform and educate people of CaLD backgrounds about Australian workplace culture and labour market needs in local regions. This scheme included a period of work experience. Specialist brochures about Job Network services have also been produced in the 20 most common languages. Job Network providers can also provide interpreter services.

ATEC

Access Training and Employment Centre (ATEC, 2000) conducts research into equity issues regarding employment, education and training. They formulated a best practice model for achieving cultural diversity in GTCs, focussed on providing adequate information to CaLD communities. On the basis of their review, the ATEC (2000) made a series of recommendations designed to enable GTCs to achieve best practice in recruiting and retaining CaLD apprentices and trainees, and in developing sustainable programmes to facilitate these practices. Many of these recommendations centre on the dissemination of information to GTCs through training, seminars and targeted campaigns. ATEC advises that in order to more effectively recruit, retain and support CaLD apprentices and trainees, the capacity of GTCs for strategically managing diversity should be developed. GTCs should also establish and build community networks with organisations such as the Ethnic Communities Council, AMES, and other relevant agencies, to collaboratively devise and implement these strategies. Also central to the ATEC's recommendations for best practice is that GTC workers undertake periodic cross-cultural communication skills training. In order to ensure the effective implementation of these recommendations for best practice in cultural diversity, and specifically in recruiting and retaining CaLD background people, ATEC make the further recommendation that reporting requirements for GTCs be adapted to reflect the accountability for GTCs to manage diversity within their organisation.[16]

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[16] No information is available on whether these strategies were implemented by the Office of Training and Further Education (Victoria), for whom this research was conducted.

In their 1998 study, McDermott et al. (1998) found that employers' and GTCs' beliefs that NESB applicants will take more time and effort to place and take care of than ESB applicants needed to addressed. They suggested this could be achieved by encouraging recognition of bicultural and bilingual skills as positive characteristics. This NSW based research and development project aimed to improve the participation rates of NESB youth in apprenticeships and traineeships. Specifically, they sought to identify and analyse the systematic, structural and attitudinal barriers that may affect participation rates of young people from NESB, and to implement a series of strategies designed to increase the number of NESB youth entering apprenticeships and traineeships. They also sought to raise the awareness of CaLD businesses with regard to apprenticeships and traineeships so as to encourage them to employ more trainees and apprentices, and to improve the effectiveness of GTCs in marketing their services to target particular CaLD communities.

On the basis of McDermott et al.'s (1998) findings, the NSW DET developed a series of recommendations, and implemented a number of strategies intended to operationalise the project goals in a sustainable manner. They identified the major goals of the project – congruent with the aim of increasing the participation rates of young people from CaLD backgrounds – as being to:

- Overcome the lack of awareness of, and negative attitudes towards, apprenticeships and traineeships in CaLD communities by building the interest-levels of CaLD youth, parents, community and businesses in apprenticeships and traineeships;
- Address problems encountered during the selection process by supporting youth through the selection process for apprenticeships or traineeships; and
- Construct a solution to the lack of available and desirable positions for CaLD young people by creating more culturally appropriate apprenticeship and traineeship positions, via the collaboration of GTCs and 'ethnic' businesses.

The strategies implemented by the NSW DET (1998) to achieve these goals included:

- Media campaigns via ethnic radio and television, for CaLD community members and businesses, to encourage businesses to recruit apprentices and trainees, and to attract prospective apprentices and trainees;
- Encouraging GTCs to refer unsuccessful applicants to support services to enhance language and literacy skills;
- Encouraging GTCs/RTOs to be aware of the available sources of language and literacy support for successful CaLD apprentices and trainees;
- Encouraging GTCs to keep more detailed records of the NESB status, length of time and years of education in Australia of all applicants (both successful and unsuccessful), in order to gain a more accurate profile of the needs of people from CaLD communities; and
- Cross-cultural communication and diversity training, on the part of GTCs/RTOs (as per the ATEC's 2000 recommendations for best practice).[17]

AMEP

The AMEP Migrant Pathways into Employment programme, undertaken by Central TAFE WA in 2002, was a successful example of the ways in which migrants can undertake gap training in mainstream vocational areas with English language support, together with work experience in their fields (Central TAFE, 2002), and demonstrates the importance of

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[17] No information is available on the direct success of such initiatives but pre-vocational and VET courses aimed specifically at people from LoTE backgrounds are on-going (NSW DET, 2004).

ESL classes as linkages to vocational programmes. The programme also recognised the ongoing need for experienced, qualified, culturally aware staff. The programme, which focussed on aged care, reduced the time required for upgrading qualifications, skills and language to about 9 months, while still achieving required industry standards. It achieved a 95% completion rate. It focussed on skills recognition, gap training, industry specific cultural preparation, industry experience, partnerships with employers, and community involvement. It is an example of the application of policy reforms which stipulate that English language, literacy and numeracy be incorporated as integral parts of training (National Training Reform Agenda, see Miralles, 2004).

Volkoff (2004) argues that CaLD students from the lower levels of the VET system may be in need of specifically targeted guidance and support in order to access higher level vocational training programmes that may be more likely to provide pathways to employment. English language programmes are potentially useful sources of information about, and pathways into, further vocational training. However, there is a need for improved articulation between English language programmes, and apprenticeships and traineeships (Miralles, 2004).

Positive experiences in apprenticeships and traineeships are related to completion levels (Miralles, 2004). Miralles found a particular preference for TAFE as providers, due to perceptions that TAFE provides more committed and caring teachers, equality of access, is amenable to slower learning styles, yields more marketable qualifications, and is more financially accessible. TAFE was also seen as providing good resource materials, information about careers and the opportunity to practice English on the job. Private providers were seen as narrowly focussed on the needs of particular workplaces. This differential satisfaction may be reflected in completion rates.

It has been suggested that culturally diverse VET students would benefit from the provision of more information and assistance in selecting their course of study, and that assistance should also be provided during the transition from supported training to independent skilled employment. Teachers, ethnic community organisations, local media and libraries, radio, brochures (translated) and the internet (for younger people), are seen as appropriate sources of information provision (Miralles, 2004). Miralles also found that best practice includes using culturally inclusive materials, and for training providers to be culturally aware.

2.9 Recommendations Identified in the Literature for Targeting and Retaining People from CaLD Backgrounds

Findings from the literature review suggest the following strategies may be effective in addressing the barriers faced by people from CaLD backgrounds in participating in the VET sector generally, and apprenticeships and traineeships specifically.

Information and awareness raising

- Provide information and raise awareness of the VET system and potential graduate outcomes targeted specifically at particular CaLD communities (migrant and refugee), using culturally and gender appropriate dissemination methods (such as drawing on local community networks to disseminate multilingual information by word of mouth). This may take a partnership model with specific communities.

- Provide targeted information to CaLD students in enabling courses so as to encourage them into pathways towards higher-level studies such as apprenticeships and traineeships.
- Combine 'vocational tasters' with English language support.

Community attitudes

- Showcase the achievements of successful CaLD graduates to promote community awareness (and prospective employer awareness).
- Promote clear pathways to employment, and assist with the transition from training to the workplace.

Employer/trainer attitudes

- Develop stronger relationships between CaLD communities and providers, and encourage providers to work with CaLD businesses.[18]
- GTCs/ GTSs should be encouraged to target CaLD applicants (currently a higher proportion is employed by the private sector than by GTCs).

Skills recognition and qualifications upgrading

- Improve qualifications assessment procedures (timeliness; practicality; cost; inter-sector and cross-government collaboration; linking with visa application systems; State based; clarity and simplicity; transparency).
- Improve pathways to upgrading overseas qualifications.
- Acknowledge existing vocational skills (Recognition of Prior Learning).

Structure of training/learning environments

- Engender greater flexibility in apprenticeships and traineeships.
- Provide integrated English language support linked to training (e.g., by using team teaching between vocational and ESL teachers).
- Acknowledge and address cultural and gender issues within training and work environments.
- Ensure teachers understand issues faced by apprentices and trainees (cultural, language and settlement), and who are, in turn, able to explain Australian cultural and professional values and practices. Professional development (of teaching staff and employers) in cultural competence should be an ongoing focus.
- Include work experience in a range of VET programs (on-the-job training) so those from CaLD backgrounds can attain a realistic understanding of the Australian workplace and work culture at an early stage (as well as develop specific skills).
- Adapt competencies to recognise cultural diversity, and include culturally-specific competencies, where appropriate.
- Use 'plain English' in recruitment and course material, and remove unnecessary jargon.

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[18] The GTCs consulted by the ATEC (2000) identified the need to work further with host employers to broaden the base of employers of CaLD backgrounds who are willing to take on apprentices and trainees. However, the GTCs also raised concerns about the investment of time that such an exercise would require, and about the potential difficulties that might arise as part of such negotiations. These difficulties included racism, cross-cultural misperceptions and apprehensions about communication difficulties and cultural differences, and a general lack of interest, on the part of host employers.

- Implement culturally relevant assessment strategies and instruments within courses.
- Use interpreters to assess competencies.

Systemic Issues

The following issues were identified as concerns requiring creative strategies.

- The need for retraining of retrenched older workers from non-English speaking backgrounds.
- The issue of cost (fees plus the opportunity cost of lost earnings), particularly for older workers supporting families. Child care issues are a particular barrier, due to difficulties of access and cultural differences in childrearing practices.
- The need to acknowledge the further time (and therefore expense) required for employers to work with trainees and apprentices from NESB.
- Compounded barriers for those most disadvantaged (e.g., NESB migrants with little labour market and training background and English skills).
- Challenging the assumption that 'one size fits all', as significant differences exist between, and within, groups.

2.10 Conclusion

There are continuing and significant access issues for people from particular CaLD backgrounds to VET, despite their disproportionately high rate of uptake of tertiary education overall. These can be classified, using the traditional dichotomy of reasons to explain migrant movements, as a combination of 'push' and 'pull' factors – those that push migrants out of various training opportunities, and those that pull them to undertake other activities. The push factors include lack of recognition of qualifications and previous skills, lack of English skills, the low levels of income available under such schemes, the culture of the educational and work environment, a general lack of information about options and ultimate opportunities, emotional factors (being disheartened), cultural factors and lack of social capital. Factors that pull migrants to undertake other activities (including employment or higher education such as university) include income, status, cultural factors and social capital.

Future strategies for addressing the access issues of people from CaLD backgrounds would ideally draw on the best practice strategies identified in this review, that is, attention should ideally be paid to the targeted promotion of the apprenticeship and traineeship system to CaLD communities, and to CaLD businesses. Also, GTSs and RTOs should ideally be encouraged to play a key role in the recruitment, placement, support and retention of apprentices and trainees from culturally diverse backgrounds.

In light of the foregoing findings, which were largely based on Eastern States research, the project team set out to investigate the issue of the under-representation of people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships, specifically addressing knowledge about these options, potential barriers to participation and retention, and possible strategies for overcoming these barriers, by consulting members of CaLD communities, relevant stakeholders, and existing apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds.

3   Community Views

While we have spoken with a diverse array of CaLD community groups, a number of common themes have emerged as a result of this. Community members largely conducted the focus groups with people from CaLD communities, in order to ensure people were comfortable providing information (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1995). While the coverage of CaLD communities is not exhaustive, with a deliberate oversampling of members of new and emerging communities, the level of consensus about the major issues was such that it was felt that more groups would not add to the knowledge already gained. As such, we feel that accurate accounts of the current knowledge about, and barriers to, accessing apprenticeships and traineeships among culturally diverse groups in WA have been attained.

3.1   The Sample

Because of the different issues affecting each group, and the distinction clearly made by our participants, we have split the findings into two categories: new migrants (recent arrivals, including Humanitarian, Sponsored, Business or Skill stream migrants) and second generation CaLD (which includes mostly first and second generation children of migrants). The new migrants category contains participants from the following ethnic or national groups: Sudanese, Congolese, Liberian, Iraqi, Eritrean, Sikh and El Salvadorean. In addition, there were three groups of parents (all first generation migrants) from the former Yugoslavia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. Their perspective was considered to be particularly important, given their stakeholder position and hence important influence on the decision-making of young people. The second generation CaLD category contains participants from the former Yugoslavia, Iran, Sri Lanka, Malaysia/Singapore; and two mixed groups of ten, one of which included young people from the Office of Multicultural Interests Ethnic Youth Advisory Group (refer to Table 4).

However, we have been unable to proceed with Chinese, Filipino and Ethiopian groups, and two Iraqi groups, due to scheduling problems with the community contacts who had originally agreed to run the groups. Attempts were made to arrange consultations with other ethnic groups by these were not successful.

Table 4: Demographics for CaLD focus groups

Group	n	Age	Gender	Self-identified ethnicity	Time in Australia
Iranians	5	17-19	M: 100%	Persian; Iranian	11-17 years
Former-Yugoslavs: young people	5	16-21	M: 100%	Serbian; Bosnian	6-12 years
Former-Yugoslavs: parents	4	42-50	F: 100%	Serbian; Bosnian	6-12 years
Sudanese	10	15-23	M: 100%	Bantu; Nilotic-Luo; Nilo-Hamite; Nuba	4 months – 3 years
Congolese	10	21-40	F: 20% M: 80%	Temini; Sudanese; Mandingo; Bembe; Nouba	4 months – 19 months
Malaysian: parents	7	38-44	F: 57% M: 43%	Chinese	1–20 years
Malaysian/Singaporean: young people	5	15-16	F: 100%	Malaysian-Chinese; Singaporean-Indian; Singaporean-Chinese	50% 1st gen. (5–14 yrs) 50% 2nd gen.
South Americans	3	31-52	F: 66% M: 33%	El Salvadorean	14-22 years
Sri Lankans: parents	11	43-55	F: 45% M: 55%	Sinhalese; Sri Lankan	5-15 years
Sri-Lankans: young people	12	16-22	F: 67% M: 33%	Sinhalese; Sri Lankan; Australian-Sri Lankan	5-17 years
Mixed Group 1	10	16-27	F: 70% M: 30%	Somali; Serbian; South Sudanese; Vietnamese; Polish; Indian; Indonesian; Jewish	60%; 1st gen. (3–16 yrs) 40% 2nd gen.
Mixed Group 2	10	18-39	F: 70% M: 30%	South African; Timorese-South African Italian; Aboriginal; East Timorese-Swiss; Maori; Icelandic; Afro-American	20% 1st gen. (7-19 years) 80% 2nd gen.
AMEP 1	2	22-25	M: 100%	Burundi; Kissi	8-9 months
AMEP 2	2	27-37	M: 100%	Iraqi; Eritrean	12-13 months
Sikhs	10	17-48	F: 36% M: 64%	Indian	3-22 years

3.2   Methodology

A targeted 'snowball sampling' method (Babbie, 2005) was used for the focus groups. Members of the research team approached people from CaLD communities with whom they had had previous contact and asked if they would be willing to organise and conduct the groups, in return for payment. Each of the focus group facilitators then contacted the research team when they were ready to proceed. Focus groups took place in people's homes or other familiar locations (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Members of the research team did not have contact with most of the participants. This methodology should have made people feel more relaxed and open in their responses, as all were known to the facilitators (and usually each other) (Babbie, 2005).

Focus group facilitators were supplied with the focus group pack (see Appendix A). This included specific instructions on how to run the group, consent forms for participants, a description of the project, acknowledgement of payment forms, general information about running focus groups, demographic forms and a set of questions. The questions focussed on three main areas: knowledge about apprenticeships and traineeships; barriers to entry and completion of apprenticeships and traineeships; and ways to overcome these barriers.

Each participant completed the consent form prior to the session, which indicated that they would be audiotaped but that they would not personally be identified in the research. They completed the acknowledgement of payment and demographics forms after the focus group concluded, and received their payment from the facilitator. The demographics form included questions about their sex, age, migration category, ethnicity, education level and previous work experience, as well as other background information. All questions were 'free response', hence reported ethnicity was self-identified. Digital recorders and microphones were provided to the focus group facilitators, who had an opportunity to practice using them prior to the session. A member of the research team collected all paperwork and equipment some time after the completion of the focus group. Focus group sessions were transcribed in full and then analysed for themes. All groups were conducted in English, expect for the El Salvadorean group, which was in conducted in English and Spanish and was translated and transcribed by the focus group facilitator.

3.3 Major Themes

The following is a summary of the major themes. There were generally high levels of agreement about the major issues in relation to apprenticeships and traineeships for people from CaLD backgrounds within the two categories, many of which were consistent with those previously identified in the literature review. There was one issue that was clearly, and repeatedly, articulated by both sets of community group members: lack of knowledge. New migrants generally had very limited knowledge about any of their training and employment options in Australia. They also found that their lack of cultural knowledge prevented them from accessing further information. Second generation CaLD people had some knowledge of what apprenticeships were but knew virtually nothing about traineeships. They knew that apprenticeships were available in the traditional trade areas (e.g., bricklaying, carpentry) but had less knowledge about options after completion.

The second generation CaLD group had another dominant issue: parental expectations. Most felt it was simply not an option for them because of their parents' aspirations for them to achieve professional careers. Parents felt that apprenticeships and traineeships should only be an option of 'last resort'. Generally, this seemed to be linked to the low status of work within the trades, less so than money. While low wages while training was frequently mentioned, most felt that the income after completion would be as good, if not better, than that obtained with a university degree. However, the work was seen as lower status, and this was clearly a bigger issue than the money.

There was some contention about the issue of 'culture clash', or a lack of cultural fit, for people from CaLD backgrounds. While not explicitly named as such, this was an example of expected discrimination or harassment as a result of cultural differences. The issue was raised in only a few focus groups, often in connection with the lower status of trades, and therefore the people within them. There was disagreement among parents as to whether it would be a problem, with some mentioning the issue of bullying of those who were different. Young people felt that they would be more comfortable in university environments which were perceived as more tolerant of diversity. There was a perception among new migrants that employers would prefer to hire Anglo-Australians, rather than them, providing an explicit example of discrimination.

Below is a summary of the themes from the focus groups for the new migrants and second generation groups (see Table 5). The themes are then enlarged upon, under the three sections relating to the main questions: knowledge of apprenticeships and traineeships, barriers to participation in apprenticeships and traineeships, and suggested solutions for

overcoming these barriers.[19] Quotations illustrating the various themes are provided, including an indication of which group they came from. As much as possible, we have tried to allow those from CaLD communities to speak for themselves.

Table 5: Summary of themes from CaLD community consultations

Group	Knowledge	Barriers	Strategies
New migrants	Lack of knowledge	Poor English skills Limited cultural knowledge- particularly of Australian workplaces Difficulty in having previous qualifications and skills recognised Reluctance of employers to hire CaLD people Some reluctance to engage in further training	Provide more accessible information Practical skills assessment Vocationally specific English programmes
Second generation	Some knowledge Seen as practical	Parental expectations Perception of trades 'Culture clash' in workplace	Provide more specific pathway related information Provide more information to parents and communities Community members to encourage or be 'role models' Change perception of trades School Apprenticeship Link and School-Based Traineeships

3.4 New Migrants

> "Yeah, some of my friends ask me to find job, together... but they don't know where to go and how to do it." (Liberian)

3.4.1 Knowledge about Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Lack of Knowledge

Knowledge about apprenticeships and traineeships was very limited among new migrants; it was not considered an option because most did not really know how to access it. They had a basic understanding of what apprenticeships involved, that is, being trained by a 'master', getting paid while you learn, and that their focus was practical. There was almost no knowledge of what traineeships were, with the concept often confused with the generic 'training'.

> It's like you do training on a particular job from an expert that knows that job and so you're gonna learn it from him. In Africa you kept the same job as that person did. (Sudanese)

> I have very limited information on those two things. All I know is that they get offered if you have been unemployed for a long time. But for when I was younger

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[19] While focus group facilitators were provided with questions about why CaLD people may not complete apprenticeships or traineeships, this issue was not explicitly addressed in the groups. This is most likely because very few knew CaLD people in apprenticeships and traineeships, or they felt that the barriers to entry would also impede completion.

they didn't offer it. You could either go to TAFE if you wanted to or you could go to university. You didn't have that extra bit of education. (El Salvadorean)

If that opportunity of being an apprentice is there then it's really worthwhile but we don't have any information. Yes we have community services and community workers but those words apprenticeships, traineeships we never heard before. (Mixed)

Most of the newly arrived migrants were quite keen to work in the trade areas; they just did not know how to access apprenticeships in these industries. Most of their knowledge came from TAFE English programmes (AMEP, AMES), advertising or high school. The Sudanese and Congolese groups particularly emphasised the 'experience' aspect of having completed training, related to the issue of lack of experience preventing attainment of employment. This aspect of apprenticeships compared favourably to university study, which was seen as theory-based, without the opportunity for experience.

Personally, I want to be a general mechanic, through the apprenticeship, so that in the future I can be automotive technician but I find it very difficult, so I think about it. It would be very important to me. (Congolese)

Yeah, through television and some friends, sometimes they tell me about apprenticeships. Even where I'm working there are some people doing apprenticeships, also traineeships, so through that I got to know about apprenticeships. (Congolese)

They taught me about it at TAFE here and in town also some friends - I told them I did electricity and they say 'yeah you can do apprenticeship also'. (AMEP)

Career counsellor, I heard it from my school, on the internet and the newspaper. People from the government were saying that if you don't get a job you might want to do an apprenticeship or traineeship. (Sudanese)

Okay so the meat of it - while training you are working at the same time, you are gaining the experience at the same time. Having an apprenticeship you have got a lot of the experience needed and you are set. (Sudanese)

3.4.2   Barriers to Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Limited cultural knowledge, particularly of Australian workplaces

The main barrier to apprenticeships and traineeships for new migrants was limited knowledge of them as options and particularly how to access them. This was related to difficulties accessing work generally. New migrants were not sure about how to contact employers, had limited knowledge of Australian workplaces, and were intimidated by using the telephone to communicate. They had difficulty both being understood (due to their accent) and understanding (due to the rapid rate of speech and use of colloquialisms by Australians). It was also reported that they received conflicting advice, or very little help from mainstream support services about accessing training and employment.

If they know that there are apprenticeships it can work. I know people that are within my community that are very good with their hands, they can build things, they can do something that keeps them busy and they can earn money. But apprenticeships and traineeships, we really don't know much about. (Mixed)

Yeah, some of my friends ask me to find a job, together. Most of my friends they really want to do a job but they don't know where to go and how to do it. When they go to find a job, they ask them if they have a driver's license and if they have transport, so that makes it very hard to get job. So they are disappointed - they

> want to do a job but hard to find a job, you no have car, no license, so that is not easy for them. (AMEP)

> Most refugees from a different country, to get to the apprenticeship is very difficult because I've been trying get an apprenticeship for three months but can't get access to it. I told my Job Network I wanted to do it and they said okay you have to find a place and then we'll tell them to get you in for apprenticeship, but it's very difficult. Sometimes we see on the news the government is complaining that Australians they don't want to get into apprenticeships but that's not true, we want to get to it but we don't know how to get to it. They tell you to go this way then we go that way and that's not the way to go, you have to come back that way, and that means you get discouraged from traineeship so it's very difficult. (Congolese)

> I don't have any communication with employers, if any employer wants to offer me an apprenticeship I'm waiting for that chance. Any information is wanted. (AMEP)

> I applied for jobs by phone and I found that not easy, so I stopped searching by phone and I'll get onto writing, maybe that's better. (AMEP)

There was also a degree of misinformation about apprenticeships and traineeships. Where people had heard of traineeships they saw them as of very short duration (months) or confused them with training or TAFE courses. There was a common perception that people could be 'dropped' during their apprenticeship, or straight after, because they would no longer be funded. The Sudanese group were particularly concerned that apprentices would have to buy their own tools (which they felt was a major barrier, and unfair in comparison to other types of employment).

Poor English skills

English was considered a major issue by most newly arrived participants (and by employers and those who work with new migrants). However, there was some disagreement (especially within the Congolese group), with others believing certain jobs, including 'practical' apprenticeships and traineeships should not require much English (see section on Reluctance to engage in further training). This was also consistent with the findings of Miralles (2004).

> Most of the problem is the language. There are some who can speak English they speak enough but they find Australian English very complicated. Sometimes you have to be very careful, for example, the younger people are different. It is very difficult in the first few days, how they pronounce everything, so for myself I take a long time. The older ones come and say 'Ah your English is good' but the younger ones say 'no sorry', so you ask them a question and they say 'don't understand don't understand' so you say 'that's okay that's okay', that's a big problem for overseas people. (AMEP)

> I am concerned because the most important thing is for most people who come here is the language, because the language is the most important thing. (Congolese)

> I think the big thing is, for me, apprenticeship is not something that you need language for, it's something you are going to do practically. I'm not sure I can see that I need language before I can do the job like construction, mechanic or something. All these jobs are something that require physical strength and skills, so I don't think language is the big answer. (Congolese)

Difficulty in having previous qualifications and skills recognised

Most participants who had previous qualifications and skills reported difficulty in getting these recognised. (However, this was not an issue for those who came as Business or Skilled migrants; the Malaysians, Sri Lankans and Sikhs.) Some had dealt with the

Overseas Qualification Unit (OQU), and most found out about OQU requirements during their English studies at TAFE. Others participants had skills but no paperwork. Most felt that their existing skills were not valued by those they came in contact with, which led to frustration and resentment. They felt as though they were 'losing time' when they had waited so long for their new life and were eager to begin it. It was felt that the recognition system relied too heavily on documentation, which refugees were often unable to provide. For some skills recognition would have provided credit towards a qualification, while for others it would have provided equivalency certification, allowing them to work immediately.

> Maybe I will do any certificate in my specialisation - mechanical automotives certificate, just to have a chance for find a job, not for the experience because I'm sure I have enough experience for my teacher's job, because I already have a diploma in automotives and I have bachelor degree in mechanical engineering. But I have to do some certificate here just to say I have some degree from Australia. I think that's the problem in Australia because they don't equalify any degrees from overseas, I don't know why, but I think maybe if the system is changed it would be better. (Iraqi)

> The fact is that it took eight years for me to find out how I can work as a teacher here. I didn't get proper information for eight years. They said you are a teacher that's fine, however, you don't have any experience as a teacher in Australia. So I spent seven years working as a teacher's assistant doing everything for people who had less education than myself. There wasn't anyone in social security to tell me 'look you should go to recruitment centre, or education department, that's the place which you should go'. I found it out after eight years, and that's not fair. (formerYugoslav)

> You have to be skilled. They only take the cream from the overseas people to come in. (Malaysian)

> A larger problem for many people is that they have qualifications in their own country but because of the war they don't have them when they come here. You present here, you say 'I did this in many companies' and they ask you 'do you have documents' you say 'I don't have it'. Until we can get it, we can't get job, then the job you will get will not be a good job, it will be stressful and hard, a job where you have no skills. (AMEP)

> Oh and the documents they like. When you come from Africa people think you have skills? No they kind of thinking more in papers rather than what stuff you have what you can do. (Sudanese)

There was one participant who had had success getting his qualifications recognised; he had a detailed certificate listing all the courses he had undertaken during a three year electrical qualification in Ethiopia. However, he had been told he needed to do an apprenticeship but did not know how to find an employer to take him on.

> And I did a training course, I studied in Ethiopia three years in electrical and I graduated, you can see here (*shows certificate*) it was 1999 … I was studying here, then last term (*TAFE counsellor*) told us how we can transfer the overseas document with the Overseas Qualifications Unit. I came to her and I show her my documents. (AMEP)

> I don't have any employer communication - if any employer wants to offer me an apprenticeship I'm waiting for that chance. Any information is wanted. (AMEP)

Reluctance of employers to hire CaLD people

Some participants felt that employers would rather hire less experienced Anglo-Australians than CaLD people. This was a clear perception of discrimination based on their visible difference and accent and highlighted the difficulty in finding an employer willing to accept someone from a CaLD background as an apprentice or trainee. In some cases, employers were reported as rejecting CaLD people due to not having experience in an Australian workplace. Several people also mentioned that others seemed to assume they were incapable because of their accents. Universities were contrastingly perceived as more accepting of diversity, and entry is based on merit not an individual's decision.

> The first thing is experience, they want someone who has worked in some place before. I have ten years experience overseas and anybody who comes with just a Certificate I from Australia they will prefer to me and this the problem. I can work with this model and at the same time I can learn the new things, it is not difficult, but I think when they listen to or when they read my resume they stopping something. (AMEP)

> And also we have to consider the attitude of those who provide apprentices as to why migrant youth are not entering. I know a friend who has been working for more than five years as a mechanic before. He has been around up and down trying to get a place but it is very difficult for him. Now he has given up and that's it. We have also to consider the attitude of those who provide apprenticeships - they are human beings but they have different attitudes to different type of people so that could be one of the reasons as well. (Sudanese)

> It's almost like discrimination is a part of life because almost everywhere you go you find racist people, and other people too, so it's kind of normal. (Sudanese)

> I remember the experience that I had at the school when I applied for the home economics assistant's job. I put in a formal application with my resume and all. I am black, older and my English, my accent, let's just say that I don't speak it properly - she gave the job to a kitchen hand woman with no qualification, with nothing. Why? Because she was white and spoke English fluently. That was obvious. At the end of the term the woman was resigning because she couldn't do it. (El Salvadorean)

> But that's it, racism is in many things, in everything. People say it isn't but it is, from the moment one starts speaking with the little accent that one has, it doesn't make sense. The woman who was there said to me 'Ah (*name*) I'm very surprised with your resume' and I thought to myself 'and what do you think that because I clean shit I have shit here (*pointing to her head*)?' (*Laughs*) but that's what happens, because they look at you for the kind of work you do. If I do it it's because I can't do some other job because nobody is going to offer me any other thing. (El Salvadorean)

> Most of the universities' atmospheres are more friendly than as you say the places for apprentices because you have a lot of kinds of people there, international students or whatever there (Sudanese)

Some reluctance to engage in further training

Some participants reported that other CaLD people they knew were reluctant to engage in long-term training (such as a three or four year apprenticeship) because of an eagerness to get on with their 'new lives'. This was related to the issue of 'lost time', and having spent sometimes years in refugee camps. They wanted to start work and begin acquiring all the trappings of an Australian life. Many just wanted to work, and often left English programmes as soon as they found employment. This was particularly an issue for the men, who found the physical inactivity of not working harder to cope with than the women did, and who often had families to support (either in Australia, refugee camps overseas or in their country of origin).

He began to get more cleaning jobs and he liked the money and he didn't want to do anything else. He come from a country where you might never have a car and here you have the means to be able to buy a car and he wanted his own car and he had to work. (El Salvadoran)

One of the other things is because we were studying in Africa before coming here, it's like starting over again. Learning English, learning the system, it's like you going to school over here in this different kind of way of education so it's like you're starting over again. So it is like you've wasted time back there and you're still studying another way how to be in life. It's so hard. (Sudanese)

You have to make the money to feed your family, if go do an apprenticeship, which takes about two years, by that time they'll all be dead *(general laughter)*. (Malaysian)

Most of the people want happiness and so when they come from their country that is a poor country, when they get to here they see 'I get a job I have a wonderful life' then they start working. (AMEP)

3.4.3   Suggested Strategies

Provide more accessible information

Given the reported limited knowledge of the participants, the most commonly suggested solution by new migrants was to increase the amount of information available, or at least make it more accessible to CaLD community members. The suggested avenues for information were: DIMIA (both here and in country of origin, before immigration), TAFE, Centrelink, Job Network, Migrant Resource Centres and other agencies that have contact with new migrants, and through influential community members.

I think that inadequate information is guiding the whole thing, because people need to be informed what it's about and what you are likely to get after they're through with it. When these things are widely known within the communities, there are individuals who will weigh up their options. (Mixed)

You target careers centres and advisors also, and many CaLD don't know that they have to go the career centre or what is available. CaLD apprenticeships should be included within the careers advice so 'they have this' and 'this is what you need do'. (Sudanese)

If different communities can send someone on behalf of the community and you can give them the information, then the head of the community would be able to inform the people. (AMEP)

What I think now is if I had that information ten years ago when I arrived it would be probably different story. I didn't know if apprenticeship were just for students, teenagers or adults. I had no idea but the thing is that, with newly arrived people, new migrants, it could be worthwhile to actually let them know as soon as possible. (former-Yugoslav)

Those who had been in Australia for a while (the parent groups) felt that staff at Job Network, Centrelink and Migrant Resource Centres were not very knowledgeable about apprenticeships and traineeships, or certainly had not communicated that information to them. The former-Yugoslav group suggested translating relevant information and making it available at Migrant Resource Centres, Community Centres, Centrelink offices and Job Network providers, so that new migrants could access it.

Practical skills assessment

The idea of practical skills assessment appeared in all the focus groups with refugees. (This issue was not discussed by the parent groups; most had come as Skilled or Business migrants, except for the former-Yugoslavs.) Many had had problems getting their overseas qualifications recognised, or did not have any documented qualifications, only skills. Most compared a practical skills assessment to the practical English test that they were given prior to starting their English course. It was accepted that their skills were unlikely to be considered full qualifications but they felt that getting some credit for existing capabilities would mean not having to 'start at the bottom'. This is a particularly important issue when considering the cost of doing training courses with TAFE or private RTOs. As such, it was expected that the practical testing could be followed by shortened apprenticeships (fast-track) or bridging courses to update skills. This was clearly a very important issue, and also a way of moving skilled, experienced mature-aged workers into employment.

> I think that's the problem in Australia, because they don't recognise any degrees from overseas. I don't know why. I think maybe if the system is changed that would be better. For example, this TAFE is for English learning, anyone come to Australia did a test here to qualify his degree in English and they classified him into what English certificate he need to do. If there was a similar system for skills I don't have to lose one or two years studying in something I study before, and I worked a long time in, just to have the certificate so I have a chance to have work in this job. (AMEP)

> If someone has the skills without the documents they can give them a test for what they did. The important thing is that it's practical. If what you are doing is practical, then giving an explanation of what you are doing. If someone asks 'did you do this?', 'yes', 'how long did you do this?', 'alright I will give you a test according to what you did'. Then they can say, 'alright you can do this or you can't' or 'you can start at this level'. Then, when you are working you can get more and more skills, and that can be good thing. (AMEP)

> I think in order to address the apprenticeships issue we need to know how many people of the target group actually have the skills, but need a little bit of bridging, and then some consideration in terms of the time that they would work at apprenticeships. Looking at the community as a whole, looking at people who have skills that just need something that can bridge those skills, so they can do one year of an apprenticeship or a one year diploma to bring it up. (Mixed)

Vocationally specific English programmes

There was conflict in the Congolese focus group over the importance of English to being able to complete an apprenticeship. While some maintained that English was required in order to understand the employer and trainer, others felt that more practically based jobs should need only limited English. A solution to this was the provision of vocationally specific English programmes, these were imagined as being undertaken while working, and would address the issue of the desire to start earning money, whilst learning English relevant to work (an idea which was also supported by most of the key informants interviewed).

> What am I saying is language is not a big issue. What we can do, for example, for a carpenter or butcher or constructor, simply we can name it 'pathway' that means that you can bring some classes to teach that kind of English for that job. Like now I am learning English like I use at home but where I want to do this specific course, I can learn specifically for that job. (Congolese)

There were a few other less common suggestions. A young man who had failed a mathematics test, and therefore had not been accepted into an apprenticeship suggested

preparatory classes before aptitude testing. Another suggestion was speciality courses to tap into existing skills within the community, focusing on valuing existing knowledge, rather than bringing people up to Australian standards. The Sudanese group supported the idea of some apprenticeship places being available only to CaLD people, so that they would not have to compete against "the natives". A few people suggested having a central register that migrants and employers could access when looking for apprenticeships and apprentices.

Work experience

The idea of organised work experience was not explicitly raised by participants, who may not have been aware of the concept. However, it seems an obvious way to get around the issue of lack of knowledge of, and experience in, Australian workplaces. Facilitated, structured work experience would also provide opportunities for new migrants to improve their English through interaction, and there is the potential to improve employer and community attitudes towards CaLD people, as well as provide an introduction to the 'world of work' in Australia.

3.5 Second Generation CaLD

> "Sri Lankans I think are a people who value education. The reason they have come here is for a better life a better education and also a better education for their children." (Sri Lankan Parent)

3.5.1 Knowledge about Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Some knowledge

Most second generation CaLD people had been exposed to information about apprenticeships and traineeships through their high school, where it was offered as an option (although most saw it as a 'last resort'). Apprenticeships were generally characterised as practical, labouring work and "getting paid while you learn". Trades were also seen as "hard work" and "dirty". Their knowledge about traineeships was more limited (one participant made a distinction based on on-the-job training) but most assumed they were the same or confused traineeships with training and/or TAFE.

> You start an apprenticeship when you're in Year Ten. You don't get paid much, something like ten dollars an hour, full-time work. At the end you get a skills accreditation or something, and it can be at TAFE. That's all I know about apprenticeships. (Mixed)

> That's pretty much what I knew, mainly sort of associated it with the trades sort of labour work rather than uni. (Mixed)

> Apprenticeship I think is where you have a kind of a deal with a company or an organisation, you can work for them at the same time learning all the skills, learning about the same things. A traineeship, I think, is where you get trained by the company, rather than being trained at uni or at TAFE. (Sri Lankan)

> Basically it's just like another way of getting a job. You don't really have to go study for it; you just get trained on the spot, while you're getting paid for it. Just learn as you go and you're making money while you're doing it, which is what attracts most people to it. (former-Yugoslav)

> And it's also like my Mum really hinted to me that a trade was dirty and you've gotta work a lot harder and stuff. (Iranian)

Seen as practical

One of the main features of apprenticeships mentioned was their practicality. This was also seen as one of their benefits, primarily for those people who did not like to study or were not interested in the theory based study presumed to be done at universities. There was also acknowledgement in many of the groups about the ease of getting work in the trades due to the widely discussed skills shortages.

> I think it's a lot more hands-on as compared to like say uni and things like that. With apprenticeships you're, you know, doing the work the way they do it in industry. (Sri Lankan)

> They do a lot more practical work than like they do at school, where it's mainly theory and stuff, but apprenticeship they do just do practical. (former-Yugoslav)

> I think that uni seems to be very theoretical and I think like that's definitely like a plus for apprenticeships and things like that, where you sort of do it the way industry does it, so I think that's important. (Sri Lankan)

> I was just thinking when I was leaving school there was TAFE, which would lead on to an apprenticeship, or going to uni, but I chose uni because it was more academic and that appealed to me more, rather than being out in a workplace straight away. (Mixed)

> It depends at lot on the way people learn as well so, with my brother he had problems around Year Ten and wanted to drop out of school. It wasn't because he wasn't doing well, it was just because he found it boring, so for him it wasn't the way he preferred to learn because he's very good with his hands and he's quite creative in the way he thinks and learns. It was only when he got involved in the aviation programme and changed to something he was really interested in, and started doing additional work that was a bit practical was he really motivated to stay at school, and that that then led on to him doing an apprenticeship. (Mixed)

3.5.2 Barriers to Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Parental expectations

The most clearly articulated reason for second generation CaLD people not to do apprenticeships and traineeships was because their parents had higher expectations for their future. Apart from some of the former-Yugoslav group (one was doing an apprenticeship and two were in TAFE), all the participants were planning to attend university, with a few already there. Parental expectations were seen as having two main sources. One was that they had sacrificed a lot to come to Australia and now they wanted their children to succeed (a phenomenon seen in past migrant generations as well). The second source of this expectation was that parents often had high levels of education and/or professional careers, and expected their children to do at least as well educationally as they had done. (In some cases parents had come as Skilled or Business professionals, in others they had had high status in their country of origin but been forced to flee.). These high expectations are consistent with previous findings (e.g., Khoo et al., 2002).

> I think parents have expectations. Leaving their home country and leaving their family and their friends to come here and give us better opportunities, better education, they want what's best for us. For a migrant to come here in the first place you have to be skilled, you have to already have maybe a university degree or something before you can come into Australia. (Malaysian/Singaporean)

In general I think with the children of migrants, there's a perception that their parents came to this country to give them more opportunity and they usually say that they could do a trade back at home, and that's not really the kind of mentality of second generation migrants. (Mixed)

It's not really been an option, because of the language your parents use as well; 'when you're older', 'when you're in university', and 'when we're old you can look after us', things like that. It's just expected you will do well in school and you will enter university and you will qualify in a profession. (Sri Lankan)

I think for me it's prestige because Iranian people are very competitive, that's actually why they come here, so all Iranian people want you to become a doctor. I was interested in joining the Air Force, but my Mum was like 'oh nah you don't want to do that' and I said 'I'll still go to university and all that' but she still wasn't feeling fond of it so I think I'm just going to become an engineer. She still brings up being a doctor every now and then. (Iranian)

We felt completely underestimated when we came to Australia. We don't want that to happen to our kids, because I want my kids to be respected. This is in our minds, that university gives you respect and I don't want my kids to be a servant in this country, so I'll do everything to make sure they get an education. (former-Yugoslav Parent)

CaLD parents were also reported as having a lot more control over their children, who remained dependent until an older age, in comparison to mainstream Australians. Starting an apprenticeship before the age of 18, or even older, may be difficult for CaLD young people because it requires a degree of independence they may not have.

Something else, a major thing with CaLD you haven't said but maybe we should acknowledge that your parents always have the final say regardless of the age you are, as long as you live with them in their house you thought of as a child so you never grow up (*general laughter*) or maybe until you get married and you have your own children you're not, you might be grown up but you're still a child to some extent (*laughs*). (Mixed)

The cultural thing definitely exists. It's a norm to say that 'you have to go to university', whereas with some of my Australian friends it's not such a big deal. It's more like do that if you feel that's what you want to do whereas it's not an option for us. It's not 'if you feel like that's what you wanna do', you just don't do it. (Mixed)

Perception of trades

A large part of parental opposition to apprenticeships, and VET generally, was reportedly due to the lower status of the trades in comparison to the careers likely to result from university study. This was partly due to the lower value placed on trades by the general community in Australia, but also due to the lesser status of these occupations in their country of origin. However, even the European migrants who came from countries where trades were seen as an equally valued alternative to professions adopted the more negative attitude seen among the broader Australian community. While a few reported lower likely earnings as an issue, others felt that some trades could lead to high wages, often quickly (although the Malaysian/ Singaporean group reported wages in the trades were low). The main issue, however, was prestige, with both the occupations associated with trades and the individuals who went into trades seen as lower status, in comparison to university.

There is a social stigma attached to doing apprenticeships. (Sri Lankan Parent)

I think an unattractive quality is the lack of significance in society. If you're a bricklayer and you're talking to someone, and they say 'whatta you do?', and

you're like 'I'm a bricklayer', and they're like 'Oh I'm a doctor', I think the bricklayer would automatically feel less significant than the doctor in the society. (Iranian)

And also sort of a something you get from your parents and society and stuff. I want to go to uni to be better educated and be sort of put on the on the track for an area of life. There's just something about going to TAFE which is associated with a sort of sort of lesser standard of education. (Mixed)

Most of my friends, they're Asians, all guys, but they all do TAFE, and they're all dole bludgers now. (Malaysian/Singaporean)

Where most of our parents come from there is a huge gap between the people who are the mechanics and them. When you're over there and you take your car to a mechanic, you're not taking it to someone who is like you, generally speaking, you're taking it to someone who is much, much lower, and for your parents at least, when you come over, that's the perception, that those in trades and stuff are all the poorer people so from that perspective that's really an issue. (Mixed)

Parental responses also reflected their expectations and their undervaluing of the trade areas and VET. Virtually all parents wanted their children to pursue higher education; this was usually reported in a way that suggested it was in the child's best interests. However, most also felt that their children wanted to go to university, and that they would not be happy with the lower status of work in the trades. It was expected that children would want to have at least the equivalent education level of their parents.

I would like my child to aspire to something more than that. (Sri Lankan Parent)

Because of our cultural values we want to encourage our kids to aim for higher. (Malaysian Parent)

Australian people think that this [trades] is a professional job but Singapore and Malaysia people think that this is a shit job. (Malaysian Parent)

They are all already ambitious, they see their parents in high positions and they want to be like them usually. (Sri Lankan Parent)

My son has his own plans for the future, to be a pilot, so personally I did not know about apprenticeships, it wasn't an option for my son. My friends said usually people with a bachelor's degree expect from their own kids to do the same. (former-Yugoslav Parent)

We all want our children to finish university, to get an education, because we believe that with a degree you can get a good job. (former-Yugoslav Parent)

Even in Australia, I'm not seeing people going into Geelong Grammar or King's College doing apprenticeships' jobs, so you can see the social divide there right now. If people who have the buying power want other people's children to do this they should set an example and say 'people who have the buying power, their children are doing this', so as with lots of things the people in power also have to lead by example. (Sri Lankan Parent)

CaLD communities generally saw apprenticeships and traineeships as a last resort option (however, most of the parents said that their children would never be in that situation). This was based on the perceived lower status of the trades in comparison to university study, but was also an issue of 'face' for the parents. A number of young people described their parents as competitive, hence having their children attend university and acquire high status jobs was important to their status within their CaLD community.

Our children fortunately they have little bit of gene from parents so they are doing well but if they didn't have that, then we would have no option, we would have to send them through that life. (Sri Lankan Parent)

> Very few people around my age have done apprenticeships or are doing apprenticeships, but there's always been this perception that they're somehow inferior to the rest of the community, that there's something about them, that they weren't capable, that they weren't intellectual enough to go to uni, so that's the perceptions of the parents' generation I think. (Mixed)

> They compare, they're competitive. Asians are competitive (*general laughter*). We have to be the best, that's very cocky but it's true. They'll go up to their friends, the other parents, and they'll be like 'my daughter's going to law school'. (Malaysian/Singaporean)

> It's just the expectation, not only your parents but other people's parents as well. Families in my community definitely compare (*general agreement*) and they're all like 'yeah my son's better than yours'. (Mixed)

There were some differences between cultural groups in terms of how acceptable it was to do an apprenticeship or traineeship. The South-East Asian groups particularly mentioned that only university was acceptable for their families but participants from European and Middle-Eastern backgrounds mentioned family members undertaking trades or TAFE training. This was most likely linked to differences in the valuing of trade occupations in their country of origin, but may also have been the result of socioeconomic status differences. However, there was a sharp gender difference. All the people mentioned as undertaking apprenticeships, and most of those at TAFE, were males. This may be due to fewer traditional trade areas being seen as appropriate for women, and reflects a general community trend. It was also suggested by people in some groups that those CaLD people who had been here a long time or who were more integrated into the mainstream Australian community would be more likely to allow their children to do apprenticeships and traineeships.

> I actually know a lot of people who are doing apprenticeships and stuff, like electricians, and it's not that looked down upon because, for me, I'm like 'ok it's good you're doing something with yourself at least' (*general laughter*), but there's a lot of Iraqi mechanics and electricians, and stuff. (Mixed)

> It comes also to your culture because it depends a lot on what happens back home, what's seen as good or not good back in your home country, and I think also that has an impact on getting information or the lack of information. (Mixed)

> I don't think I know an Iranian girl that hasn't gone to uni. If they don't get in they repeat Year 12. (Iranian)

> I reckon that's kind of different for me because I think it depends on individual people's backgrounds as well, because if your whole family are all university graduates you're kind of born and brought up with the sense that you have to go to uni as well, those expectations. But like she said, sometimes when people have gone to TAFE it becomes normal and it's easier to accept that way. (Malaysian/Singaporean)

> It depends on the family itself, because if the family only promotes professional studies then obviously the children will only be influenced to that life, so the culture we are part. Sometimes the children are influenced by the parents, and sometimes by society at large. (Sri Lankan Parent)

It was also felt that those from second generation CaLD backgrounds may not want to pursue careers in these areas because of their previous association with new migrants. Having children who 'moved up' in society was seen as part of adapting to the new culture, effectively breaking ties with the stereotype of the new migrants who do the jobs that no one else wants to do.

> I think maybe some people just don't want to go to TAFE and do labouring jobs because migrants used to do that. They want to come a step up and they want to be professionals now. (Mixed)

> Usually as a foreigner, or a non-Australian, you really need a good profession if you wanna have respect, because otherwise people may consider you as just leakage in the economy or something. (Iranian)

'Culture clash' in the workplace

This issue did not arise in all groups and when it did, it was often contentious. Some felt that people from CaLD backgrounds would not fit in to the type of workplaces associated with apprenticeships and traineeships, which were stereotyped as 'masculine' and 'blue-collar'. As a result, people from CaLD backgrounds may face discrimination and harassment in the workplace as a result of their cultural or language differences. This mostly seemed to relate to new migrants, with the children of migrants seen as having fewer problems. There was much disagreement about the issue among the Sri Lankan parent group, whereas the Malaysian parents all agreed that their children would not be discriminated against if they were to go into trades. The Sikh group was also concerned that this would be a major issue.

> I won't agree with that because when you look at the social fabric, the people who are doing that, I'm not putting them down, those kind of people who are doing the tradesman's work have a certain tendency to bully someone. Even within older, more mainstream, they bully people, so with the first generation migrant I'm sure they will laugh at that person. I have noticed this in the workplace, surely they will laugh at the way this person talks, the accent and if you are in that thing you know there's no way out. There are certain apprentices who were asked to go home because they could not relate to people of other cultures because they become a target for bullying. (Sri Lankan Parent)

> I think that most of the people that do become mechanics and people that do trades are more 'Australian' and more the kind of person that has a beer now and then. The foreigner, especially Middle-Eastern people, they're not like that at all. There'll be this big cultural clash in the workplace which will make you not want to become an apprentice even more. I think that's got a lot to do with work, with who your workmates are your colleagues are. I think I'd be fine on an apprenticeship, because I was brought up in Australia and I did take in more Australian culture than Iranian culture (*laughs*). I'm more Australian if you will, culturally, but it's not the same for other people, especially those that have just come over. (Iranian)

> Something similar too is if you're working, we are always conscious who we work with because we have come across so many people who really make you doubt your ability to be doing what you're doing. If I can see an African person or anyone else working together with another one in a friendly environment that would encourage everyone to go and work. (Mixed)

> Just generally the stigma that other people might have towards a particular CaLD group. People might think they're not responsible, that they don't have the necessary skills to go into the apprenticeship. (Sri Lankan)

3.5.3   Suggested Strategies

Provide more specific pathway related information

Most participants felt they were able to access information about apprenticeships, through schools, advertising and people they knew, although their knowledge of traineeships was very limited. They felt that more specific pathway related information should be provided so that people knew what kinds of areas they could do apprenticeships and traineeships in and what opportunities they would have after they were done. Some felt that the jobs were

'dead end' and did not see the options beyond a qualification, although becoming self-employed was mentioned by a couple of participants as a benefit of a trade.

> I think just in general a lot more information out there, advertising, brochures and stuff, just bombarding people with information, basically what the options are, how many different options they can choose, what they can do, what the benefits are compared to going to uni. Give them a lot more information and they'll probably respond. (Mixed)

> I think it's just simply making up our mind and if we can see that that is useful, then that would basically solve of the problem. (Sri Lankan)

> You can have more. After you're finished with your training, successfully, and then maybe you can be your own boss, you can open your own business, you can take your holidays or employ somebody yourself. (Sudanese)

Provide more information to parents and communities

The most common suggestion was to educate parents about apprenticeships and traineeships; what they were, what they involved and what options they provided after completion. Most felt CaLD young people were not in a position to insist on what they wanted, parents had to be convinced. However, in the South-East Asian groups particularly, it was thought unlikely parents would change their minds, unless the child was not able to go to university. It was also believed that with time, as subsequent generations became more integrated into, and accepted by, the mainstream Australian community, that apprenticeships and traineeships would become more common.

> I think for apprenticeships and traineeships to work maybe the parents themselves have to be informed about the training and education system, how it works, we have university, we have TAFE, and we have traineeships and apprenticeships as one of the options. What does it mean? Does it mean their child will have less equal opportunities to someone else? If the parents are more informed and know exactly what it is then this whole problem will go away. (Mixed)

> Our parents don't know anything about apprenticeships, so then if they knew what it was about maybe some of them would actually encourage us to choose that path, but they know nothing, most of our parents have been living here for more than ten years or something like that. (former-Yugoslav)

> Not knowing about apprenticeships is definitely the main reason why it's not taken into consideration when we try to guide our children to choose something for the future (former-Yugoslav Parent)

> I think it's a really good idea the talking to the parents but they also have instilled values in them, and I still think no matter how much education they get on apprenticeships I don't think their values are going to change (*general agreement*). (Sri Lankan)

Community members to encourage or be 'role models'

It was also felt that exposure to people from CaLD backgrounds who had completed apprenticeships or traineeships would encourage people to take part. These role models could speak at schools or community events, and also appear in advertising (which predominately features Anglo-Australians at present). Also, community groups could distribute information, so that doing apprenticeships and traineeships would be seen as accepted by the relevant community.

> There should be figureheads of ethnic origin who are actively driving these things so people and children will be attracted to that sort of thing. (Sri Lankan Parent)

> Maybe using those networks, as in getting people that are working within those community organisations to somehow organise within their communities. If it's coming from someone from the same background you might actually believe that's a good option. (Mixed)

> It would probably make people feel more comfortable talking to someone who's gone through the same situation as they have. (Mixed)

Change the perception of trades

Given the low prestige in which the trades were held many thought that this would have to be changed at a broader community level in order to get CaLD people's views to change. Advertising was seen as the best way to do this, but not exclusively focussed on CaLD people. Other suggestions were an increase in wages during training, to make it a competitive option compared to going straight to work, and recognising high performing apprentices through awards. The Malaysian/Singaporean and Sri Lankan groups suggested bringing the trades into universities.

> They would have to break the stereotype of this being just like a labouring job and that it's actually respected because a lot of people just think 'oh you're a brickie', anybody can do that, but not everyone can be an accountant, they have to actually tell people how it's a lot more prestigious. (Malaysian/Singaporean)

> You don't see them on the TAFE ads or you don't see them on posters or whatever, whereas you look on the news at someone from the medical association, it will be an Indian person or some black or someone from wherever. When you see ethnic people it's not in anything like trade related, it's something other related, and basically that's the reality of it, so at least in the advertising it might be a way to change perceptions. (Mixed)

> If we're talking about advertising, we also have to be quite careful about how these people are targeted because there's this whole element of 'othering' them in the community. If it's aimed specifically at specific ethnic groups, that in itself is kind of saying 'you're different that's why we're targeting you', so I think that also has to be kept at the forefront, even if a campaign was constructed or targeted at more ethnic people, that you're not isolating these people and saying 'oh we want people just from this community'. (Mixed)

School Apprenticeship Link and School-Based Traineeships

Only a few participants mentioned that this was available at their schools, as only a limited pilot programme is currently underway, although School-Based Traineeships have been around longer. However, one of the suggestions of the Sikh focus groups was providing experience in apprenticeships and traineeships during school holidays. Exposing students to workplaces where there are apprenticeships and traineeships would be beneficial in a number of ways, given the issues raised (and not just CaLD students). It would allow a better understanding of these options to develop among students, and in turn, parents. Hopefully, it would reduce the stigma attached to these occupations, among the students, their peers, and the community at large.

3.6   Key Findings

Knowledge

- **Lack of knowledge**. There was limited knowledge about what apprenticeships were and how to access them for new migrants, as well of Australia workplace

culture generally. It was also difficult to access information due to the complexity of the system. Among second generation migrants and their parents there was a lack of awareness about the pathways associated with apprenticeships, and particularly options following completion. There was limited knowledge about traineeships among all groups.

Barriers

- **Discrimination and harassment in the workplace ('culture-clash'):** Many felt employers were unwilling to hire people from CaLD backgrounds and this was usually couched in terms of a lack of cultural-fit, although employers were reported as blaming lack of Australian workplace experience. There was some disagreement, but many thought that those more integrated into Australian society (e.g., second generation) would have fewer problems.

- **Skills recognition:** Many had trouble getting their existing skills and qualifications recognised, which prevented them entering the workforce at an appropriate level. It also made them feel undervalued and created financial problems, both in having to take low skilled work and in having to pay for training to achieve Australian qualifications.

- **Parental expectations:** Most parents had high aspirations for their children's futures, including university study and professional careers. This was seen as due to the sacrifices the parents had made by immigrating to Australia to provide better educational and occupational opportunities. In the case where parents were skilled migrants, high expectations were an instance of status reproduction.

- **Status of trades:** Many saw the occupations associated with apprenticeships and traineeships as being of lower status than those associated with university study. This was a major contributor to parental rejection of these as career options, and was based partly on the lower status of such occupations within the country of origin, but also the attitude within the broader Australian community.

Strategies

- **Increase access to knowledge for new migrants and parents:** Information needs to be made more accessible to new migrants, through its location, promotion and format, and for parents, knowledge about outcomes, particularly career pathways, would be beneficial. CaLD community members should be involved in the dissemination of information.

- **Improve skills recognition process:** The nature of skills recognition needs to be less about qualifications and more practical, holistic and flexible in response to cultural differences. Pathways to accessing skills recognition also need to be simpler and more direct. Flexible gap training should also be available to those whose skills fall short of the relevant competencies.

- **Vocationally-specific English:** This would allow people to work and receive English training tailored for that occupation, overcoming the issues of lack of industry-specific language and literacy, and the problem of leaving English training as soon as one finds work.

- **Raise status of trades:** Efforts focused on the broader Western Australian community would be most efficacious, by encouraging greater participation among all groups.

- **Expand SAL and SBT:** The School Apprenticeship Link and School-Based Traineeships programmes provide students with exposure to workplaces where apprenticeships and traineeships occur, helping to create a norm of participation in these fields.

- **Facilitated work experience:** This would aid in overcoming the barriers of lack of knowledge about the 'world of work' in Western Australia. It would also be beneficial in building wider social networks, which may lead to future employment, as well as increasing societal acceptance of new migrants. However, it would need to be facilitated, given that lack of knowledge and discrimination already act as barriers to gaining employment for this group. This could be done through programmes based on existing TAFE courses.

3.7   Conclusion

Overall, several key themes emerged from the focus groups, in terms of knowledge about apprenticeships and traineeships, barriers to undertaking them, and solutions linked to these issues. The issue of lack of knowledge seems primarily related to issues of access, rather than a dearth of information. As such, alternative methods of communicating with new migrants and second generation migrants and their parents need to considered, such as involving members of CaLD communities in information dissemination, using CaLD role models, and offering information resources in alternative languages. Facilitating structured work experience for new migrants may be a way of overcoming some of the barriers listed, as well as increasing societal acceptance of members of new and emerging communities generally.

Problems with skills recognition are partly related to lack of knowledge about access, but also to the system itself. The Overseas Qualifications unit primarily provides paper-based assessment; practical assessment of competencies requires contact with an appropriate assessment agency, either through Trades Recognition Australia, specific industry regulatory bodies or Registered Training Organisations. In many cases such a process is facilitated by an employer, but there were issues of discrimination, which acted as a barrier to obtaining employment. Following assessment, provision should be made for bridging training to cover any gaps in competencies, rather than seeing it as a 'pass-or-fail' process.

The issue of parental expectations, clearly linked to the lower status of trades compared to university study, was the main barrier to participation for second generation migrants, although discrimination was also perceived by some to be at work here too. Parents should be encouraged to see the trades as a viable option for their children, perhaps through greater exposure to such careers (via general promotion and school-based apprenticeships and traineeships) and greater information about career pathways. It is also likely that, with time, CaLD people will become more integrated into the general community, which will also become more accepting of particular CaLD groups, and hence participation in apprenticeships and traineeships should become more common. However, efforts to improve the status of these occupations as careers among the community generally would facilitate this process and encourage more young people into apprenticeships and traineeships, addressing the existing skills shortages.

Having examined the knowledge and experiences of people from CaLD backgrounds, the next step was to consult with key stakeholders from industry, government and organisations who worked with migrants to study their ideas about the barriers to participation and retention of CaLD people in apprenticeships and traineeships, and, most importantly, what could be done to overcome these.

4   Stakeholder views

Interviews with key informants were the second stage of data collection. The project team tried to sample a wide range of viewpoints from people who serviced the settlement needs of migrants, to Registered Training Organisations, Group Training Schemes and other employers of apprentices and trainees, and people involved with policy direction and strategy implementation in Government. Some informants were concerned with new migrants directly, others with apprentices and trainees. While not all industries were represented, the issues raised, and solutions suggested, should apply broadly across areas.

4.1   The sample

Key informants can be broken into three categories. The first are those who work with new migrants to address their specific needs, including people at Migrant Resource Centres and AMEP/AMES psychologists. Included within this category were also people who helped young people generally to enter employment, such as school career counsellors (from schools with an over-representation of people from CaLD backgrounds), and several organisations which provide links to employers for disadvantaged youth.

The second group consisted of representatives of GTSs, other employers and RTOs (including TAFE). A broad range of industries were covered here, including most of the traditional trades such as metals, engineering, electrical, plumbing, and hospitality and related services, cleaning, and aged care and health services. Those supplying both apprenticeships and traineeships were represented. Some in this group were contacted specifically because of existing programmes that either addressed the issues of CaLD people, or were possible models for adaptation.

The final group includes key informants involved in policy formation and strategy implementation in State Government, and the members of the Reference Group, who provided advice, direction and contacts for the research (but are not included as interviewees). These consultations were important in terms of recognising existing programmes or planned changes which affected the issue of apprenticeships and traineeships for CaLD people.

Interviews with key informants varied in the extent to which they addressed either new or second generation migrant issues, depending on the particular focus of their involvement with apprenticeships and traineeships and/or people from CaLD backgrounds. Some had worked primarily with new migrants, while others, most notably employers, had relatively

little contact with second generation migrants and virtually none with new migrants. However, they were still able to provide important information about their experience with apprenticeships and/or traineeships, and were able to identify some of the barriers within their particular industry. Attempts were made to contact representatives from several other industries, including automotives and retail, which were unsuccessful. Interviews involving more than one person have been counted as one key informant in Table 6; however, 54 people participated in the research interviews in total. When an organisation was a member of more than one category it was counted only once (GTSs were not counted as employers, or RTOs, and one RTO worked with disadvantaged youth).

Table 6: Stakeholder informants

Group	Sub-group	n
People/organisations who work with CaLD and/or young people	Migrant Resource Centres	4
	High school or TAFE counsellors, psychologists or teachers	8
	Groups working with disadvantaged youth	3
RTOs, GTSs and other employers	Registered Training Organisations including TAFE	5
	Group Training Schemes	4
	Employers	4
Government	From DET and other State Government departments	8

4.2   Methodology

A targeted 'snowball sampling' method (Babbie, 2005) was also used for the key informant interviews. Members of the Reference Group provided contacts initially and when further suggestions of relevant individuals or organisations were made in interviews these were followed up. Some also came from cold-calling particular organisations which had been identified as relevant, following on from previous interviews or focus groups. Some informants were personal contacts of members of the research team.

Key informants were approached by a member of the research team, usually by email or telephone. They were given a brief description of the study, told why they, or their organisation, was relevant to the research, and asked if they would be willing to be interviewed. Almost all interviews took place in the participants' workplaces. Informants were given a project description to keep and asked if they would be willing to have the interview audiotaped, under the proviso that both they and their organisation would not be identified in the research. All these participants agreed to be recorded and completed a consent form ensuring anonymity. All interviews were taped using a digital recorder and microphone, then transcribed and analysed for themes. Three participants were unable to participate in an interview due to time constraints, but still wanted to be part of the research. They were asked key questions over the telephone and the interviewer took notes, which were also drawn upon in the analysis.

The questions asked of key informants varied, depending on the role of the individual and their organisation, in regard to both apprenticeships and traineeships and people from CaLD backgrounds. Informants were first asked to describe their role and their organisation. They were also asked why they thought people from CaLD backgrounds were under-represented in apprenticeships and traineeships and in their industry particularly, if relevant. Where they identified barriers, they were asked how these could be overcome. In cases where there was a particular programme within their organisation that was seen as relevant to the research this was also discussed. Finally, participants were asked what specific things DET could be doing to make their work easier (in the case of

employers and RTOs), or to increase CaLD involvement in apprenticeships and traineeships (in the case of organisations who worked specifically with migrants and government policy informants).

4.3   Major themes

The following is a summary of the major themes. There was general agreement about the major issues in relation to apprenticeships and traineeships for people from CaLD backgrounds, and key informants generally produced similar themes as were seen with the community members themselves. Those who worked with new migrants were able to identify more long-term issues than were seen by migrants, such as desire to adapt to the culture. However, the clearest issues identified by many was lack of recognition of overseas qualifications and skills and difficulty in obtaining a placement as an apprentice or trainee, due to discrimination by employers, and the perception that CaLD people would be "too much work". Simplifying and increasing the accessibility of skills recognition and recognition of prior learning were the most cited solutions to low participation by CaLD people, along with convincing employers to take them on as apprentices or trainees.

In the case of second generation migrants the perception of trade qualifications as lower status compared to university was the dominant issue, along with parental expectations clearly linked to this perception. Most felt there needed to be a concerted effort to change the way trade qualifications and vocational education were perceived by the community at large, and recognised that the belief about low status was magnified among people from CaLD backgrounds.

There was some contention about the issue of 'culture clash', or lack of cultural fit, for people from CaLD backgrounds. Some employers believed it was a minor issue, while others emphasised that new migrants needed to be prepared to fit into the existing culture. This was linked to reluctance of employers to hire people from CaLD backgrounds. Those who worked with new migrants saw it as an issue that could be overcome if employers addressed it. The issue was raised in only a few of the consultations with CaLD community members, often in connection with the lower status trades, and therefore the people within them. Such responses were also seen to be a signal of discrimination, and those who worked with new migrants discussed the difficulties those from new and emerging communities especially had in obtaining employment generally.

Most employers reported low levels of applications for apprenticeships and traineeships from people from CaLD backgrounds, of both generations. This was the case, even when larger numbers of the general workforce in their organisation or industry were from migrant backgrounds, such as hospitality and construction. However, both the aged care and health services, and cleaning industries reported high numbers of new migrants, along with mature-aged women. Due to the part-time nature of these industries they were unable to take on as many trainees as they would have liked, because the hours were not available (minimum part-time traineeship hours are 20).

The key themes from the interviews are discussed below, along with quotations illustrating them. Quotes are identified by sub-group, as indicated in Table 7, and where appropriate by industry. Both barriers and suggested solutions for each group (new migrants and second generation CaLD) are outlined. There is also a section dealing with responses to the question of what DET could be doing better in the area of apprenticeships and traineeships generally, and an outline of relevant existing initiatives and programmes.

Table 7: Summary of themes from stakeholder interviews

Group	Barriers	Strategies
New migrants	Limited cultural knowledge, particularly about Australian workplaces Difficulty in having previous qualifications and skills recognised Reluctance of employers to hire CaLD people Not competitive compared to Australian applicants Possible culture clash Difficulties with English Some reluctance to engage in further training Issues with adult apprentices Transport	Practical holistic skills assessment Bridging programmes Centralised careers pathway resources Vocationally specific English programmes Convince employers of benefits Promote the value of a diverse community Facilitated work experience Employment readiness programmes Recognising CaLD as a priority category for funding
Second generation	Perception of trades Parental expectations	Increase knowledge among young people and parents Change perception of the trades School Apprenticeship Link and School-Based Traineeships Moving skilled adults into qualifications
The role of DET in facilitating apprenticeships and traineeships		
Existing Initiatives		

4.4   New migrants

4.4.1   Barriers to Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Limited cultural knowledge, particularly about Australian workplaces

Most of those who worked with new migrants felt that their limited cultural knowledge of how different systems worked in Australia was a major barrier to accessing employment generally. It was likely that new migrants were unfamiliar with many of the types of occupations available in Australia, and also unfamiliar with the way in which people obtain work. This was also seen as a barrier to continuing once they entered work, as misunderstandings or communication issues could lead them to leave. It was also suggested that this limited cultural knowledge may affect their confidence levels, making new migrants reluctant to apply for jobs. Limited knowledge may also limit the options they pursue.

> Their confidence levels are not up there for putting themselves up and out there. (GTS)

> I try and talk about what they're interested in, a lot of them don't really know and they only have interests in what they're familiar with, so for example quite a few will be interested in the aged care course because they've cared for elderly people in the camps in Kenya and they're caring people - they've cared for relatives, they've cared for young children and they know how to do that type of work. (Counsellor/Psychologist)

Difficulty in having previous qualifications and skills recognised

Difficulty in having previous qualifications and skills recognised was considered the major barrier to employment for new migrants. Most informants mentioned this issue, and most felt that it needed to be urgently addressed. The negative consequences of failing to recognise existing qualifications and skills were identified at the individual and societal level. Individuals had to endure complex procedures, found it difficult to access information and often got no recognition or simply gave up, forcing them into lower skilled work. Both Trades Recognition Australia (TRA) and the Overseas Qualifications Unit (OQU) were seen as focussed on paper-based qualifications, and practical testing was only usually available where some form of existing qualification was produced, or employment had been attained. This left new migrants feeling undervalued, and in some cases skilled or independent migrants were reported to have returned to their country of origin. As such, Australia is not taking advantage of existing skilled workers and in some cases is losing them altogether. The issue of qualifications not being recognised also affected subsequent generations, with parents preferring their children achieve university degrees, which are more widely accepted.

> Our system doesn't readily accommodate recognition of their current skills and recognition of their expertise because ours is a qualification based system and if you don't walk in with those qualifications, well then it's not recognised. For the majority of migrants it's about getting employment quickly in order to try and get settled and often they find themselves trapped in low level and low skill jobs, adjusting to a new culture and needing the money. Commonwealth employment support systems are geared to getting a job - any job. (Government)

> I think there's a real issue too for the most disadvantaged people, particularly if they are refugees, where we rely on people having documentation. (RTO)

> It's horrible, it's madness, it is just madness. I had a mate that came over from Yugoslavia - he was a qualified veterinary surgeon, he spent eight years at university studying to become a veterinary surgeon. He came to Australia and he's not allowed to work as a veterinary nurse for Christ's sake. (Employer)

Reluctance of employers to hire CaLD people
Not competitive compared to Australian applicants
Possible 'culture clash'

These three themes tended to be connected, and all seemed linked to discrimination. Obtaining a placement as an apprentice or trainee was clearly perceived as a major barrier.

Many key informants raised the issue of new migrants not being competitive with Australian applicants in getting apprenticeships and traineeships. This was linked to problems with English, lack of cultural knowledge, lack of community networks through which to obtain employment, and also reluctance of employers to hire people from CaLD backgrounds. The reluctance of employers to hire people from CaLD backgrounds, which was reported by people from all key informant groups, was again evidence of systemic discrimination. Most often this was due to concerns about 'culture clash' or it was felt that employers preferred people who could "hit the ground running" (were familiar with Australian workplaces, and would fit in more easily). As these issues contributed to new migrants being seen as a 'risk', employers would be reluctant to hire them generally, let alone on long-term commitments like apprenticeships or traineeships. They were also seen as requiring more work on the part of RTOs or employers to manage them, due to language and cultural knowledge issues.

> There's obviously an employer barrier because there's racial and cultural misunderstandings that create barriers. Some employers are looking for white

Anglo-Saxon males fifteen years of age with five years experience and when faced with someone who is of another race, or another culture, for whom English is a second language, or they may have a different religious background, some of the employers just can't deal with that; they don't even get interviewed. Also, if you had an application from Mustafa or Mohammad as against Mark, the employer will, if they are a white Anglo-Saxon male, they'll be interviewing Mark. (Government)

Out of the few bosses I've had, two were racist (*laughs*). I can't repeat the things I heard them say they were so so low, shocking, shocking. So some people would never employ people with another background. (RTO)

Yes they would [have difficulty getting employed] because they're black, they speak a different kind of English and they don't have the connections that a lot of other people do. (Counsellor/Psychologist)

We have employers who may be willing to hire a person from a non-English speaking background or a recent arrival, but they might be reticent to hire someone who's visibly different or whose accent's a bit too strong, or they have a requirement for prayer five times a day, even if their English is perfect. So there might be people who are willing to take a risk or a perceived risk but they are few and far between. (Migrant Resource Centre)

I just want to talk too about staying in those jobs or apprenticeships and traineeships because I think Australians have quite a rough and tumble sort of a camaraderie at work and that can often be poorly understood by migrants of CaLD background or if you're visibly different. You'll find that they'll take the piss out of someone whose accent's too strong or who looks dark or something like that on the job but it might not be perceived correctly as just a bit of a lark - it might be seen as racism or that Australians can be very bad at making someone feel at home. (Migrant Resource Centre)

Never have enough money to make up for the work involved. (GTS)

Some employers and RTOs disavowed the issue of culture clash, or saw it as an issue only between the person's cultural norms and values and the work tasks they engaged in. Most claimed that their workplaces or training programmes were accepting of diversity, but the issue of tension between different CaLD groups within the workplace was mentioned on a couple of occasions (certainly more often than potential conflict between CaLD and other employees, and was usually characterised by a 'cultural misunderstanding' on the part of CaLD people).

Yeah that's true of some employers who are going to say 'that's too hard that won't work' but when they start losing work because the guy down the road has been employing Korean welders and he's able to make it work, then it's a different thing altogether. (GTS)

Just the cultural requirements, for example, some of the Muslim people and also Indigenous people are not able to do personal care on a particular person, such as a male or female. This relates to the personal care issues I think rather than anything else. (GTS)

There was also an issue for GTSs and some employers that their clients (in the case of GTSs other employers) would not accept new migrants. This was clear evidence of racism; the individuals involved had to be discriminatory in their hiring practices or they would lose work. The concerns that GTSs claimed their clients would have were the same as other employers; that they would require more work and that there may be cultural differences which prevented the CaLD person from fitting into the workplace. Employers were concerned that their clients would not want new migrants to be supplying their services, again due to possible cultural differences and difficulty understanding the CaLD

employee, if they had a heavy accent, or found it difficult to understand Australian English (which tends to be rapid and use colloquialisms).

> I mean that may sound racist but we're a servant to the client and if we go and upset them they just find someone else, it's pretty easy. (Employer)

Difficulties with English

Poor English skills were seen as a major issue by almost all informants, as clearly articulated in the statement by one GTS informant that "language and literacy's the main barrier". Generally, those who worked with new migrants were concerned that they left their English programmes as soon as they got a job, which were often in low-skill areas working with other migrants. As a result their English skills would likely remain at a low level, preventing them from accessing more skilled, better paying jobs. There were also literacy issues, such that some new migrants might speak English very well but not be able to read and write. There were concerns that allowing people to apply for jobs prior to them attaining adequate English language and literacy skills would "set them up for failure", as they were unlikely to last in skilled or white-collar positions or would end up only in low-level jobs. This also had broader implications for their cultural group generally because an employer may be less likely to take on another CaLD person if one was unsuccessful - there was a risk that they would generalise to the whole group.

Most employers and GTSs were concerned about English levels, with some GTSs reporting that they had to send applicants back to TAFE to do more English before they would be able to accept them. Safety was cited as a key issue, if people were not able to understand the hazards that existed in the workplace they put themselves and others at risk. There was also an issue with the extra time that would need to be spent explaining and teaching people how to do things, which was particularly a problem in industries which had stretched resources. However, one informant did not see language as a major barrier, just something that required more work. It seems likely that employers would be more willing to accept this when they are unable to attract enough applicants, which links back to the competitiveness of new migrants compared to mainstream Australians.

> I think it probably is mainly an English issue because all the other stuff you can learn. For example we've got different codes for the cables that is something you can learn in a couple of months I suppose, but if you don't have a grasp of the language then you don't even understand the colours. (Employer)

> So obviously the supervisor has to spend a little bit more time with that person and that's an issue. I don't know whether it affects the others in the team, it might be a cultural thing out in the sheds where you've got nine people that can all speak English fluently and then one person that's sort of behind. (Employer)

> The language is seen as a barrier by the migrants. It's not a barrier. If you can teach someone who's profoundly deaf to become an excellent pastry chef, then you can teach someone who has no English to become a good tradesperson. (GTS)

Some reluctance to engage in further training

As had been expressed in the focus groups, some people who worked with migrants felt that they may be reluctant to engage in further training, due to a desire to get on with their new lives. Refugees had often waited for years in camps before coming to Australia and they were seen as keen to get on with creating a life in Australia, including all the trappings, such as a car, mobile phone, and new clothes and furniture. In some cases they had families to support, either in Australia or in their country of origin. Besides doing English classes, many young people were also encouraged to go and complete high school,

even though they were older than most students. There was a sense of "infantalisation" in the treatment of refugees, which they resisted. Being in a low paid apprenticeship or traineeship may be seen as an extension of this, although others disagreed, believing that as long as people could see that they were working towards something they would be happy to undertake further training.

> They really want to come out here, work hard, make a lot of money and live their lives whereas we're keeping them down or infantilising their experience and themselves, so they're often busting out of the school environment or an English class thinking what am I doing here - I just want to get a job. (Migrant Resource Centre)

> They've come here to gain and they want to show that they can live here. They want to enjoy the parts of the society, the privileges and the trappings and they don't want to be trapped in poverty for year upon year. They want to get on their feet, they want a new car, they don't want just a car and they want really flash clothes, they don't want to just look well dressed. (Migrant Resource Centre)

> I would say that an apprenticeship is not seen in the same category as learning English. Especially with males, they need to be doing things with their hands and they need to be working with their hands and working towards a course - it's very difficult for them to sit in a classroom learning about koalas going up trees and eating gum leaves all day because they want to be out there doing things actively and manually. (Counsellor/Psychologist)

Issues with adult apprenticeships

While some were very positive, two major issues were also raised with regard to adult apprenticeships, financial and status barriers. The major financial barrier was wages. The pay issue was twofold; firstly it was too low for someone supporting a family, with even adult rates below the minimum wage, and secondly, employers in some industries were reluctant to pay adult rates when they could pay less for younger people. This was particularly an issue for the hospitality industry, where most are small businesses with small profit margins.

> We're attracting kids okay but the adult pay rate's not very good. (GTS)

> They're on such low wages for such a protracted period of time. It's a couple of years minimum that they'll be working for so little wages and some of them, they say it really clearly, they just want a job. So putting them into an industry that's going to take them four years to qualify is quite hard. (Migrant Resource Centre)

The issue of status was articulated as a 'loss of face' that may come from working in a subservient position. Being an apprentice is considered a step down in status, particularly if the person had many years of experience within their country of origin, which would result in a loss of face. This is particularly the case if a negative outcome from the skills recognition process had occurred. Because of this status issue, it was thought that people would be more likely to become apprentices only if working for someone else within their particular community, as this would minimise the issue. While some mentioned that adult apprentices could be an advantage because they already had skills, one RTO reported that employers may see this as a disadvantage, because the person might not do things their way, or might have skills not suited to the specific job.

> Loss of face is as an adult you actually go back to being a junior which is just not on in some areas. You just can't do it, and a lot of people who come from other countries, 'cause you're considered to be the head of the household, you're at the top. To then become an apprentice is a little bit demeaning in a way and that just

happens to be the system we have in this country. So even though they get paid notionally adult rates of pay that doesn't matter if you're doing something that means loss of face. (RTO)

The greatest opportunity lies with adult apprentices in the market currently. There are many people who would be very happy to go back and finish, or to complete a fast-track apprenticeship, who bring with them an already substantial work history. (GTS)

Transport

Transport was also mentioned as a major obstacle for new migrants and their children, in being able to access work and training. As most were on very low incomes or benefits, or were not able to attain driver's licences, they relied on public transport, which made getting to workplaces not close to existing public transport routes difficult. However, no specific solutions were identified for this problem, other than Job Network and employer awareness of this issue.

4.4.2   Suggested Strategies

Practical holistic skills assessment

Given that this was seen as a major barrier to full workforce participation, this issue received a lot of attention in the interviews and several key informants were involved in addressing the issues, either within the OQU or through the establishment of skills recognition programmes. The current system was seen as too based on paper qualifications, and not enough on recognising skills. As such, most recommended simplification of access, and more practical and flexible evaluations. Holistic skills assessment was emphasised, rather than component or module based testing. It was felt that using tests, which assessed both practical skills and theoretical knowledge, would be better. It was also thought that skills recognition or RPL could be a step on a pathway to qualification, allowing the identification of missing competencies that could then be followed by gap training. Some suggested specific gap courses, while others felt these could be accessed through existing apprenticeships and traineeships (fast-tracking, although this is currently only available in a limited number of trades). This was an issue already being considered by DET.

What we're trying to do is to set up some test centres so that people can actually come in and have their skills assessed rather than it being a paper-based portfolio model. Our intention is to base it on the World Skills model which is like the Olympics in the trades areas; they're international competitions of butchers, bakers, candlestick makers (*general laughter*). It shouldn't be that difficult for us to set up test centres based on the World Skills standards so we're looking at that now and that would open up opportunities for everybody to come and demonstrate their skills. We'd have to put in place arrangements to assess the underpinning knowledge. (Government)

We need to cut through the red tape and the crap associated with the recognition of overseas qualifications - it needs to be rationalised, simplified and made public knowledge and then it will work. (GTS)

We're currently at a crossroads. In five years time adults, fast-track and skills-gap will be secondary nature. (GTS)

For some migrants such a process would lead to a certification of trade equivalency, while for others it may point the way to further training, such as bridging courses, or a 'fast-

track' apprenticeship. However, for fast-track apprenticeships, there would still be the issue of attaining a placement, and for adult apprentices, financial and status issues.

Bridging programmes

Bridging courses, or 'gap' training, was suggested as an option for those who had had their skills and experience assessed but not met the full requirements for trade equivalency certification. Courses could include training to Australian standards, information about local workplace culture and practices and vocationally-specific English.
Such training could be combined with provisional registration within the relevant field and work placement with an experienced tradesperson, so that people could earn an income and receive recognition for their skills, whilst being brought up to Australian standards. A model for this would be the Migrant Plumbers course which was previously offered at TAFE and is currently being re-worked as a pilot project for OQU. While not an avenue to an apprenticeship or traineeship, this would help address the skills shortage by getting experienced tradespeople into the workplace immediately. In combination with skills assessment, such training would also address the barriers of financial difficulties and 'loss of face', which were identified as a concern for adult apprentices from CaLD backgrounds.

> There would be a need for a TAFE WA approach if there's a need established, and obviously there is because there's a skill shortage and it's an issue of how we're going to get people that are qualified. That's probably the point at which a product, which is language specific to an industry would be right. To develop a skill in areas where there's a skill shortage we'll put on a course that makes sure that their qualifications in their trade are current and contextualised and that their language in that industry area is developed. (RTO)

> The course is designed so that a migrant coming from another country could be subject to an initial audit by the Water Corporation and if they didn't make a full transition they could be put on what's called provisional registration. That means they could go and work for a licensed plumber and gain experience, on the condition that they attended TAFE college over a six month period to do additional training in things like relevant bylaws, techniques and local conditions. At the completion of their six month course they were taken from a provisional to a full registered tradesperson, which gave them the first career path they could start to move off from there to be a licensed contractor on their own (RTO)

Vocationally specific English programmes

Given the concerns of employers and new migrants, the provision of vocationally specific English programmes would ensure that people were able to work, while receiving English language and literacy support. The focus on vocationally specific English has a number of advantages, including allowing the person to work and making the learning process seem more relevant (both concerns raised by the focus groups). It would also reduce employer reluctance to take on those with limited English, or limited knowledge of specific terminology within the relevant industry in WA.

> Well I believe the solution really would be to have a funding structure that would allow for the English language and literacy to be integrated as part of the introductory courses. (GTS)

It was suggested that this support could be provided by RTOs, as part of general training or in a supported after-hours situation. The existing Certificate of Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVSS) run by TAFE would be a model for such a programme, but with the focus on ESL rather than just low literacy generally. This involves one to one support in a

team teaching environment. This may not be an option for some industries, such as hospitality, where training is predominately on-the-job, as is also the case with most traineeships. A suggested alternative was having after-hours individual tutoring, organised by the RTO, but funded by Government. If it was more appropriate from a financial viewpoint, or if there were a large enough group within that vocational area, group classes could also be an alternative. In this case, such classes could also be run through TAFE, within the Adult Community Short Courses or part-time (based on existing programmes such as Certificate II in English Language Literacies), but would require vocationally specific materials as course work, and instructors who were culturally aware and familiar with teaching people in an ESL environment.

> I always think too, with this particular issue, looking at the English for aged care, I think it needs to be a practical sort of a thing. It needs to be something they're doing hands on as well, not just sitting in a classroom. (GTS)

> I suppose one of the things that could be looked at would be some sort of preparation course for a skilled person, particularly given the skill shortage, who has that competency as a trades person but they don't have sufficient language. That might be the role of an RTO to say ok we will develop their language skills and particularly their language skills in relation to their trade. (RTO)

Centralised careers pathway resources

In conjunction with the simplification of skills recognition, the idea of offering centralised information about career pathways was also mentioned. This was generally envisaged as a 'one-stop shop' approach, whereby new migrants could access skills recognition, bridging courses or gap training, and also generalised careers information. This was seen as having a number of advantages, including having one location to direct new migrants to for information and assistance, and also making the process of getting accurate and relevant information about their career options simpler. While all members of the public could use such a central location, modelled on the existing Careers Information Centres (which are currently being updated as 'Employment Direction Network Career Development Centres'), it could also have staff who specialised in servicing the needs of people from CaLD communities. Such individuals would either have, or receive, training in dealing with CaLD people, and an awareness of their specific barriers to entering the workplace. These Career Development Centres could either offer skills recognition or bridging courses directly or would have specific contacts to refer people to. The focus would be on providing straight-forward information about career directions and minimising the number of separate contacts which had to be made by the individual (CaLD or otherwise) in order to attain the career services they required in order to become a skilled, productive member of the Australian workforce.

> It's very fuzzy but it could be streamlined and we could have a feed through process happening if we had a few more contacts and if it was easier to actually speak to them. So even something as simple as a typed list with all the names of all the current programme managers in the various TAFE colleges so I could just discuss students with them. (Counsellor/Psychologist)

Convince employers of benefits
Promote the value of a diverse community

The importance of employers in the issue of under-representation of CaLD people in apprenticeships and traineeships cannot be understated. Any efforts to increase participation will not succeed if those who actually employ apprentices and trainees are not included. Employers currently seem to regard new migrants as too much hard work, so they need to be convinced of the benefits of employing CaLD people. There are a

number of positive attributes that informants mentioned in relation to new migrant employees; they were hard-working, committed, loyal and willing to learn.

As well as 'selling' employers on CaLD individuals, it was also suggested that the advantages of having a diverse workforce be emphasised. Examples given included having employees to suit clients' needs, such as people with multiple languages or understandings of different cultures. Several informants expressed frustration that Australians did not appreciate cultural diversity enough, the richness and new knowledge and experience that migrants added to Australian culture. As such, they felt the Government in particular needed to take the lead on this issue, and actively encourage the community to appreciate multiculturalism and make it clear that racism and discrimination were unacceptable, in the workplace and the community at large.

> I think all you can do is promote and encourage and say look these are the benefits - try to identify the benefits of employing a CaLD person and just say well look do you realise these people are more committed or whatever and just appeal to employers. (Government)

> [Migrants] have risked absolutely everything to set up a new life so they're motivated - boy they're motivated like you wouldn't believe. They are focussed, they know why they want to work, they work hard and they're diligent. (GTS)

> But I do see it's very beneficial to have multicultural people because our country's full of multicultural people, so obviously we don't want just English speaking people caring for our elderly. (GTS)

Facilitated work experience

Providing the facilitated opportunities for new migrants to gain work experience was suggested by several key informants and is also an obvious solution to the issue of lack of knowledge of Australian workplace practices. These would provide awareness of workplaces and work practices, as well as giving people the opportunity to improve their English through interaction. Work experience programmes would not only benefit the CaLD individual, but would also provide employers and members of the general public (the employers' clients) with greater opportunity for contact with members of new and emerging communities. Negative attitudes on the part of employers and the public to certain groups may be reduced by positive contact and the opportunity to form friendships (Pettigrew, 1998), and may encourage employers to consider taking on CaLD people in the future.

> [I] often had wonderful outcomes in jobs with this idea of work experience; that this person will come and give you two days for free because they'll learn the job. In one way they're a liability in the sense that the employer's really gotta spend so many man-hours supervising and ensuring that they're able to do something and learn from their experience etcetera, but at the end of that two days there was often a rapport built up there and an understanding of what their skills were. There was also an understanding by the young person as to what were the expectations of the role, due to the work experience. (Migrant Resource Centre)

> Look at some work experience, because you get into this sort of chicken-and-egg situation that even if somebody wants to go straight into employment what they don't have is a track record of any employment in Australia, or any understanding of employment conditions and the culture of employment in Australia, which is going to be very different from many other countries. (Government)

Employment readiness programmes

To ensure employers recognise that new migrants are competitive employees, compared to Australian-born applicants, a number of steps must be taken. This is particularly an issue

for new migrants who have not been able to get existing skills recognised, or are seen as needing to access fast-track apprenticeships. Work experience was suggested as a solution, but employment readiness programmes could go further, in terms of providing more opportunity to learn the types of work available in WA, how to apply for work and what to expect in the workplace. These courses would need to be promoted to new migrants, possibly through the centralised careers pathway centre. Alternatively, there could be better promotion of existing programmes, even those not necessarily aimed at new migrants.

Among existing TAFE programmes, there already is one specifically for migrant women, *New Opportunities for Women (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse),* and another general employment readiness programme, *Gaining Access to Training and Employment.* There is also *Certificate I Industrial Skills (Entry Level Training).* This programme is currently only available in the North-West but could be modified to meet the needs of new migrants, and is focussed on a particular family of trades, rather than being general skills for employment. Each of these courses includes a work experience component. (Programmes also currently exist for preparing people with a disability for work, such as *GATE: Gaining Access to Training and Education.*) The family of trades approach may be a good strategy with programmes for new migrants, who may have a general idea of their interests but may not be familiar with the range of careers available in WA. If the aim is to attract new migrants in unskilled labour, such programmes could be offered on a short-term basis (3-6 months), full-time, or alternatively, part-time during school hours (similar to how the NOW course is currently organised), or as night courses (such as the *Certificate II in Language Literacies*).

The other alternative is modifying any of the existing pre-apprenticeships to include ESL components, some of which also take the family of trades approach (within the metropolitan area). Existing pre-apprenticeships can be competitive, so such tailored courses may be more appropriate, with the vocationally specific English aspect based on CAVSS. The concern with recommending these types of courses is that they serve to keep new migrants in training for longer, when many, particularly the men, want to get out and work.

> Pre-vocational training gives people courses up front before they start to compete, before they get to the starting line, to give them some skills, knowledge and confidence so they are more competitive. Because at the end of the day it's the employer that makes the choice but if you can improve that person's chances of being chosen through a pre-vocational or pre-apprenticeship training, to make them more attractive to employers, that might be a better way to go. (Government)

> Like we do for the other disadvantaged groups, like the Aboriginal students, where we've got those pre-apprenticeship type programmes that help them with specific issues for that group. So for CaLD clients it would be cultural issues and maybe language and those sorts of things, customise a programme for that group. (RTO)

Recognising CaLD as a priority category for funding

One government informant recommended classifying CaLD as a priority category under DET funding model for GTSs. Recent changes to the funding model have meant that GTSs now only receive State funding when employing apprentices and trainees in areas recognised as high priority by the Government or when those individuals were from 'difficult to place' groups, such as Indigenous Australians and people with a disability. As the current apprenticeships and traineeships paperwork already collects information on whether people come from a NESB and country of birth, it would also be possible to add CaLD as a priority funding category. Encouraging GTSs, which employ about 25% of

apprentices and trainees in WA, to employ more people from CaLD backgrounds (particularly those from new and emerging communities) would have flow-on effects to employers and the community generally, making them more accepting of people from diverse backgrounds. However, in the case of new migrants, this would most likely need to include funding for on-going language support where necessary (most likely vocationally specific English programmes), otherwise the financial incentive may not be seen as enough to cover the extra workload perceived as associated with employing a new migrant.

4.5 Second Generation CaLD

4.5.1 Barriers to Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Perception of trades

It was again felt that the general community, and especially CaLD communities, perceived the trades as second-class, dirty and inferior to the types of occupations which could be attained through university study. Part of the negative perception of CaLD communities originates from the way jobs in the trades areas were viewed in their own country. Low pay while training was also seen as an issue, with parents described as preferring their children worked and got paid at a higher rate immediately rather than spending three or four years on very little income. This economic issue was reported as a particular barrier for those CaLD families of low socioeconomic status, where children may need to work from a young age to support the family, or because the family could not financially support them. Combined with this was a lack of knowledge within CaLD communities about what options were available with regards to apprenticeships and traineeships, and what career pathways were available upon completion.

> I think the environment probably might not, either they're not aware of it or it doesn't come across to them as what they want to do - working in a shed. I'm not sure. (Employer)
>
> I mean for some parents, some people, the trades are dirty, unattractive and have high turnover. (Government)

Parental expectations

As was reported in the focus groups, many key informants felt that parents were a major obstacle to second generation CaLD young people pursuing apprenticeships, traineeships and VET generally. This was again linked to the issue of parents sacrificing to come to Australia and wanting better for their children, or wanting their children to undertake professional careers if they themselves were professionals. There was also the issue of parents failing to receive recognition for their overseas qualifications and skills; hence they wanted their children to receive undisputable qualifications. The issue of the low value of the trades, both in Australia and the country of origin, was also mentioned. It was also noted that the workplace culture within the trades might not be accepting of people from CaLD backgrounds, that they might be discriminated against or harassed.

> The profile or status of apprenticeships and traineeships is not quite what people would like it to be, here in our school it's culturally based and it refers back to my own upbringing too, the saying 'I don't want any son of mine to get his hands dirty'

– the Arabic expression translated means 'I don't want them to wear a blue shirt'. (Counsellor/Psychologist)

'I've sacrificed everything to get you a decent life' – yes they have and that child they have to live through their parent's dreams - and that's a huge expectation, quite difficult to live up to, especially if their parents are dreaming of the doctor and lawyers and engineers. (Migrant Resource Centre)

With Asians there's a strong cultural desire for a bit of paper. (GTS)

High school career counsellors in particular discussed the complete opposition of parents from CaLD backgrounds to any other options besides university. Even when their children were not performing well enough academically to make university likely, parents were reportedly still focussed on improving their child's chances of tertiary study, rather than alternatives to that. When both parents and children were first generation migrants, parental expectations tended to also be high, but often unrealistic, due to their lack of knowledge of the Australian education and employment system. However, schools often found it difficult to engage with such parents, who tended to avoid contact, presumably due to difficulties with English and a lack of confidence in interacting with school officials.

The main one is parental expectation - they don't value TAFE and don't respond to any alternative to university. (Counsellor/Psychologist)

The parents have in most cases very unrealistic expectations of their kids – the Promised Land, this type of scenario. I do not think that they in any way understand what this employment actually is because they don't have apprenticeships or traineeships within their own cultures; it's a totally foreign concept to them. If you want to be a builder you go with Dad and you learn to build and eventually you become a builder - to actually be accredited, to go to TAFE, to actually have units of competence ticked off, they have no idea whatsoever. Also, the parents really are looking for different things for their kids, they have builders back wherever they came from and they don't necessarily see that as something to aspire to. (Counsellor/Psychologist)

There is a big reluctance for parent participation. With any Parent Nights I always say that there needs to be a partnership between the school, students and parents and with these students there is not a partnership between parents because these parents don't have a command of English, or very little command of English, therefore their participation in the school is very little. Therefore trying to pass on any information to them is extremely difficult. (Counsellor/Psychologist)

4.5.2 Suggested Strategies

Increase knowledge among young people and parents

Increased knowledge about what trades involve and where they might lead was again mentioned as a way to increase interest in apprenticeships and traineeships among CaLD young people. In some cases this was considered an issue best tackled via the wider community, while others thought special effort could be paid to those from CaLD backgrounds. However, this may not be strong enough to overcome the rejection of many CaLD parents of any alternative options to university, unless it becomes clear that their child will not be able to attend university (i.e., the last resort option).

We now are talking to parents, teachers and to young people themselves trying to influence those people who are helping students make a decision about where they're going to go and also trying to get at those people who are interested in changing careers or returning to a trade. (GTS)

> I think education and getting through to the parents and putting materials out in languages which they can actually understand and also getting people within their community. (Counsellor/Psychologist)

Change perception of the trades

It is likely that, with time, subsequent generations of CaLD people will become more integrated into, and accepted by, the mainstream Australian community; hence they will be more likely to adopt the mainstream viewpoint. Therefore, it is necessary to address the way society generally views apprenticeships and traineeships, and the trades; a broader, societal level approach aimed at changing the general public's perception was recommended by many. This should emphasise the options available as a result of completing a trade (including management careers and self-employment), the theoretical as well as practical nature, and the positive aspects of a career in these industries. These include: sense of achievement (taking pride in expertise, having valued skills to contribute to society); work condition (high wages, demand for skills, regulated hours); lifestyle issues (opportunities for travel; flexibility in working conditions); career pathways (range of options, opportunities for high level management positions or self-employment); and the opportunity to make a significant, useful and valuable contribution to society.

> What they're looking for is something that's worthwhile in an old fashioned sense. They're looking for recognition for their work, they're looking for the opportunity to do interesting work, they're looking for the opportunity to perhaps travel, to have variety in their work and to meet people who they would enjoy working with. Those are the things that motivate young people to choose a career, not the money, and all we talk about is 'get an apprenticeship and earn lots of money'. (GTS)

Besides advertising the benefits, it was also suggested that more awards for outstanding apprentices and trainees be implemented, or existing ones promoted more heavily. It was also suggested that specific awards for those from CaLD groups, sponsored by relevant community groups, could be implemented. For example, there is currently an Italian apprentice of the year award, sponsored by businesspeople in WA's Italian community.

School Apprenticeship Link and School-Based Traineeships

The School Apprenticeship Link (SAL) is currently running as a pilot programme in a select number of public high schools, School-Based Traineeships (SBT) have been around longer and similar programmes have run in private schools in the last decade. One employer we spoke with had also been involved in a similar programme with a local high school. The focus is on encouraging students to finish Year 12, while also gaining practical workplace skills, increasing their chance of acceptance into traineeships and apprenticeships after graduation. It is also important in providing meaningful activities for students not destined for university after changes to the school leaving age come into effect.

SAL and SBT have several positive benefits. They allow students to gain experience of workplaces where apprenticeships and traineeships take place, increasing their knowledge of what is available, what it involves and their options after completion. This knowledge would not only be available to the students directly involved but would also be communicated to their peers and parents. Greater knowledge and a supportive peer environment may encourage more CaLD people to take part in apprenticeships and traineeships, or at least to consider them as an option. SAL and SBT programmes help to normalise and create acceptance of work in these fields among young people.

> Getting CaLD clients into apprenticeships and traineeships through the schools would probably be our best way to target them, through the SAL programmes and through the general promotion of apprenticeships and traineeships such as the young people in Years 10, 11 and 12. (Government)

> Now schools are starting to offer School-Based Traineeships, School Apprenticeship Links all these different programmes and so if we want to see a greater participation of people from disadvantaged backgrounds then there needs to be those sorts of programmes, well thought out, that allow the link between schools and work. (Counsellor/Psychologist)

One employer had been involved in a similar programme, where high school students did a pre-apprenticeship while at school, including working during the school holidays. The programme had recently ended because the employer did not feel they were getting the benefits from the amount of money they spent. Their programme was only on a small scale though, so a larger, more centralised SAL and SBT, managed by DET, may be more cost effective. However, the employer also reported no problems attracting suitably qualified applicants for their apprenticeships generally, so perhaps SAL would be better for areas which do not attract many applicants.

> Obviously the long-term result is to gain an apprenticeship and then we credit them a year out of their apprenticeship for what they've done in their school based traineeship, but we stopped doing that about two years ago. We just couldn't see the benefit for the outlay of the tools, and not even so much the actual cost of the wages, but the time spent on them for what the return was. (Employer)

Moving skilled adults into qualifications (role models)

It was thought by some that if skilled adults in CaLD communities were able to gain trade qualifications this would have an impact on the acceptability of apprenticeships and traineeships among people within those communities. It would also serve to increase knowledge about what the trades involve. These individuals could serve as role models for both other skilled but unqualified adults, and young people, in encouraging participation in these fields. It would be necessary to identify such skilled migrants and engage them in the skills recognition process, most likely with gap training or fast-tracking to bring them up to Australian standards. This was noted by some as a difficulty, especially if they had previously had difficulties dealing with the skills assessment bodies, however, it would be valuable in both the immediate sense (by making people feel valued, and using existing skills within the workforce at a higher level) and in the long-term (by helping change perceptions).

> What tends to happen and seems to be from some of the discussions I've had with the people in some of the other avenues of adult migrant education is that the young people are saying 'my Dad can do that', so they're actually reading it and taking the message home to their parents to say 'do you know that you could do this' and that's how sometimes that information gets to people. (RTO)

To address the issues associated with adult apprentices CaLD employers could be encouraged to take on people from within their community through fast-track apprenticeships. Also, it was suggested that some kind of payment could be provided to adult apprentices to help offset their low wages. This could be paid to the employers and passed on, or through social security (via the Commonwealth Government) or a State Government payment (similar to the *It Pays to Learn Allowance*, but larger and more frequent).

> What tends to happen is the only ones who tend to do it are people from their own ethnic background and then they will give them a go because they can talk to them and they will see that and there's not considered so much a loss of face because you're working for the community - that community you come from. (RTO)

4.6 The role of DET in Facilitating Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Responses to the question about how DET could better facilitate apprenticeships and traineeships sometimes confirmed earlier comments about the accessibility and simplification of skills recognition and centralisation of information about career pathways. They also included greater promotion of the positive aspects of apprenticeships and traineeships, aimed at encouraging more people generally into the trades or at changing the negative perception of trades. Most respondents were generally happy with the job DET was doing in the area of apprenticeships and traineeships.

However, paperwork was mentioned as an issue by several employers, with the suggestion that simplified forms for claiming financial incentives from State and Commonwealth Governments be implemented. It was felt that in some cases the amount of work involved, especially when employing large numbers of apprentices and trainees, outweighed the funding received. One form, instead of separate forms for each person, was also suggested.

Some industries also suggested that DET approve shorter part-time traineeships (10 or 15 hours per week), which would suit the part-time nature of the aged care and cleaning fields in particular, but also hospitality. This would allow businesses that could not offer enough hours to trainees to meet existing traineeship requirements to produce qualified workers. This would most likely be attractive to CaLD women with childcare responsibilities. These industries are keen to take on more trainees, as there is a preference for qualified workers as they have greater knowledge of occupational health and safety issues, and are more skilled.

Also, it was felt that funding generally was not sufficient to cover the costs of taking on an apprentice or trainee. This probably reflects a societal change whereby the economic value of an employee is placed above the social good of providing skilled workers. It was also suggested that DET become a universal GTS, driven by the philosophy of training for the public good (the value of a skilled and productive workforce) rather than the economic value of the individual. It was also felt that government organisations should take the lead on promoting the value of a culturally and linguistically diverse society, rather than seeing those who were different as a problem or burden. DET could also show leadership by employing more people from CaLD backgrounds as trainees themselves.

4.7 Existing Initiatives

There were a number of existing initiatives relevant to the issue of under-representation of CaLD people in apprenticeships and traineeships. The most significant was current efforts by the Overseas Qualifications Unit Network to investigate new ways of undertaking skills recognition, using a more holistic approach and focusing on at RPL and skills bridging, rather than just paper-based qualifications. Numerous pilot programmes are currently

under way which should provide clearer ideas about how this can best be achieved, and what some of the likely obstacles may be. There were also efforts by TAFE colleges to look at bridging or gap training for particular CaLD groups, where vocationally specific English programmes were incorporated into the curriculum.

There is also an effort within the Careers Development Directorate of DET to create 'one-stop shop' testing and information centres (Employment Direction Network Career Development Centres). This would be particularly important in providing easier access to definitive career pathway information, for migrants and general community members. It could also provide links to further services, and should employ officers trained in servicing people from CaLD communities to ensure they receive appropriate help and consideration of their specific needs.

Fast-track apprenticeships are currently being piloted in the metals area, where existing employees are taken on as apprentices to get them formal qualifications. This is being expanded to other industries, providing an avenue for recognition of skills and prior learning, although it requires an employer. SAL is also a pilot project that is looking at expanding next year. There is also the new 1-2-3 Steps campaign designed to promote apprenticeships and traineeships to young people, which aims to provide easier access to pathway information. However, more campaigns aimed at showing off the benefits of careers in these industries, with the intention of changing negative community perceptions of the trades, would also be valuable.

The Skills Formation Taskforce is currently working with industries to overhaul the apprenticeship and traineeship system in order to create a more skilled workforce in WA. Their findings are likely to have a substantial impact on the VET system, but the issue of people from CaLD backgrounds is something that should be considered, especially if they decide more skilled migrants are needed to boost these industries. They are likely to be looking particularly at the structure of training programmes, to make them shorter and more flexible, in response to industry and economic demand.

There were a number of existing initiatives outside of DET that supported members of disadvantaged groups in gaining and retaining positions as apprentices and trainees. Most were based on a case management model, looking at the needs of individuals and also emphasised the importance of awareness of cultural difference issues in the workplace. In the case of programmes with Indigenous people, the role of communication was emphasised, as well as having a person with appropriate cross-cultural knowledge who the individual could access to help resolve issues in the workplace. The role of leaders within the organisation in actively supporting diversity was also considered a key aspect of the success of such initiatives, because it set the stage for valuing difference and seeing cultural misunderstandings as opportunities for learning, and becoming more culturally aware. This supports the idea of the State Government further promoting the value of a diverse workplace and society.

4.8   Key Findings

Barriers

- **Lack of knowledge:** This was articulated at a broader level among key informants, focusing on lack of knowledge about Australian workplaces, including how to obtain employment, and was linked to lack of competitiveness of new migrants in the workplace and difficulty in gaining employment. This was also related to lack of community networks, which provide informal information dissemination, but also to the complexity of the system, which made it difficult for even professionals

to gain adequate pathways information. Parents of second generation migrants were also seen as having little knowledge of the apprenticeship and traineeship system and particularly to career pathways associated with these training programmes.

- **Complexity of system:** This made it difficult for both consumers and professionals working within the apprenticeships and traineeships area. Many key informants reported difficulty accessing information and were unaware of policies and programmes operating, even within DET. Greater co-ordination and communication about initiatives within these areas is needed.

- **Skills recognition:** Both access to, and the nature of, existing assessments were seen as problematic, as they were among members of CaLD communities. There was also an issue with lack of appropriate pathways following skills recognition processes, particularly when further gap training was required to meet Australian standards.

- **Discrimination in the workplace:** Many felt people from CaLD communities would be less likely to obtain employment initially because they were seen as less likely to fit into the workplace ('culture-clash'), and their was resistance to making adjustments to suit cultural differences. New migrants especially were seen as requiring too much extra work, with the benefits of a diverse workplace underestimated.

- **Lack of competitiveness:** Hiring the best person for the job was not seen as discrimination, and generally people from CaLD backgrounds were not considered to be competitive against Australian-born applicants, who had greater knowledge of Australian workplace culture. Existing skills and experience gained outside Australia were undervalued, in comparison to familiarity with Australian cultural practices.

- **Difficulties with English:** Many mentioned this as a major barrier, including those who worked with new migrants. Current ESL hours for migrants were considered to be inadequate, and many wanted an emphasis on funded vocationally-specific English to ease the transition to workplace. The main concern with inadequate occupation-specific English language skills was safety, of the CaLD individual and colleagues and customers in the workplace.

- **Issues with adult apprentices:** Mature-age migrants were seen as facing financial and status barriers to undertaking an apprenticeship. Hence, it is important that they receive adequate recognition of existing skills and experience to fast-track training process, or, if highly skilled, are able to undertake bridging training as an alternative.

- **Parental expectations:** As was found previously, the aspirations of parents were seen as key to the low representation of second generation CaLD people in VET generally. The immigration decision was often linked to a desire to provide children with better educational and occupational opportunities, and in the case of Skill and Business stream migrants was due to status reproduction.

- **Status of trades:** A large part of parental rejection of apprenticeships and traineeships was the lower status of occupations associated with these pathways, both in their country of origin and within the Australian community generally.

Strategies

- **Increase access to knowledge:** Lack of knowledge was linked to a lack of access to information resources. As such, information should be available in multiple languages and information dissemination should involve members of CaLD communities, to engage informal networks. Also, the process for accessing

information should be simplified, and a centralised list of resources should be available to both professionals and community members.

- **Practical holistic skills assessment:** Access to assessment processes needs to be simpler and the procedures themselves need to be practical, holistic and flexible. Pathways after assessment, such as bridging courses or fast-track training, need to be available and accessible.

- **Vocationally specific English programmes:** These can be offered by RTOs but should be funded, to ensure access to employment for those from CaLD backgrounds. Vocationally specific English has the advantage of being available while working and/or training.

- **Bridging courses:** These would provide an avenue to full certification for skilled and experienced new migrants who had undergone skills assessment. They should include training to Australian standards, information about local workplace culture and practices, work experience and vocationally-specific English. If possible they should be combined with provisional registration to allow for practical experience and an income while training.

- **Employment readiness courses:** Such courses could make new migrants more competitive in the workplace and build knowledge of cultural standards and practices. They could be modelled on existing TAFE courses and include vocationally specific English and work experience.

- **Facilitated work experience:** This could be offered through employment readiness courses or separately but must be facilitated to overcome the difficulties associated with finding employment. They would be beneficial in building knowledge of workplace culture among new migrants and making the general community more accepting of members of new and emerging communities.

- **Centralised careers pathways information:** This would provide one point of access for all members of the community and professionals helping new migrants. It should also provide access to skills assessment and other relevant programmes designed to obtain qualifications and employment for new migrants.

- **Change perception of trades:** Such efforts should be targeted at the general community to increase participation in these skilled occupations. Various positive aspects of trade qualifications could be promoted such as sense of achievement; work conditions; lifestyle issues; career pathways; and the opportunity to make a significant, useful and valuable contribution to society

- **Promote the value of a diverse community:** This would help to reduce instances of systemic racism and discrimination by raising awareness of diversity and equity issues, whilst promoting the positive aspects of a diverse workplace and society more generally. It was suggested that the State Government show leadership of this issue.

- **Convince employers of benefits:** As part of promoting the value of diversity, the benefits of a diverse workforce should be demonstrated to employers, such as the opportunity to forge new customer and business networks, and being able to meet the needs of diverse clients. New migrants were also seen as loyal, hard working and dedicated.

- **Recognising CaLD as priority category:** Making CaLD people a priority funded group under the GTSs funding model, GTSs would be encouraged to employ them, providing easier access to employment. However, funding for necessary support services may also be needed, to ensure people from CaLD backgrounds are adequately supported in the workplace and in training.

- **Expand SAL and SBT:** These programmes offer exposure to career pathways in areas in which apprenticeships and traineeships are conducted, not just among

4.9   Conclusion

The major themes from the key informant interviews were relatively similar to those seen in the focus groups with CaLD community members, although key informants had much greater knowledge of the sector and so were able to provide specific comments and recommendations. When it came to new migrants, the importance of appropriate skills recognition and building knowledge of apprenticeships and traineeships were emphasised, as was the difficulty in gaining employment. In addition to more accessible, practical, flexible and holistic skills recognition, numerous training options were suggested to address some of these issues, including vocationally-specific English, bridging and employment readiness courses and facilitated work experience. Making CaLD apprentices and trainees, especially from new and emerging communities, eligible for priority funding, and providing English language and other support, should encourage more GTSs to recruit CaLD people, addressing the difficulty of finding an employer.

For second generation CaLD people, increasing and focussing knowledge about pathways to and from apprenticeships and traineeships was highlighted. Two societal level issues were also prominent: the need to change community perception of the trades, and the need to emphasise the value of a culturally and linguistically diverse WA. Both of these issues require long-term support from the top down in order to change community attitudes and norms.

There already seems to be some movement within DET to address some of the major issues raised in this research. Both skills recognition and the development of one-stop shop career pathway centres (which incorporate skills testing and bridging training) are currently being investigated (likely to be Employment Direction Network Career Development Centres). Adult apprenticeships are also being piloted, with their expansion likely to offer opportunities to new migrants with some skills but no formal qualifications. However, for highly skilled migrants bridging courses may be more appropriate and remove some of the issues faced by adult apprentices, especially if they include provisional registration components. There are also existing programmes which can help migrants directly or be tailored to suit their needs. The avenues to increase numbers of second generation CaLD people in apprenticeships and traineeships may be through changes to general community attitudes, increased exposure to these fields (e.g., SAL, SBT) or through the passage of time, with third and fourth generations likely to be more integrated into, and accepted by, mainstream Australia.

The third stage of the data collection was a survey of existing apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds. This was designed to investigate pathways into training for members of this, admittedly very diverse, group, and also allow the examination of issues to do with retention, which had received little attention in the consultations with CaLD community members and key informants.

5 Survey of Apprentices and Trainees

Canvassing the experiences of apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds was an essential part of the research, in terms of identifying existing pathways, and barriers to access and completion. Telephone surveys were conducted with a random sample of 60 apprentices and trainees who spoke a language other than English (LoTE). The sample included people from a variety of occupational areas, with a language and country of birth profile similar to the overall population of LoTE apprentices and trainees. The results suggest that this sample experience few difficulties with their on and off-the-job training related to cultural differences, and most seem to be well integrated into mainstream Australian culture. As such, the results may illustrate the factors that contribute to entering such training programmes, rather than demonstrating how cultural differences can be accommodated within apprenticeships and traineeships.

5.1 The Sample

Apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds were accessed through DET's Training Records System. This includes all apprentices and trainees in WA, as of October, 2005. Contact details were requested for all those who had indicated that they spoke a language other than English (LoTE) and were born either overseas or in Australia. Hence the participants were either first-generation migrants, or subsequent generations who continued to speak the first language of their parents or grandparents.[20] Telephone interviews were chosen because of their higher response rate, the likely English language and literacy issues (interviews allow further explanation of items, reducing missing data, and the opportunity to provide prompts for open-ended questions) and the short time-frame.

Completed interviews were obtained from 60 people; 33 apprentices and 27 trainees (see Table 8). There were 41 males and 19 females, with an age range of 15 to 30 years (mean age= 22.2)[21]. The length of enrolment in their training programme ranged from less than

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[20] This selection process excludes those who failed to report that LoTE was spoken and those first or second generation migrants who only speak English. No attempt was made to distinguish between subsequent generations; e.g., second or third. However, second language is often limited among the third generation, and rarely continues after that (Khoo, McDonald, Giorgas & Birell, 2002).

[21] Three participants failed to provide their ages, hence the uneven totals in Table 8.

one month to three years, although the overall mean was one year. There was little difference between the two types, but greater variation in the apprenticeships, most likely due to their greater length (apprentices: mean= 13 months, S.D. = 11.1; trainees: mean= 10 months, S.D. = 7.1). Forty-two per cent of the sample were Australian born, 19% had lived in Australia for 5 years or less, 16% for 5-10 years, 18% for 10- 20 years, and 5% for more than 20 years.

Table 8: Survey sample breakdown by training programme, sex and age group

Age	Apprentices		Trainees		Total
	Female	Male	Female	Male	
15–21	5	12	4	3	24
22+	2	12	6	13	33
No age	2	0	0	1	3
Total	7	24	10	16	60

Apprentices were more likely to be Australian born (55%), male and younger (mean age = 21.1 years) than trainees (27% Australian born, mean age = 23.6 years). Those from Eastern European backgrounds (including the former Yugoslavia) were just as likely to be trainees as apprentices. Trainees born overseas were more likely to be from Asian or Western European backgrounds than apprentices, however, the numbers in most other categories were too small to compare.

The majority of apprentices were engaged in the automotives (e.g., mechanical technician, auto electrician, panel beater) or building trades (e.g., carpenter, tiler, electrician). Six of the seven female apprentices were hairdressers, the other was a mechanic. There were also some apprentices from the metal trades (e.g., boilermaker/welder, fitter) and some from other areas (e.g., butcher, greenkeeper). Of those involved in traineeships, most were doing business certificates (e.g., business studies, financial services, telecommunications), followed by transport and warehousing (e.g., truck driving, haulage, warehousing), retail and aged care. Three participants were undertaking school-based traineeships, one in retail and two in hospitality.

5.2   Methodology

A randomly ordered list of 1581 potential participants was obtained from DET's Training Records System. The overall distribution of those with LoTE, born in Australian or overseas, broken down by age, sex and type of training programme (apprenticeship or traineeship) can be seen in Table 3 (see Section 2.5.3). However, the original list included 23 Indigenous Australians, who were excluded from the survey. Participants were contacted by telephone at home between the hours of 4.00 and 7.00pm by trained research assistants and asked to complete the survey, which took approximately 15 minutes. Each used a standard introduction, which included details about the research and how the participants' contact details were obtained (see Appendix B for copy of the survey). As well as general information about their course and demographic data, the survey included questions about issues which had been raised in the previous stages of the research. These included issues to do with English proficiency, sources of information about apprenticeships and traineeships, general barriers to access, reasons for undertaking their course and the influence of significant others on their decision (e.g., parents, friends, community leaders). Participants were also asked how satisfied they were with their apprenticeship or traineeship and what factors had contributed to their satisfaction. They were also asked about any problems they had encountered during their training, and ways

these could be addressed. Apprentices and trainees were also asked about their plans for the future. The majority of items were rated on a four-point scale, while others required open-ended responses. While the refusal rate was very low overall, there was evidence that those with low English proficiency were more likely to decline to participate in the survey, hence such new migrants are probably under-represented in the sample.

Representativeness of sample

With Indigenous Australians excluded, the total population of apprentices and trainees who spoke LoTE was 1558. Of these 60% were male and 40% female, while 65% were trainees and 35% apprentices. Those born in Australia accounted for 31.1%. The breakdowns for regions of birth outside Australia were: 27% Asian; 12% Eastern European (including Russia and the former Yugoslavia); 9% Western European; 8% African; 4% Pacific Islands; 3% South American; 3% Middle East; 3% Southern European; 0.4% Northern European; 0.1% North American. When language category was considered the breakdown by region was: 34% Asian; 22% Eastern European; 14% Western European; 13% Southern European; 5% African; 5% Middle Eastern; 3% South American; 2% Pacific Islands; 0.5% Northern European and 0.4% Creole languages.[22] The disparities between country of birth and language indicate which groups of second generation migrants are most likely to pass on their first language to their children (e.g., Eastern and Southern Europeans).

Within the sample of 60 participants the gender breakdown was 68% male and 32% female, indicating that women were somewhat under-represented in the sample compared to the population of apprentices and trainees. Apprentices were over-represented in the sample, with 55% apprentices and 45% trainees, which may have led to the gender difference, as women were much more likely to be in traineeships generally. While these discrepancies with the database are not ideal, having close to even numbers makes comparisons easier, and differences between those in each training programme are examined at each stage of the analysis, in order to overcome this discrepancy.

A higher percentage of the sample was Australian born (42%) compared to the population of LoTE apprentices and trainees. The breakdown for regions of birth for the sample were: 19% Asian; 12% Eastern European; 7% Middle East; 5% South America; 3.5% African, Pacific Islands, and Southern and Western European. While percentages of overseas born participants were generally lower, the order by region was relatively similar, with only Western Europeans dropping much lower. The sample, however, was much smaller than the overall population (only 4%); hence some differences are to be expected. The biggest overseas born groups in the sample were from nations in South-East Asia and the former Yugoslavia, with Vietnam and Bosnia each making up 5%, and El Salvador, Iraq, Malaysia, Sudan and Yugoslavia each on 3%.

Language region was based on second language reported (as English was reported as the first language for all – possibly as they were speaking it at the time). Only three participants failed to report a second language, with 13 reporting three. In some cases third language was not from the same region as second, but this was only among European regions. The percentage breakdown by language regions were: 26% Asian; 25% Eastern European; 18% Southern European; 12% Middle Eastern; 9% Western European; 7% South American; and 2% African and the Pacific Islands. This suggested that compared to the overall distribution, the sample contained fewer participants from Western European and African, and more from Middle Eastern and South American, language backgrounds. The most frequently spoken languages reflect both past and more recent waves of migration,

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[22] It is likely that South American languages are underestimated as those who were Australian-born and spoke Spanish were classified in the Western European category, although many may have been of South American origin.

with Italian the most common second language mentioned overall (12%), followed by Arabic (9%), then Croatian, (South American) Spanish and Vietnamese (all 7%).

5.3   Results of Survey

Previous education and experience

All of the participants had completed at least Year 10 (30%), with many also completing Year 11 (28%) or 12 (40%), with the majority having attended Australian high schools (90%). One participant had obtained a bachelor degree in Marine Science from an Australian university but was now undertaking an apprenticeship. Thirty-seven per cent of participants had attained another type of qualification, predominately at Certificate I (including pre-apprenticeships) and II level. However, except for the pre-apprenticeships, most of these qualifications were not directly related to the field of the current training programme. This suggests that those with qualifications who undertake further training are most likely pursuing a career change. When it came to previous employment there was a closer match, with several indicating that they had already worked in the area, and were attaining qualifications, and five people having undertaken 'work experience' in the area, presumably while at high school.

Those undertaking traineeships were more likely to have completed Year 12 (63% vs. 21% of apprentices) and were more likely to have attended an overseas high school (18.5% vs. 3.2%). Most likely due to their older age, trainees were also more likely to have a previous qualification (50% vs. 27%) and to have previous work experience (74% vs. 61%) compared to apprentices.

The majority of participants reported working as well as studying for their qualification (90%), but this was most likely due to the way the question was worded, such that participants considered their primary work, as an apprentice or trainee, rather than the intended meaning of a second job. Most reported more than 30 hours a week of work, with a range from 3 - 45 hours (mean = 34.6), with apprentices reporting more work compared to trainees (mean = 38 vs. 31 hours), and this difference was significant (t (50) = 2.67, $p<0.01$).

English level

All participants reported speaking English, with 95% reporting at least one other language and 21% two other languages. Most participants reported high levels of self-assessed English speaking and writing, with means of 3.2 and 3.1, respectively (maximum score = 4). A majority rated themselves at the top level ('fluent') for both speaking (57%) and writing (52%). However, trainees rated their speaking and writing (both means = 3.4) more highly than apprentices did (3.1 and 2.8, respectively), with the difference for writing significant (t (58) = -2.04, $p<0.05$). This may be related to the higher levels of education and qualifications among the trainees in the sample, and not to difficulties with English as a second language (as the trainees were more likely to have been born and educated overseas).

Only 24% of the sample had used English support services (evenly split between apprentices and trainees), most at high school (ESL- English as a Second Language); others had undertaken language courses through TAFE, AMES and Tuart College (which specialises in high school level education for adults). The mean time spent receiving English support was 1.5 years. Only 15% of the overall sample indicated that they needed vocationally specific English (12% of apprentices and 18% of trainees). However, twice as

many in each programme said that they would take up such training if it was available. This suggests that most people from LoTE backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships do not have problems with English, however, among those who do, there is a reluctance to indicate that they need help (an issue of 'face' also raised in relation to adult apprentices in Section 5).

Sources of Information

Participants were asked to rate, on a four-point scale, the importance of several possible sources in providing information about their training programme (see Table 9). The results clearly showed that personal communication was by far the most important source of information, with participants rating it significantly higher than all the other sources listed. There were no major differences between apprentices and trainees, except for trainees' greater use of the internet to find out about their course (t (58) = -2.26, p<0.05). When asked for any other sources of information, most participants mentioned speaking to people, particularly those already involved the area, such as tradespeople. A couple of apprentices indicated that they had gone into the 'family business', while others mentioned media sources, just as job advertisements (slightly more often among trainees). While participants reported drawing on a wide variety of information sources, it seems that 'word-of-mouth' or contact with those working in the area may be the best avenue to creating greater awareness about apprenticeships and traineeships among members of CaLD communities.

Table 9: Mean ratings of importance of different information sources

	Overall Mean	Apprentices	Trainees
Someone told me	3.1	3.0	3.1
School	2.5	2.4	2.7
Internet	2.4	2.0	2.8
Advertisement	2.2	2.2	2.1
Career Expo	2.0	1.9	2.1
Brochure	1.9	1.8	2.1

Barriers

A number of possible barriers to entering a traineeship or apprenticeship were rated by participants according to their importance (see Table 10). Most of the barriers were rated quite low in importance, with no significant differences between the ratings of apprentices and trainees. However, the items about lack of information were the most strongly endorsed, suggesting that knowledge gaps in the community may be a barrier (as earlier research also indicated).

Table 10: Mean ratings of importance of possible barriers to participation

	Overall Mean	Apprentices	Trainees
Lack of task information	2.3	2.2	2.3
Lack of options information	2.2	2.1	2.3
General lack of information	2.2	2.4	1.9
Language problems	1.5	1.6	1.3
School marks	1.4	1.5	1.4
Family disapproved	1.4	1.6	1.2
Friends disapproved	1.2	1.2	1.1

Reasons for decision

Many possible reasons for doing an apprenticeship or traineeship were offered for participants to rate their importance (see Table 11). The reason rated most important was that it offered a stable job, closely followed by being interested in the area and being offered a place. The popularity of the latter item highlights the importance of community networks in securing a place as an apprentice or trainee. Those reasons rated lowest included those relating to such pathways being a 'last resort' option ("couldn't get into university" and "didn't know what else to do"), and the fact that others they knew had done an apprenticeship or traineeship (friends and family). This was particularly interesting in light of previous evidence that apprenticeships and traineeships were seen by members of CaLD communities as options of 'last resort' only. Those involved in these training programmes, unsurprisingly, did not view the resulting careers in the negative light that others had mentioned, rating the fact that such jobs were stable, important, and to a lesser degree, well-paid, as important in their decision to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship. This may have been related to class issues, with a middle-class bias in the sample of CaLD community members consulted.

Table 11: Mean ratings of reasons for undertaking training

	Overall Mean	Apprentices	Trainees
Stable job	3.4	3.2	3.6
Interest	3.3	3.3	3.3
Offered place	3.3	3.3	3.3
Important job	3.2	3.3	3.0
Suited skills	2.9	3.0	2.7
Lots of jobs	2.9	2.8	3.0
Well paid	2.9	2.8	2.9
Always wanted that job	2.7	2.7	2.6
Prestigious job	2.6	2.6	2.6
Friends doing one	1.7	1.4	2.1
Other family had done one	1.7	1.9	1.4
Didn't know what to do	1.7	1.7	1.8
Couldn't do uni	1.4	1.4	1.3

When asked to provide any other reasons for their decision some participants indicated that they had experience within the industry already and wanted to obtain a qualification. Others reported liking the job, and two mentioned it as an alternative to high school, which they had not liked. Several participants also saw it as a way to "better themselves".

There were very few differences between apprentices and trainees, particularly in terms of interest and being offered a place. There was one significant difference, with trainees more likely to be influenced by their friends having undertaken a traineeship than apprentices were (t (58) = -2.51, p<0.05). There was a clear difference in responses, with 26% (n=7) of trainees rating this as 'very important' but none of the apprentices doing so. Of the seven trainees rating this most highly, six were born overseas, and they had been in Australia, on average, 5 years. Those trainees who indicated friends were 'not important' in their decision (n=15) had been in Australia an average of 13 years. It therefore seems that seeing friends undertake training opens up such options to new migrants, who, like the general community, seem to have limited knowledge of traineeships.

People influencing decision

As Table 12 shows, ratings of the importance of significant others who may have influenced the participants' decision to enrol in an apprenticeship or traineeship were not very high (2 = 'a little important'). Parents were rated most important overall, but not as

highly as previous research had suggested, however, this may be due to the age range within the sample. Those aged 21 years and under rated parents as significantly more important than those over 21 did (t (55) = 4.11, p<0.001), as shown in Figure 4. However, the older age group did not show a significant difference in their rating of other family, which could include both partner and children, and extended family.
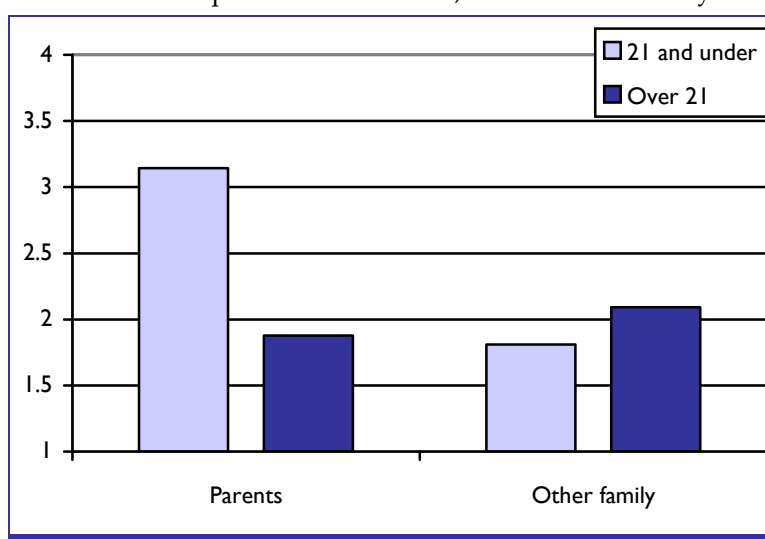
Figure 4: Mean ratings of importance of particular groups in decision to undertake training by those under and over 21 years

These results suggested that members of extended family and community had little influence over the decision to enter training. There were no significant differences between apprentices and trainees. Participants were also given the opportunity to indicate if there were any other people who had influenced them, and here a clear difference emerged. A total of five apprentices and six trainees provided a response; five of the trainees indicated it was their employer's idea, while the other was influenced by "work colleagues". Only one apprentice indicated that his employer had influenced him, and he was in a family business. It seems likely then that people entering traineeships are usually already employed within a business, before being offered a place. Given the difficulty that many new migrants have with obtaining employment, this pathway to a traineeship may not be open to them, while the limited social networks of new migrants may prevent them having contact with people already in trades (the major reported source of influence of apprentices).

Table 12: Mean ratings of importance of others on decision

	Overall Mean	Apprentices	Trainees
Parents	2.5	2.5	2.4
Other family	2.0	2.1	2.0
Teachers/counsellors	2.0	1.7	2.2
Siblings	1.9	1.9	1.9
Friends	1.9	1.8	1.9
Community leaders	1.6	1.4	1.8
Other people from same background	1.6	1.4	1.8

Satisfaction with training programme

Overall, most participants indicated that they were very satisfied with their training, with a mean score of 3.1 (out of 4). Apprentices were slightly more satisfied (mean = 3.2) than trainees (3.0), but this difference was not significant. Many specific aspects of their

experience were rated highly in contributing to this satisfaction (see Table 13). Most important was that the course provided many work opportunities after completion, the chance to learn new skills and get a good job, and that they enjoyed their work. Those factors rated lowest were learning Australian culture and aiding in settlement, most likely because the majority were not recent arrivals. Indeed, analysis confirmed a significant difference on the latter item, with those who had been in Australia for 5 years or less rating aiding in settlement significantly higher than did those who had been in Australia 6-10 years, 10-20 years, more than 20 years, or who were Australian born, ($F_{(4, 51)} = 6.50$, $p<0.001$). Those who had been in Australia 5 years or less rated learning Australian culture significantly higher only compared to those born in Australia ($F_{(4, 51)} = 2.80$, $p<0.05$).

Table 13: Mean ratings of contribution to course satisfaction

	Overall Mean	Apprentices	Trainees
Many work opportunities	3.7	3.8	3.6
Learning new skills	3.6	3.7	3.4
Enjoy the work	3.5	3.7	3.2
Chance to get good job	3.4	3.4	3.4
Increasing confidence	3.2	3.0	3.4
Money making opportunities	3.1	3.2	3.0
Meeting new people	3.0	3.0	3.0
Contributing to Australia	3.0	2.8	3.3
Making friends	3.0	2.9	3.0
Supporting family	2.9	3.2	2.6
Learning culture	2.4	2.2	2.7
Helping settlement	2.4	2.2	2.6

The only significant difference between training programmes was in gaining enjoyment from the work, with apprentices rating this significantly higher in contributing to satisfaction than trainees, ($t_{(56)} = 2.21$, $p<0.05$). Apprentices tended to rate the top few items more positively than trainees, who, in turn, rated the lowest few more highly than apprentices. This most likely reflects the greater numbers of new migrants among the trainees, as do their higher, but not significantly different, ratings of 'contributing to Australia' and 'increasing confidence'.

Only six participants provided further reasons for their satisfaction with their training programme. These were generally related to enjoying the work they did, and in one case the work environment. One participant also mentioned having money.

Problems experienced

Participants were asked to rate the impact of a series of potential problems; at home, in the workplace and in off-the-job training (see Table 14). In general, both apprentices and trainees rated these problems very low, with 'low income while training' the biggest concern. Issues to do with social acceptance were rated marginally less problematic than those in off-the-job training and the workplace. There were virtually no differences between the groups. Either participants were reluctant to admit to problems or they may simply have not experienced any issues perceived as resulting from their cultural difference. The latter seems especially likely, since the sample were seemingly well integrated into mainstream Australia, with most having attended high school in Australia, and those who were born overseas having been here an average of 10 years.

Table 14: Ratings of potential problems at home and in the workplace

		Overall Mean	Apprentices	Trainees
Work	Low income	1.9	2.0	1.8
	Treated differently work	1.4	1.6	1.3
	Disagree Boss	1.3	1.3	1.4
	Disagree Co-workers	1.3	1.3	1.4
	Language problems	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Not accepted	1.3	1.3	1.2
	Understanding TAFE work	1.3	1.3	1.2
	Expectations	1.2	1.2	1.3
	Problems at TAFE	1.2	1.3	1.1
	Misunderstandings	1.2	1.2	1.2
	Treated differently TAFE	1.1	1.2	1.0
Home	Parents disagree	1.1	1.1	1.1
	Friends disagree	1.1	1.1	1.1
	People look down on you	1.1	1.2	1.0

When participants were asked what problems they did have, the issues raised were general ones, seen throughout the workforce. These included: low pay in comparison to previous jobs; difficulty managing childcare; long travelling time; lack of support from supervisor; underemployment (part-time work); and difficulties managing the theoretical component of their training, in one case due to poor numeracy and literacy skills. Two participants mentioned age barriers, one as a mature-aged apprentice, who felt the younger employees didn't do enough work, and the other with feeling excluded from the family business because of his young age. Interestingly, one noted that 'swearing' was an issue, in response to the 'language difficulties' item, suggesting that some aspects of the workplace culture were incompatible with his cultural background.

When asked if they had ever wanted to quit, 22% (n=13) indicated 'yes', with three currently wanting to quit. The main reasons offered by apprentices (n=8) were related to poor wages, in some cases in the future as well as the present. Two mature-aged apprentices indicated that they had health problems which made the physical work involved difficult for them to manage. One participant had problems passing TAFE work. The five trainees indicated dissatisfaction with their work conditions, including the hours, their supervisor, and the nature of their work, as their reasons for wanting to quit. None of these issues seemed to be related to their status as people from CaLD backgrounds, and none mentioned racism, discrimination or harassment in the workplace because of their background. Those who still wanted to quit mainly mentioned the issue of pay, which would be unlikely to change over time, while another was generally dissatisfied with the job. Of those who no longer wanted to quit, some reported needing the money, others the value of the qualification, and another that they were now enjoying their job more.

Ways to help completion

A variety of responses were offered as ways to aid in completion, but most were general issues and did not seem to be related to participants' status as people from CaLD backgrounds. More money and greater support from family were cited most often. Given that problems with family were not strongly endorsed previously this may refer to financial support, but was not specified. Greater support from training providers and employers/supervisors was also requested, particularly in providing information and the opportunity to learn new skills. Issues with off-the-job training were also mentioned. These included difficulties with TAFE work, predominantly theory, and the desire to have more practical experiences. Some trainees also wanted more information about specific modules within their courses, and one would have liked more information at the

beginning. A few people also mentioned the need for more time to complete and more working hours. A large number of participants also offered internal motivation as a way to aid completion; indicating that they needed to "work harder" and "set my mind to it".

Apart from addressing issues to do with information and extra support for those struggling in TAFE courses, most of these issues would need to be dealt with at an individual level, and not by outside organisations. However, it may be necessary to provide further information to employers, supervisors and training organisations on their responsibilities to apprentices and trainees, and to ensure that those in training know that they can seek help from the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Support Network if they are having difficulties in the workplace or in off-the-job training.

Future career plans

Participants were asked about their plans after completion of their qualification. Most of these open-ended responses fell into a limited range of categories, the largest one being 'continue working in the same job' (57%). A further 3% hoped to work in a similar field to their existing qualification, while another 3% wanted to start a new career. The second largest response category was further study (13%), followed by starting one's own business (10%). Most planned further study in their current field, with only two wanting to pursue different areas. Travelling was the aim of 5% of participants, with the remainder not knowing what they wanted to do, or failing to respond. Most who wanted to travel planned to continue in the same area upon their return.

Those in traineeships were more inclined to say they would stay in the same job (67%), with 7% wanting to work in a similar field and 19% planning to pursue further study (the remainder did not know or provided no response). Among apprentices, only 52% planned to continue in the same job, with 6% wanting to pursue a new career, and 9% planning further study. However, 18% of apprentices wanted to start their own business, while none of the trainees did (highlighting differences in opportunities between the two types of qualifications, and between the areas in which each are available). Also, 9% of apprentices wanted to travel, which may reflect their younger age and the fact that they were predominantly Australian-born.

5.4   Key Findings

Overall, the results of the survey suggested that those from CaLD backgrounds who are already well integrated into the mainstream Australian community are most likely to enter training programmes, with most having attended at least high school in Australia (90%), and those not born in Australia having been here on average 10 years (no difference between apprentices and trainees). This was particularly the case with apprentices (97% Australian high schools; 55% born in Australia), compared to trainees (82% and 27%, respectively). The results also highlighted the importance of community networks in finding places as apprentices and trainees, and indicated that they had already overcome the major discriminatory barrier to access. 'Word-of-mouth' was the most important source of information and being offered a place was also an important factor in taking a position in a training programme. Existing networks were especially crucial for trainees, with most offered training by their existing employer, which may explain the greater take-up rate of this type of training by new migrants, but also the way in which they can be locked out of such training opportunities through lack of employment. The majority of problems and issues to do with completion related to general concerns and not to discrimination based on their background or language problems. This was most likely

evidence of their greater integration, but may also have been due to a reluctance to admit such problems. The main problems which existed related to support within on and off-the-job training, and general workplace issues, such as pay, hours, transport and childcare.

The following are the main points for each of the issues addressed:

- **English:** Most reported very good English, but with less proficiency among new migrants. While few indicated the need for vocationally specific English, twice as many would take it if offered.

- **Information:** The main source of information was speaking to people, either directly involved in the area, or those who could provide specific information and contacts.

- **Barriers:** The main barrier was lack of information, but most were rated low.

- **Reasons:** The most important reasons for choosing to undertake training were to have a stable job, for interest and being offered a place. Friends having undertaken similar training was an important influence for new migrants.

- **Influences:** Those with the most influence on the training decision were parents for young people, but for traineeships, employers were most important.

- **Satisfaction:** Most were very satisfied with their training programme. The aspects which contributed most to satisfaction were: providing job opportunities after completion, learning new skills, enjoying the work and being able to get a good job. Aiding settlement and learning about Australian culture were important for new migrants.

- **Problems:** The problems provided were rated very low. The few problems identified by participants, were the same as for most workers, with low pay particularly emphasised. Participants did not report discrimination or racism.

- **Aids to completion:** The main aids to completion were more money, greater support from family (possibly financial), increased individual motivation and more information about, and support within, on and off-the-job training.

- **Future plans:** The majority of participants planned to continue working in the same, or a similar, field after completion, with a smaller number of apprentices (but no trainees) planning to start their own businesses.

5.5   Conclusion

The results of the survey suggest that those already well integrated into the Australian community and particularly the workforce, in the case of trainees, are most likely to find pathways to apprenticeships and traineeships. However, it must be kept in mind that new migrants and especially those with limited English skills, may have been more likely to refuse to participate in the study. Importantly though, most participants were very satisfied with their training programme, and considered that it would lead to stable, important work, and provide access to further employment opportunities. Unlike members of CaLD communities not involved in apprenticeships and traineeships, the participants did not see these training programmes as options of 'last resort', but as valuable, skills-building opportunities. Clearly, they were more open to such options than some of those involved in previous stages of the data collection for this project, which may have been linked to socio-economic status. Participants reported few instances of discrimination; however, they had already overcome the major barrier to access by obtaining a placement, primarily through social and workplace networks. These results further support the options of offering work experience opportunities to new migrants and

expanding School-based apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities, as both would provide greater knowledge of work within these fields, and, most crucially, networking opportunities which may lead to future placements as an apprentice or trainee.

6   Recommendations

Four major recommendations emerge from this project. These recommendations are consistent with the State Government's current emphasis on addressing the shortage of skilled labour.

Each recommendation is accompanied by suggested implementation strategies expected to contribute to increased access, participation and retention of people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia.

The four recommendations are based upon information provided by the respondents in this study – members of CaLD communities, various industry and government stakeholders including employers, Registered Training Organisations, Group Training Schemes, those who work with new migrants, and people currently undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship – and by practices in other countries identified through the literature review.

In considering these recommendations and how to implement them, it is critical to be mindful that 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse' is not a uniform category. A 'one size fits all' approach is unlikely to achieve broad success. There are many important differences between and within groups typically categorised as 'CaLD', and these should always be considered when implementing any strategy. This point also highlights the need for DET to consult with members of CaLD communities when developing and implementing strategies.

The recommendations articulate with recent State Government strategies to address critical skills shortages through increased participation in apprenticeships and a more strategic focus on utilising the inherent skills of mature-aged migrants with a trade skills background. The State Government of Western Australia is committed to increasing participation in the workforce, across the board, through the *Plans 4 Jobs* scheme, especially because of the current severe skills shortage in the economy.

The State Government is also committed, through the four principles of civic values, fairness, equality, and participation enshrined in the *WA Charter of Multiculturalism*, to promoting the full participation of all groups in all aspects of our community – social, economic, and civil – and to remove any systemic barriers to full participation. This commitment is also embodied in multi-departmental *Policy Framework for Substantive Equality*.

It is clear that members of CaLD communities in this state, in particular those from new and emerging communities, do not currently enjoy full access to apprenticeships and traineeships. This is inequitable and is a loss for the economy; it must be remedied.

Aside from equity, denying equal opportunity also engenders resentment and hostility within our community, diminishes human value, and denies the state the full benefits of all its members' talents. The cost of discrimination accrues to those who are denied opportunity and to the society which tolerates discrimination.

6.1 Value the Diversity of the Community

> 1. **To support diversity in the community and the workplace by promoting diversity through public campaigns, ensuring materials promoting apprenticeships and traineeships are targeted appropriately for different communities, and developing mechanisms to make the pathway into apprenticeships and traineeships more accessible for members of CaLD communities.**

Secure community buy-in

Involve CaLD community members in developing campaigns and materials.

Include people from CaLD backgrounds, in particular those from new and emerging communities, in all advertising and promotional material, alongside people from more traditional groups and well established communities.

Portray the success you are seeking

Portray successful apprentices *and* employers from the target communities across a wide range of occupations and work environments.

Highlight diversity in all media promotion, television commercials, pamphlets, posters, etc.

Include some successful local people from CaLD communities, and in particular people from new and emerging communities, as role models when conducting school visits or community events to promote apprenticeships and traineeships.

Promote diversity

Consider diversity when employing DET staff who work directly with new migrants.

Develop a 'myths and realities' handbook outlining facts to clarify erroneous popular beliefs and misconceptions about apprenticeships and traineeships among some new and emerging community groups and society at large.

Re-enkindle the *Productive Diversity* message of the 1990s through media publicity to illustrate the benefits of diversity. Such publicity could include concrete evidence of the benefits of a diverse community and workforce (e.g., creativity, new skills, additional resources such as languages, new social and international business networks). The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's *Diversity Makes Good Business* project conducted in 1993 could be used as a model to further research the challenges and new productive possibilities embedded in workplace diversity.

Work in close collaboration with business and industry groups to promote the concrete benefits that employees from diverse backgrounds can bring to an organisation – for example, increased networks of clients within diverse communities locally, nationally and internationally; the possibility of capitalising on the diversity of the workforce as a 'selling'

argument to promote a business; personal learning and satisfaction from working with people from diverse backgrounds.

Work against racism

Work to overcome widespread perceptions of individual and institutional racism by:

- Promoting the obligations of policy makers, service providers, and employers within the apprenticeship and traineeship system, under the WA Equal Opportunity Act 1994, in the areas of policy development, service provision, and recruitment;

- Considering working in conjunction with the Substantive Equality Unit at the Equal Opportunity Commission to address issues of actual and perceived discrimination, and using the *Policy Framework for Substantive Equality* to form a basis for this collaborative work;

- Promoting the participation of people from disadvantaged CaLD backgrounds in the decision making processes relating to the planning, development, implementation, and promotion of policies, programmes, and services in the area of apprenticeships and traineeships.

Increase the status of apprenticeships and traineeships

Work to increase the status of apprenticeships and traineeships, both generally in the community and among members of CaLD communities, by promoting the individual and social benefits of apprenticeships and traineeships, and careers in the trades' areas.

6.2   Greater Communication and Cooperation

> **2.   Ensure greater coordination and dissemination of all information about programmes, organisations, research, and other information pertaining to apprenticeships and traineeships, pursue greater cooperation and communication between and within Federal and State Government departments, and ensure that current and new sources of information about apprenticeships and traineeships are well promoted and easily accessed by members of CaLD communities.**

Consider the development of a Clearinghouse

A Clearinghouse with a current, easily accessible webpage, designed for use by stakeholders and also by community members seeking information about apprenticeships and traineeships, is a suggested way of improving communication and coordination of information about apprenticeships and traineeships. Such a webpage would need to be well-resourced and continually updated.

The existence and usefulness of this Clearinghouse could be publicised among all stakeholders, including School Counsellors, AMES/AMEP psychologists, Job Network members, Centrelink and OQU.

The advantages of face-to-face interaction over paper-based methods of information dissemination should be capitalised on by having staff in a Clearinghouse dedicated to facilitating placement-matching.

Employment Direction Network Career Development Centres

Actively pursue the conversion of the Training and Information Centres into one-stop shop 'Employment Direction Network Career Development Centres'. The partnership between Commonwealth and State in the provision of services at the new metropolitan Centre in Wellington Street, Perth, is unique in Australia and will provide enhanced services for all people, but especially for those from disadvantaged CaLD communities. This Centre, as well as the regional centres, would also be expected to make extensive use of the proposed Clearinghouse.

The use and success of such Centres may be further increased by employing some staff who are members of local CaLD communities, and more generally ensuring that staff are well prepared to interact with people from CaLD backgrounds.

The planned movement of the OQU into the proposed EDN Career Development Centre in Wellington Street is important for facilitating the skills recognition process. It is suggested that TAFE Archives, currently housed with OQU, also be moved there, as they provide a valuable resource of information on both current and previous TAFE courses.

Ensure information is widely disseminated

The contributions currently made by programmes, centres, and agencies such as Adult Migrant Education Services and English Programmes and AMEP- Central TAFE (AMES/AMEP), Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), migrant resource centres, Centrelink and Job Network agencies could be enhanced by them having full access to information about programmes, organisations, research and other information relevant to apprenticeships and traineeships.

Intensify current campaigns to reach young prospective students and their parents from CaLD and non CaLD backgrounds (e.g., school visits) and publicise DET's EDN Career Development Centres as critical resources when considering career paths.

Reflect the diversity of the community

All promotional material should reflect the diversity of the Western Australian community. With the enduring community belief about the low-status of apprenticeships and traineeships, this is critical so as not to give the impression that only students from CaLD backgrounds are being targeted for trade areas, as this could be perceived as a form of systemic discrimination.

Greater communication

Establish a regular forum for information exchange among all stakeholders. This could take any form, ranging from formalised knowledge-exchange seminars, to more informal email discussion lists (including archives of previous dialogues).

Whether or not a Clearinghouse is established, DET must work to disseminate more widely information about training courses offered by TAFE Colleges and other RTOs to both those working with new migrants and members of CaLD communities.

6.3 Include CaLD communities as a Priority Funding category under the Group Training Scheme funding model

> 3. **Add new and emerging communities from CaLD backgrounds to the list of priority-funded groups under the Group Training Scheme funding model, and seek other such mechanisms to increase participation and retention of people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships**

Extra support services

To compensate for the extra time required for the training process and extra individual support, employers, including Group Training Schemes, hiring new migrants from disadvantaged CaLD backgrounds should be offered extra support services, perhaps especially when employers are themselves from CaLD backgrounds, such as:

- Subsidised vocationally-specific English courses;
- A designated support person in the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Support Network;
- Cultural-awareness and diversity training programmes.

Additional incentives

It may also be appropriate to offer additional incentives to employers to compensate for the extra effort required in training new migrants in areas like occupational health and safety, work conditions, workplace culture, and specific local industry issues. This could take the form of funding short-term training courses or be a more direct incentive, keeping in mind that such incentives can be open to abuse, including exploitation of new migrants.

Mentors

Involve mentors from CaLD backgrounds to guide and assist people already in apprenticeships and traineeships toward successful completion of their course.

6.4 Strategically Target Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy and Resources towards CaLD Communities

> 4. **Facilitate the participation of people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships through sustainable target programmes.**

These target programmes should rely on on-going policy and resource commitments, rather than competitive funding to ensure sustainability.

Expand the School Apprenticeship Link (SAL) and the School-Based Traineeships (SBT) programmes in areas with low participation

Both Federal and State initiatives within the *VET in Schools* programme appear to have widespread success, though not in all states, schools, or demographic sectors. Paralleling this, expanding the State-based SAL and SBT programmes into more schools and into occupational areas with currently low participation rates would expose many more high-

school students to apprenticeships and traineeships, and to the networks through which those are usually attained. Such an initiative would be of further promotional value too, in relation to publicising such careers as valued alternatives to the professions, among students, their peers and parents, and the wider community.

Develop and provide ongoing support for vocationally-specific English programmes

Vocationally-specific English programmes could be modelled on the existing Certificate of Applied Vocational Study Skills, which provides support to low literacy TAFE students in a team-teaching environment. These programmes could be provided by TAFE Colleges or other RTOs in conjunction with traineeship and apprenticeship courses, with appropriate resourcing.

Lobby to increase the number of hours of English funded by the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs for new migrants above the current level of 510.

Pursue existing efforts toward a more practical, flexible skills recognition process

This important issue is being addressed by DET, and by the Commonwealth Joint Standing Committee on Migration's inquiry into Overseas Skills Recognition, Upgrading and Licensing. All groups reporting in the present study stressed the need for simplification, this includes both the processes themselves and the pathways to accessing assessment services, which often must be through employers, RTOs or specific industry bodies. This process would be most useful for those migrants with considerable expertise and experience, by providing equivalency certification, rather than an avenue to apprenticeships and traineeships. If implemented, these strategies would most appropriately be within the purview of the new EDN Career Development Centres, and could be administered by the Overseas Qualifications Unit, given their existing expertise. The following specific suggestions were made:

- More flexible, practical, holistically-based, rather than module-based, assessment. The World Skills Competition provides a best-practice example of how this may work through task-based assessment to the World Skills Standards. Applicants could be required to perform complex work tasks and be asked to explain the theory-behind the practices.

- Skills could be evaluated against the standard competencies outlined in the Australian Qualifications Framework for the awarding of trade certificates.

- Identification of specific gaps between an individual's skills and the Australian standards for the trade. This would lead to the identification of what bridging training is necessary. The pilot programme currently being re-developed for the plumbing industry is a good example of how bringing the skills of new migrants to Australian standards can be done effectively.

Develop bridging courses for new migrants with prior skills and experience

DET could build on the approach of the Canadian vocational education system for providing bridging programmes for skilled new migrants, but aim this at trade-based occupations, especially those with acute skills shortages, rather than only at professions. These bridging courses should include:

- Vocationally-specific English language training;

- Training in local workplace culture, practices and communication;

- Technical upgrading to meet Australian Standards necessary for registration within these specific occupations;

- A work experience component to gain practical knowledge of local workplace environments;
- Flexibility, in order to accommodate individuals' specific training needs.

OQU is currently funding a number of pilot programmes, in conjunction with Trades Recognition Australia, in specific occupations looking at both skills recognition and gap training to meet local competencies. Should these prove to be successful, DET could use them as models for similar initiatives in other industries, and could also consider the inclusion of a provisional registration component.

Further develop the fast-track apprenticeship scheme for skilled but unqualified adults

The pilot programme currently being conducted in the metals trades has been received extremely positively by employers. Employers in other trades are viewing this programme as a model for the future. This would facilitate the transition into the workforce of migrants who have some basic skills, but need considerably more retraining and/or training to Australian standards and in local conditions than a bridging course could provide. However, pathways to fast-track, including finding an employer, need to be accessible to new migrants, perhaps through the EDN Career Development Centre.

Establish short-term courses specifically designed for new migrants as preparation to join the Australian workforce

Develop short term courses based on existing successful TAFE programmes, such as the New Opportunities for Women (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse), Gaining Access to Training and Employment and Certificate I Industrial Skills (Entry Level Training). These programmes also include a work experience component, which is invaluable because it provides some immersion within the local workforce.

Use the family-of-trade approach, to attract those with interest and some prior experience in a specific trade area, and to overcome reluctance to engage in general training that does not recognise prior experience. A vocationally-specific English component could also be incorporated within the short-term courses.

Expand structured opportunities for work experience

These opportunities need to be advertised more widely, as they are not well-known.

Assistance programmes designed to facilitate such experience are more likely to be more effective than those requiring participants to organise their own work experience.

Such programmes would best be coordinated by the EDN Career Development Centres.

Develop shorter hours part-time traineeships

Some industries, particularly those in which work is predominantly part-time, may benefit from the introduction of traineeships of 15 hours per week. This option is available in other states. However, caution must be exercised to avoid creating 'ethnic ghettoes' in particular low-paid areas.

Develop a scheme to involve leading CaLD community members as a bridging resource between communities and official programmes

Having respected community members involved as a bridging resource assists information access for members of CaLD communities, and provides legitimacy and support to vocational education and training as a valuable employment pathway.

Glossary

Apprenticeship	An apprenticeship is a full-time employment situation where the apprentice is indentured to the employer for the term of their training (usually three or four years, depending on the qualification). The apprentice receives both on-the-job practical training and experience from the employer, and off-the-job theoretical and practical training with an RTO. At the end of their term, provided they have completed all the necessary competencies, the apprentice is awarded a nationally recognised qualification (usually equivalent to a TAFE Certificate III). They can work as a 'tradesperson' within their industry and can also go on to further specialisation and higher levels of accreditation within their trade, or university study.
CaLD	People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds are those who have emigrated from countries which are culturally different from Australia. It is more inclusive than NESB, which excludes those from countries which speak English but are still culturally different from Australia, such as India and Sri Lanka. It does not include Indigenous Australians.
CAVSS	A Certificate of Applied Vocational Study Skills is available from TAFE. It involves offering in-class support (team-teaching) to people with low literacy and numeracy skills enrolled in TAFE courses. It provides vocationally specific literacy and numeracy skills.
GTS	Group Training Schemes provide apprentices and trainees to employers, but they are the direct employer of those staff. They take on all the direct responsibilities of an employer, including hiring, wages and insurance, and receive payments from the employers they provide apprentices and trainees to. Apprentices and trainees are not indentured to a single employer for their term, but to the Group Training Scheme. Group Training Schemes also receive funding from the Federal and State Governments.
OQU	The Overseas Qualification Unit is a part of the Careers Development Directorate of WA's DET. It provides recognition and equivocation of overseas qualifications.
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning is a process by which previous knowledge and experience is assessed in order to determine skill level. Previous knowledge and experience may be from learning institutions or learnt

	on the job. RPL can be used to provide credit for entry into institutions of learning or for qualifications such as Trade Certificates.
RTO	Registered Training Organisations are authorised to issue nationally recognised vocational education and training qualifications (under the Australian Qualification Framework), not just for apprentices and trainees. They can be private or public. All RTOs in WA must be approved by the Training Accreditation Council.
TAFEWA	Technical and Further Education Western Australia is WA's public RTO. TAFE colleges provide VET qualifications in a wide variety of fields. There are four TAFEs in the Perth metropolitan area: Challenger (south-western), Swan (eastern and hills), West Coast (northern) and Central (city). Central TAFE runs the AMEP and West Coast runs the AMES. There are also six regional TAFEs: Central West, C.Y. O'Connor, Great Southern, Kimberley, Pilbara and South West Regional.
TRA	Trades Recognition Australia is part of the Commonwealth's Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. It provides assessment of overseas qualifications in trades and para-professions, and issues Australian Recognised Trades Certificates to migrants (for DIMIA) and members of the general community. Assessment of people in WA is primarily based on telephone interview, and can then lead to practical skills assessment.
Traineeship	A traineeship is a full-time or part-time employment situation where the trainee is indentured to an employer for the period of the training (usually 12 months full-time, but varies between qualifications and industries). The trainee receives on-the-job training and experience, and may also receive off-the-job training from an RTO. A nationally recognised qualification is received upon completion (equivalent to a Certificate II, III or IV from TAFE, depending on length of time and extent of training). This qualification provides access to increased employment and further training opportunities, either in VET or university.
VET	The Vocational Education and Training system consists of organisations which provide post-secondary learning leading to qualifications within specific occupations. It does not include universities. There are both public (e.g., TAFEWA) and private providers of VET. Qualifications which can be attained include Certificates I, II, III and IV; Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas.
WELL	The Workplace English Language and Literacy programme is funded by the Commonwealth Government. An employer can apply to run the programme for a group of existing workers with low English language and literacy skills. The programme is run within the workplace and must report measurable outcomes back to the Commonwealth Government.

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Appendix A: Focus Group Pack

A.1 Instructions for Focus Group Facilitators

Each person to sign the consent form after they have read it and agreed to participate. Each person receives a copy of the project description to keep

When you're ready to start, make sure microphone is plugged into recorder and turned on. Then press "Rec/Pause" button on recorder. Press "Rec/Pause" to pause and "Stop" to finish.

Main aim of focus group is to find out what the people in that group think are the reasons why people from CaLD (migrant) backgrounds are less likely to do apprenticeships or traineeships (vocational education)

Also interested in what they think might be the reasons why people from migrant backgrounds might not remain in apprenticeships or traineeships

Focus group schedule is a guideline only, you should use your own words to ask questions in a way you think the other people will understand.

Focus groups are more like a conversation than an interview

When finished, give all people their $25 reward and have them sign the sheet indicating that they have received the reward

Each person to complete a demographics form (but this will not be linked directly with anything they say in the focus group- it will provide an overall summary of the people who have been involved in the research).

Thank you again for your help with this project.

A.2 Consent Form

Project Title: **Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships for People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) Backgrounds**

We are a research team from the Australian Academy of Race Relations at Murdoch University. We have been asked by the Department of Education and Training to investigate and identify the existing pathways to apprenticeships and traineeships for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds.

You can help in this study by agreeing to be interviewed/participating in a focus group. This should take between one hour and an hour and half. You will be asked to discuss any barriers that you perceive, to participation in apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia for people from CaLD backgrounds; any successful practices you are aware of, that have been utilised by employers or group training schemes to recruit, support and/or retain apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds; and any potential strategies you may have for addressing these identified barriers.

You may withdraw from the study at any time. All information given is confidential and no names or other information that might identify you will be used in any publication arising from the research. A short summary of the final report will be provided to participants.

If you are willing to participate in this study, could you please complete the details below. If you have any questions about this project please feel free to contact either Susan Hansen or the project director, Iain Walker. We are happy to discuss any concerns you may have on how this study has been conducted, or alternatively you can contact Murdoch University's Human Research Ethics Committee.

- -

I (the participant) have read the information above. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to take part in this activity, however, I know that I may change my mind and stop at any time. I understand that all information provided is treated as confidential and will not be released by the investigator unless required to do so by law.

I agree for this interview to be taped.

I agree that research data gathered for this study may be published provided my name or other information which might identify me is not used.

Participant:

Date:

Investigator:

A.3   Project Description

Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships for people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds

Opportunities presented by community diversity are immense and can be captured in government, business, and community services. However, the State's ability to capitalise on its diversity is hindered by unemployment and lower participation rates by those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds in training and development.

People from CaLD backgrounds have relatively low participation rates in apprenticeships and traineeships locally and nationally, which may lead to restricted access to employment in certain fields (Jupp, 2001). DET statistics indicate that people who speak a language other than English at home represent just 3.3% of apprentices and 8.8% of students currently in traineeships.

In response to these low participation rates, the Department of Education and Training has engaged the Australian Institute of Race Relations at Murdoch University to:

- Research and identify barriers to participation in apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia for people from CaLD backgrounds (including attitudinal, academic, systemic and structural barriers);

- Identify successful practices utilised by employers and group training schemes to recruit, support and/or retain apprentices and trainees from CaLD backgrounds; and

- Recommend strategies to address identified barriers, which include successful practices utilised by employers, as well as structural and systemic changes.

The Australian Academy of Race Relations has assembled a diverse team of researchers with the necessary background knowledge, skills and experience in research and reporting to carry out a comprehensive and innovative review of pathways to apprenticeships and traineeships. The team includes experienced education, psychology, sociology, community development and diversity researchers who appreciate the issues of integrating culturally and linguistically diverse people into the vocational and educational training system. The team also includes members who are experienced in qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis and best practice research methodology. They have wide ranging experience in report writing that gives an assurance that the final report and recommendations will be of value to the Department and stakeholders.

The team brings to the project:

- A comprehensive background in education, psychology, sociology and community, and diversity;

- An understanding of the major challenges that people from CaLD backgrounds face in participating in the Australian community in general, in employment and education aspects in particular, and in contemporary vocational and educational training more specifically; and

- The provision of practical, well-grounded skills in research, analysis, and reporting.

The team's diversity will enable different frames of understanding and analysis to be brought to bear on the research question and will result in a valuable range of recommendations being provided to the Department.

A.4 Demographics Form

In order to understand our sample, we would like you to complete the following form. This information is anonymous and will be used only in aggregated form.

Thank you.

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity
4. Migration category
5. Length of time in Australia
6. Your educational background
7. Educational and occupation background of parents

8. Your proficiency in English
9. Your previous work experience
10. Your country of birth
11. Your current living situation
12. Presence of other family members in Australia.

A.5   Focus Group Schedule for Young People

Questions are a guide only: These are the questions to keep in mind as you conduct the focus group. Facilitators should put the questions into words that they think the people in the group will understand.

1. What, if anything, do you know about apprenticeships and traineeships?
   - What kinds of skills can you learn; what kinds of jobs do they lead to? (what kinds of options/pathways are available)
   - How did you come to know about apprenticeships/traineeships (careers counsellor, media, parents, peers, etc?)
2. Have you ever thought about undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship?
   - Why?/Why not?
3. What is most attractive about doing an apprenticeship/traineeship?
4. What doesn't appeal about doing an apprenticeship/traineeship?
5. Do you think that there are specific barriers for people from CaLD backgrounds to attaining an apprenticeship or traineeship?
6. Do you have any ideas about how we could overcome these, to encourage more people from CaLD backgrounds to undertake traineeships/apprenticeships?

A.6   Focus Group Schedule for Parents

Questions are a guide only: These are the questions to keep in mind as you conduct the focus group. Facilitators should put the questions into words that they think the people in the group will understand.

1. What, if anything, do you know about apprenticeships and traineeships?
   - What kinds of skills can you learn; what kinds of jobs do they lead to? (what kinds of options/pathways are available)
   - How did you come to know about apprenticeships/traineeships (careers counsellor, media, children, etc?)
2. How would you feel about your children undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship? Would you encourage them to do so?
3. What do you think is most attractive for young people about doing an apprenticeship/traineeship?
4. What do you think doesn't appeal to young people about doing an apprenticeship/traineeship?

5. Did you have the option to do an apprenticeship or traineeship?

- If not, do you now think you might have taken this option?
- Why/why not?

6. Do you think that there are specific barriers for people from CaLD backgrounds to attaining an apprenticeship or traineeship?

7. Do you have any ideas about how we could overcome these, to encourage more people from CaLD backgrounds to undertake traineeships/apprenticeships?

Appendix B: Telephone Survey

STRUCTURED TELEPHONE SURVEY FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES FROM CULTURALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

INTRODUCTION:

May I please speak to (name)?   This is (   ) from Murdoch University. We are doing a research project for the Department of Education & Training into apprenticeships and traineeships. We would really appreciate your help in answering some questions about your experiences as an apprentice or trainee. You were randomly selected from the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Support Network database, held by the Department of Education and Training, to take part in this survey. All your responses will be confidential, and will not be identified as having come from you.

DEMOGRAPHICS – Questions about you

Are you enrolled in an: *Apprenticeship*   *Traineeship*

Please give title: _____

How long have you been doing this course?   _____

What level of school did you finish?   _____

Where was this?   _____

I n what year was this?   _____

Do you have any previous qualifications?   *Yes   No*

If Yes, please outline: _____

Any previous job experience?   _____

_____

Are you currently working as well as studying for your qualification?   *Yes   No*

If Yes, how many hours per week do you work?   _____

What languages do you speak?   _____

At what level would you say you speak English:

   Basic   *Good*   *Very Good*   *Fluent*

At what level would you say you write in English:

   Basic   *Good*   *Very Good*   *Fluent*

Have you ever used English language support programmes, such as AMES, IEC or others?

Yes   *No*

If Yes, which programmes and for how long?   _____

Do you think you currently need some Vocationally Specific English, that is related to your area of study?   *Yes*   *No*

If this were available would you enrol in the course?   *Yes*   *No*

QUESTIONS – About your apprenticeship or traineeship

How important were each of these sources in providing **information** about your apprenticeship or traineeship?

	Not Important	*A Little Important*	*Quite Important*	*Very Important*
Advertisement	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Brochure	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Career information at school	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Career Expo	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Internet	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Someone told me	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Other [please describe]	_____			

How important were each of the following as **barriers** to you starting your apprenticeship or traineeship?

	Not Important	*A Little Important*	*Quite Important*	*Very Important*
Lack of information about apprenticeships or traineeships generally	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Lack of information about options	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Lack of information about what it involved	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Family disapproved	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Friends disapproved	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Language problems	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
School marks not good enough	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**

How important was each of the following was in your decision to do an apprenticeship or traineeship?

	Not Important	*A Little Important*	*Quite Important*	*Very Important*
Interest in area	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Suited existing skills	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Always wanted to do that job	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Lots of jobs available	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Well paid job	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Important job	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**

Prestigious job	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Stable job	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
I was offered a place	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
All my friends were doing one	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Other family members had done one				
	NI	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Couldn't get into university	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Didn't know what else to do	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Other [please describe]	_____			

How important were each of the following people or groups were in your decision to do an apprenticeship or traineeship?

	Not Important	*A Little Important*	*Quite Important*	*Very Important*
Parents	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Siblings	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Other family members	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Friends	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Teachers/careers counselors	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Community leaders	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Other people of same ethnic/national background				
	NI	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Other [please describe]	_____			

How would you rate your satisfaction with your course   out of 4, with 1 being the lowest rating and 4 being the highest level of satisfaction: _____

[not satisfied] 1   2   3   4 [very satisfied]

How important are each of these things in contributing to your satisfaction with your apprenticeship and traineeship?

	Not Important	*A Little Important*	*Quite Important*	*Very Important*
The chance to get a good job	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Learning a new skill or trade	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
I enjoy the work	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Many opportunities of working when I finish				
	NI	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Chance to make a lot of money when I finish				
	NI	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Meeting new people	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Making new friends	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Increasing my confidence	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Helping me settle into Australia	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Learning Australian culture	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Helping to support my family	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**
Contributing to Australia	**NI**	**LI**	**QI**	**VI**

Other [please describe]   _____

Have you experienced any problems with the following things while you've been doing your apprenticeship or traineeship?

	No Problems	*A Few Problems*	*Some Problems*	*Many Problems*

At Home:

Parents don't agree with decision

               NP   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Friends don't agree with decision

               NP   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

People (family, friends, community members) looking down on you

               NP   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

At Work:

Language Problems   **NP**   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Misunderstandings due to cultural differences

               NP   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Job wasn't what you thought it would be

               NP   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Not accepted by other workers **NP**   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Disagreements with boss   **NP**   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Disagreement with other workers

               NP   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Treated differently from other workers

               NP   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Problems at TAFE or other training place

               NP   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Problems with understanding TAFE work

               NP   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Treated differently to other students at TAFE

               NP   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Low income whilst doing course

               NP   **FP**   **SP**   **MP**

Other [please describe]   _____

Have you ever wanted to quit your apprenticeship or traineeship?   *Yes*   *No*

If yes, why?   _____

Do you still want to quit today?   *Yes*   *No*

Please say why/why not?   _____

What sorts of things would help you finish this course?

_____

What do you intend doing once you finish your course? [Briefly outline]

_____

Do you have any other comments related to your apprenticeship or traineeship?

_____

DEMOGRAPHICS – more questions about you

Age in years:	_____	
Sex:	*Male*	*Female*
Are you financially supporting family members at home:	*Yes*	*No*
If Yes, how many?	_____	
Were you born in Australia?	*Yes*	*No*
If not: Country of birth:	_____	
Number of years in Australia:	_____	
Ethnicity:	_____	

Thank you so much for your participation in this research. Your help is greatly appreciated.