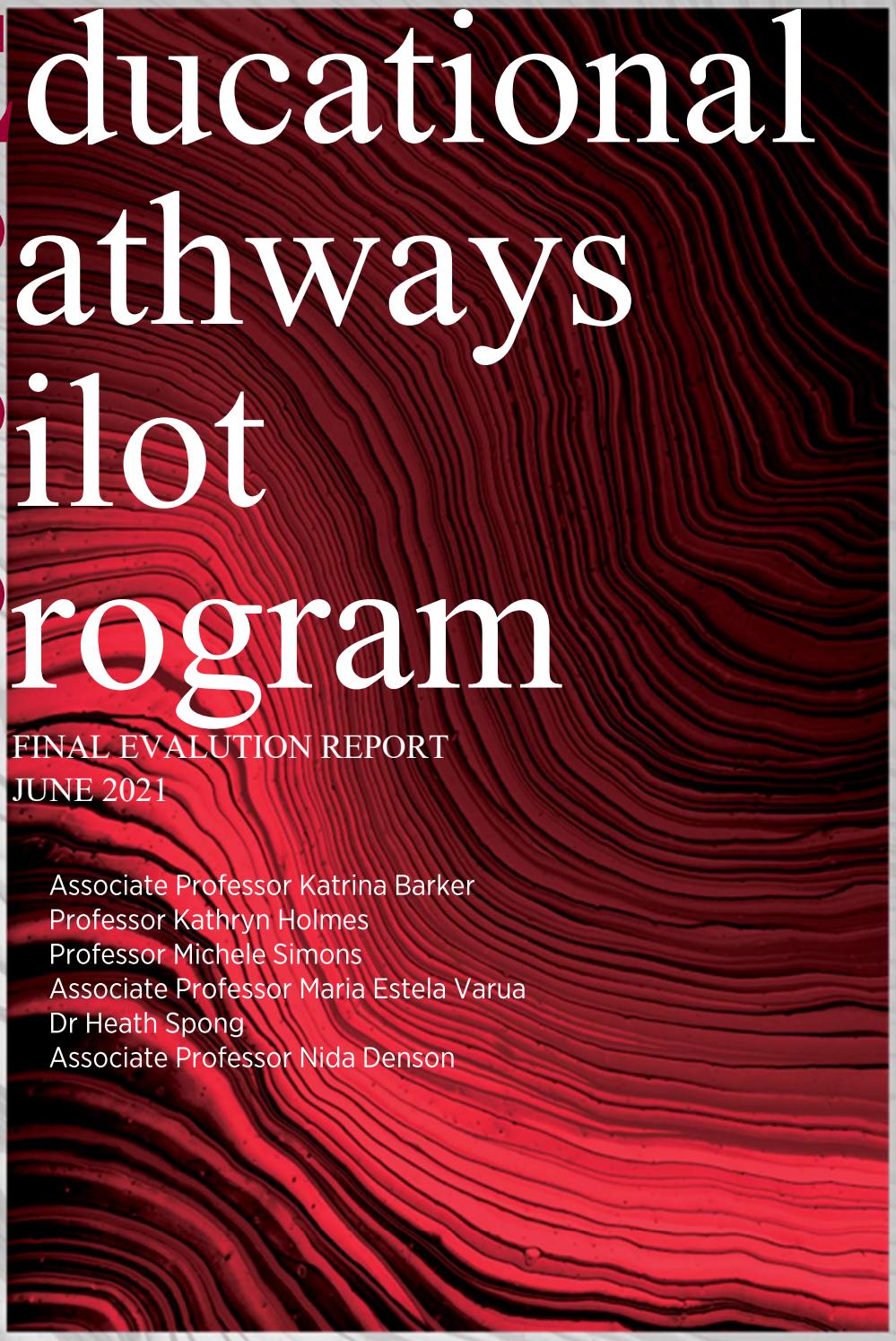
Educational Pathways Pilot Program



FINAL EVALUTION REPORT
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Executive Summary

Educational Pathways Pilot Program background

The NSW Department of Education describes the Educational Pathways Pilot Program (EPPP) as an innovative program designed to improve further education and career outcomes for young people. The EPPP aims to transform the way students and parents/carers think about post-school options and future careers. A key objective of the EPPP is to prepare students and young people to transition between school, tertiary education, and employment.

The EPPP consists of 10 unique pilots. These were trialled in 24 high schools in South West Sydney (15) and on the North Coast (9) of NSW in 2020 and continue in 2021.

Evaluation

The aims of the pilot evaluation were to:

1. Identify the experiences and views of the EPPP participants who were both directly and indirectly involved in the program;
2. Ascertain the EPPP intervention-related benefits and costs; and
3. Identify enablers and barriers to implementing the EPPP with the purpose to improve the program for future delivery as well as inform the scalability of the EPPP.

Methodology

The evaluation was informed by quantitative and qualitative sources of data. Surveys were conducted to capture the experiences and views of all stakeholder groups including students (n = 1,129 for the 10 pilots), parents/carers (n= 40), educators (n= 123), training organisations (n= 21) and businesses/employers (n= 26). Interviews with all stakeholder groups (n = 134) and various NSW Department of Education datasets were used to examine the implementation of the EPPP and informed five in-depth case studies. The case-studies serve to provide a contextualised understanding of the perceived value of the pilots and the factors that impacted upon implementation. An accompanying cost-benefit analysis drew from both the survey and case study findings to assess the benefits and costs for each of the EPPP pilots.

Findings

Stakeholders' experiences and views of the EPPP and intervention-related benefits

The relative experiences and views captured from surveys and interviews were triangulated to gain perspectives on which of the pilots were the most impactful (as implemented) in terms of strengthening young people's knowledge, skills and confidence in career decision making and better aligning their career aspirations with their study and career plans. Pilots and the components within them that were the most successful at achieving these outcomes are outlined below.

YES+, Fee free "test and try" VET, and Increasing the uptake of SBATs: Industry engagement

Across all the stakeholder groups, the pilots where students actively engaged in developing career-related knowledge and skills through firsthand exposure to industry, were the most highly valued EPPP pilots. Students experienced different industries through three pilots (YES+, Fee Free "test and try" VET, and Increasing the uptake of SBATs). The industry embedded experiences were successful in facilitating students' decision making about their future study and career plans.

Teachers and school leaders reported that the individualised and targeted support students received from the SBAT mentor was a strength of the EPPP. Interviews revealed the benefits of the SBAT mentor extended beyond the school through building networks with training organisations, businesses and employers. Businesses and employers mentioned in interviews that having an SBAT mentor helped make hosting students undertaking an SBAT easier. In the surveys, educators (Mean /5, 95% CI [4.32,4.75]) and training organisations (Mean /5, 95% CI [3.99,4.84]) agreed the SBAT mentor role was useful in supporting students. Mentors would trouble-shoot on behalf of businesses reducing the workload for them and improving the match between students and businesses.

EDGE workshops

The EDGE workshops were valued across different stakeholders as evidence from the focus groups conducted with students and teachers and interviews with external stakeholders. Students (n = 97) rated the EDGE workshops very highly (Mean /5, *95% CI [4.27:4.59]*) and this was further substantiated with the demand for the pilot exceeding the number of available places. The EDGE workshops engaged Year 9 and 10 students in activities preparing them for the workplace which were reported to be both relevant, useful and enjoyable. The value of EDGE workshops can be maximised by scheduling them to occur before students' complete visits to workplaces.

New model of careers education

Interviews with school leaders and careers advisers confirmed the quality of careers events improved with the introduction of the Careers immersion teams (CIT) and with the role of the Head teacher - careers (HTC). Careers events were reported by school leaders and careers advisers in interviews at all five case study schools to have increased in relevance, efficiency, and convenience. The variety of offerings for students widened with better matching of careers advice to the local community context and alignment with students' interests.

Wrap around u17's and Regional VET pathways (RVP): Holistic student support

The Wrap around u17's and RVP pilots contributed uniquely to the suite of the EPPP pilots since the target participants were young people who may leave school early placing them at risk of disconnecting from education, employment and training. The demand for these pilots was extremely high. Relative to RVP participants, Wrap around u17's participants were more interested in further study (Mean /5, *95% CI [3.99,4.63])* and were highly motivated about getting as much as possible out of their studies (Mean /5, *95% CI [4.16:4.71]*) but noted they had potential obstacles that may hinder their study or future employment (Mean /5, *95% CI [4.16,4.71]*) such as financial or extenuating personal circumstances. Capturing young people earlier, while they are interested and motivated to re-engage in learning is a strength of the Wrap around u17's pilot. Counsellors interviewed suggested they had more flexibility, resourcing and discretion compared with schools to provide individualised support to students. RVP participants reported that their engagement in the pilot was somewhat useful for preparing them for a job and career in the future (Mean /5, *95% CI [2.84, 3.42*) and had them thinking about doing Vocational Education and Training, apprenticeship or traineeship (Mean /5, *95% CI [3.52,4.14]*). The two most valued components of the RVP pilot were the personal mentoring and support from the youth mentors followed by the career resources and information they were provided (Appendix 2, Table 41).

What worked well and what were the challenges experienced with the implementation of the EPPP pilots?

Figures 1 and 2 report the most frequently shared positive and challenging aspects of implementing EPPP which emerged from interviews with students, parents/carers, school leaders, careers and transition advisers and teachers, training organisations and businesses/employers.

Figure 1. Reports on what worked well

Figure 2. Reports on what was challenging

School leaders stated that it was premature to assess the full impact of Anticipated/Actual Enrolment Return (AAER) exemptions in 2020 since the schools only had the policy change confirmed in October 2020 and the full impact would not be experienced by schools until 2021. Instead, they speculated the impact of AAER exemptions would be more positive and benefit smaller schools relative to larger schools. School leaders were still favourable of the exemption in larger schools, but they suggested that the impact would likely be minimal.

Cost Benefit Analysis findings in relation to EPPP and scaling of EPPP

The Cost Benefit Analysis was used to identify those pilots that appear to be cost-effective based on the current cost data, in addition to developing longer-term projections based on forecasts of both costs and benefits, and potential numbers of students in future years. Appendix 2 outlines the methodology, presents a table with the results for the individual pilots and recommendations.

The most notable findings and perhaps unsurprisingly, were that the resource-based pilots (Pilots 1, 4, & 6) were found to be the most cost-effective in terms of their delivery, particularly when considered in terms of cost per student. Mentoring based pilots (Pilots 5, 9, & 10) were more expensive, due to the individualised nature of the support they provide. However, much of the additional benefits derived from these pilots stemmed from this mentoring relationship provided to students.

The Experiential based pilots (Pilots 3, 7, & 8), lie in between the other two groups in terms of expense, but also have the potential to garner significant long-term benefits. Indeed, Pilot 7 "jumps" from a low ranking in terms of costs, to a high ranking in terms of Benefit-Cost Ratio, due to positive student responses and the associated potential to deliver improved labour-market outcomes. Pilot 2, which combines resources, mentoring, and experience, is a cost-effective program, but is likely to generate additional support costs which will need to be covered in some manner or be absorbed by schools.

Recommendations

Recommendations for scaling and future implementation considerations are addressed in Table 1.

Table 1. Recommendations and substantiating evidence informing pilot scaling

Mode of delivery	Substantiation
1.Digital Careers Toolbox **Continue and scale with some modifications and embed in Pilot 2**	Pilot 1 was the 2nd most cost effective (*based on CBA cost per student*). Pilot 1 was found to be a useful resource for students across all case study schools, with some caveats. ***Recommendations*:** • Update to include careers relevant to non-metropolitan students. • Review and lower the reading age to be more accessible and provide translations. • Increase reach of the revised online tools through Pilot 2 with parent and stage 4 students.
2.New Model of Careers Advice **Continue and scale once modifications have been applied**	Pilot 2 contributed to improving the: quality of careers education within the school and with external partners (*interviews with school leaders, careers advisers and businesses; overall rating of the work conducted by the CIT by careers advisers M = 4.29; 95% CI [3.56, 5.03], lead educators (M = 4.13, 95% CI [3.69, 4.56] and training organisations (M = 3.25, 95% CI [2.95, 3.55]*; networks established and strengthened over time with schools and businesses and to a smaller extent training organisations (*interviews with HTC, employers, training organisations; surveys from educators with overall rating of HTCs M = 4.42; 95% CI [3.68, 5.16]*). ***Recommendations*:** • Resourcing burden on schools' staff could be reduced by conducting fewer activities/events, scheduled earlier & recorded in the school's calendar for the academic year. • Consider HTC to work with the school leadership to have careers education included in the school's strategic plans to support the allocation of school's resourcing and teacher professional development to priorities careers. • Include a focus on online careers events/activities for parents. Target activities for Stage 4 students because this is a gap in EPPP's delivery and impacts EPPP's achievement of outcomes from the Program Logic models. • HTC to work with classroom teachers on embedding careers education within the curriculum to support reach to stage 4 students and address resourcing.

	• Run more professional development with teachers and develop workshops and resources tailored to parents to increase their knowledge regarding careers and viable pathways.
3. YES+ **Continue and scale**	Student and stakeholder interviews confirmed YES+ to be the most favoured pilot involving industry engaged experiences and was rated highly in the student surveys (*overall student satisfaction M = 4.14, 95% CI [*4.01:4.27*]*). YES + had strong enrolments (*558 with a target of 480*), strong demand by schools as expressed by careers advisers and valued by businesses in interviews, and high completion rates (*93%*). Barriers including transport and access to industry were reduced through 2 variant models for delivery. Students rated them equally as high with no significant differences found between the students' experience or outcomes (Appendix 2). HTC interviews confirmed the need for both models to address contextual barriers. ***Recommendation:*** • Maintain the 2 models of YES+.
4. Training Awards Ambassadors **Continue and merge with pilot 7. Deliver the newly combined pilot focused on the promotion of careers via viable pathways in Pilots 2 and 7 for scaling purposes**	Across the focus groups, interviews and the student and stakeholder surveys, there was minimal evidence of engagement with Pilot 4 or awareness of Pilot 4. From the limited sub-sample of students who did report participating in Pilot 4, they were overall satisfied with the Training awards ambassadors (*M = 4.07; 95% CI [3.80, 4.35]*) and valued the pilot resources including the podcasts, videos and webinars about Vocational Education and Training (*M = 4.07; 95% CI [3.85, 4.29]*). ***Tentative recommendations*:** • Leverage the resources created in 2020 by continuing to embed them in the EDGE workshops and Pilot 2 careers education activities and increase the target audience to stage 4 students using the electronic resources. • Maintain Ambassadors for a 2-year period and update the video resources after a 2-3 year timespan which reduces recruitment, affiliated training costs and resource development costs. To assist with consolidating pilots to make them more meaningful for stakeholders, merge the promotion of VET pilots (4 & 7).
5. Increasing uptake of SBATs **Continue and scale**	Pilot 5 was rated highly (*overall satisfaction M= 4.38, 95% CI [4.12:4.64] students; M = 4.54 educators; M = 4.42 training organisations*). Interviews with students and all school staff recognised the value and the unique contribution of SBAT mentors in their interviews. ***Recommendations*:** • Implementation should establish guidelines for how HTC and mentors can collaborate and avoid duplication to optimise networks. • Maintain the SBAT student reporting exemption for the Anticipated and Actual Enrolment Return (AARE) and re-assess the benefits of AAER at the end of the first full year of implementation in 2021.
6. Promoting MBA pathway **Continue the promotion and deliver through Pilot 2.**	Poor sampling of Pilot 6 resulted in low student and stakeholder insights as well as non-responses to survey items from stakeholders due to having no engagement with this pilot, renders challenges for determining the value perceived by participants and stakeholders. Interviews across 134 participants did not capture any pilot engagement, or at least awareness of it. Pilot dashboard showed activities with the Careers Adviser Association and industry groups but no implementation of activities in schools with students, parents or educators. Pilot 6 is the most cost effective (*based on CBA cost per student & school*) and CBA revealed larger schools enjoy economies of scale. ***Tentative Recommendations*:** • Modify by rolling out 2020 promotional resources and update after a 2-3 year timespan.

	• Connect students, parents/carers and educators to the EPPP website and EPPP TV through delivery explicit activities in Pilots 2 and Pilot 5.
7. EDGE Workshops **Continue and avoid scaling until modifications are addressed**	The benefits outweigh the costs for the EDGE workshops. At post-testing students reported improvements to their knowledge and skills (*increased awareness about being able to study and SBATs while at school; increased knowledge about the impact of social media posts on future job prospects; increased skills for job interviewing and confidence in approaching an employer about work experience or employment*). Pilot 7 was considered worthwhile in interviews across students and stakeholder groups and there was high demand for it in schools. Provider quality and school cancellations impacted workshop delivery and the pilot fell short of 2020 delivery targets (*61% - 21 of 34 target workshops ran*). ***Recommendations***: • Group smaller schools by location and schedule workshops earlier. • Offer more than 1 workshop to larger schools to cater for demand. • Increase the number of quality providers and schedule schools at least 6 months prior to delivery.
8. Fee free "test and try" VET **Continue with no scaling up**	Careers adviser interviews recognise stronger networks were forged between GTOs and schools through Pilot 8. However, without the networks, the success of the pilot is compromised. Students enrolled and completing Fee free "test and try" reported a significant and noticeable increase in their plans to study higher VET in the future ($\beta = 0.56$, $SE = 0.18$, $\chi 2 = 2.96$, $df = 24$, $p < .01$). This pilot was cost effective however not visible as an EPPP initiative. Students and stakeholders were unable to distinguish the uniqueness of this pilot relative to Pilots 3 and 5. The target of 105 enrolled students was not meet (*enrolled n = 63*) meaning it did not achieve its target capacity. Interviews with careers advisers revealed limited suitable employers, which was exacerbated during COVID-19. ***Recommendations*:** • Before considering scaling this pilot, schools and GTOs need to forge networks. Pilot 2 can assist with establishing and building these networks. • Conduct a needs assessment in schools for students' interests and subsequent establish networks with businesses based on industries where there are local employment opportunities or industries with future growth. Networks need to be well established to facilitate effective scaling.
9. Wrap around u177's **Continue and scale**	Wrap around u17's participants were motivated about study (*M = 4.44; 95% CI [4.16, 4.71]*) and expressed interest in doing a TAFE course (M = 4.31; *95% CI [3.99, 4.63]*) and reported being confident about completing the TAFE course (*M = 4.25*; *95% CI [3.89, 4.61]*). Capturing students enrolled at school but not attending and connecting them earlier has long run benefits. Underspends make the pilot more cost effective (*ie. only 47% were allocated the $700 big ticket item*). It is anticipated that success in this pilot will reduce the demand for RVP in the future. ***Recommendation*:** • Interview data confirms the need for improved monitoring and reporting systems between schools and TAFE.
10. RVP **Continue and scale**	Met target enrolments with an average 5-6 students per school but there was high demand (*referral requests stood over 190% for the full year*). Mid-way through the pilot, RVP participants reported being somewhat satisfied with RVP (M = *3.07, 95% CI [2.3, 3.82]*) and difference testing revealed that there was already an increase in the number of students who suggested they felt less nervous about returning to study ($\beta = -0.63$, $SE = 0.2$, $\chi 2 = --3.15$, $df = 27$, $p < .01$). Schools and counsellors were very positive about the associated benefits for young people engaged in RVP. Capturing these young people to

re-engage them in learning or employment has benefits and cost savings in the long run.

***Recommendation*:**

- Transport considerations and funding may need to be reviewed to ensure scaling is successfully implemented.

Areas for future focus to improve EPPP implementation

Table 1 reported recommendations and improvements for pilot scaling. This section reports additional considerations that could be directed to amplifying the effectiveness of the EPPP as a program.

Resourcing

- Review resourcing including allocations of school careers advisers and school allocations to pilot activities.
- After implementation of a year, evaluate the impact of the AAER exemption to assess the real, rather than this evaluation's ability to assess the perceived impacts of the policy change.

Curriculum

- Increase opportunities to develop students' soft skills as well as literacy and numeracy capabilities through Pilots 1 and 8. Importantly, sequence Pilot 2 activities to occur before students complete work placements, apprenticeships or traineeships, particularly in schools with linguistically diverse populations.
- Create a workshop similar to the EDGE workshops or adapt the current EDGE workshops to also include preparation for students going to traineeship or apprenticeship to address their current lack of readiness. Equally important, support industry with online workshops or a resource package developed by schools on how to support students with challenging or additional needs.
- Schools prepare students with more realistic expectations of VET courses, prior to enrolling in them. Students need to be informed that VET courses comprise not only the practical elements but also theory.
- Careers activities need to focus on aligning students' aspirations with their study and training to help support their motivation and commitment when they engage in work placements, traineeships and apprenticeships.

EPPP program reach

- Consolidate EPPP into a smaller set of meaningful programs which can be more easily recalled and better understood by students and stakeholders.
    - Careers education: Pilots 1, 2, 4, 6 & 7. Nest Pilots 1, 4, 6 and 7 within Pilot 2.
    - Engagement with industry: Pilots 3, 5 and 8.
    - Wrap around support: Pilots 9 and 10.
- Engage more diverse cohorts of students with the EPPP pilots. In addition to focusing on students with challenging behaviours and disengaged from school to connect with EPPP, target more diverse groups of students including Indigenous, culturally diverse and students with a disability.

Limitations

Survey data comprised sampling and non-sampling errors. The most notable of the sampling errors related to the small sample size for the parent/carer and business/employer stakeholder surveys as well as the student surveys for Pilots 4 and 6, resulting in non-representative samples for the respective surveys. Large non-responses to survey items was evident resulting in a high percentage of missing data for some student (Pilots 3, 7 & 4) and stakeholder (parent/carer & business/employer) surveys. Limitations in the evaluation's design due to external variables outside their control included the pilot delivery commencing before some of the pilot surveys were available for administration and post-surveys being conducted before the pilots had been completed. These limitations render some of the student and stakeholder survey data to be unreliable. Consequently, the key findings and recommendations from this report about the EPPP have been derived from the 5 in-depth case studies and surveys producing reliable data.

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1. Background

The Educational Pathways Pilot Program

The NSW Department of Education describes the Educational Pathways Pilot Program (EPPP) as an innovative program designed to improve further education and career outcomes for young people. The EPPP aims to transform the way students and parents/carers think about post-school options and future careers. A key objective of the EPPP is to prepare students and young people to transition between school, tertiary education, and employment. Specifically, the EPPP has been designed to:

- expand opportunities for students to engage with School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs) and Vocational Education and Training (VET)
- strengthen career guidance and support for school students under specialist Career Immersion Teams and dedicated SBAT Mentors
- give students the opportunity to explore their career pathway options while still at school
- increase the proportion of young people engaged on a pathway of lifelong learning

The EPPP consists of 10 pilots. These pilots were trialled in 24 high schools in South West Sydney (15) and on the North Coast (9) of NSW in 2020 and continue in 2021. The NSW Department of Education selected the 24 trial schools for a range of factors including their high youth unemployment and to ensure the program covered both metro and regional areas. The program commenced day 1, Term 1, 2020 following its launch in November 2019 by the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education the Hon. Geoff Lee and the Minister for Education and Early Childhood the Hon. Sarah Mitchell.

10 pilot Program Logics and an overarching EPPP Program Logic were developed at the commencement of the evaluation, April 2020. Developing the Program Logics entailed the NSW Department of Education describing to the evaluators, each pilot's inputs, outputs (activities and participants) and outcomes and the evaluators pictorial representing the information using Program Logic models. Details of each pilot's purpose, their planned implementation and Program Logic models are detailed in Appendix 1. Table 2 outlines the 10 pilots, their primary participant target and predominant mode of delivery.

Table 2. EPPP pilot summary

Pilot Name	Primary Target	Mode of Delivery
Fee free "test and try" VET subjects for high school students - under NSW Smart and Skilled (Pilot 8)	Years 10-12	Experiential The benefits of experiential learning for promoting clarity for career decision-making and commitment and motivation is well documented in the research literature (Denault, Ratelle, Duschesne, & Guay, 2019). Benefits associated with experiential initiatives are maximised when they are closely linked to the labour market and the world of work (OECD, 2004).
TAFE Youth Engagement Strategy Plus (YES+) (Pilot 3)	Years 9-12	
EDGE Workshops (Pilot 7)	Years 9-10 Years 11-12 *(identified as possibly becoming NEET*)*	
The Digital Careers Toolbox (Pilot 1)	Years 9-12	Resource When young people and their parents/careers access quality information on careers, research confirms they make better choices about study options (Joyce, 2019). The provision of quality resources provides convenience and depending on their form, can be cost effective and recommended for wide audience needs as well as have reach over a long period of time (Hasanica, et al., 2020).
NSW Training Awards Ambassadors promote VET pathways to students, parents and local communities (Pilot 4)	Years 7-12	
Promoting the Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway with the Master Builders Association (Pilot 6)	Years 9-12	
Increasing the Uptake of School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs) (Pilot 5)	Years 10-12 Parents/carers of SBATs	Mentoring There is unanimous support for the provision of mentoring for career guidance interventions.

	Principal SBAT employers	Meta-analyses of high-quality controlled studies demonstrate that when individual career guidance is provided, it has a positive effect on many important outcomes including students' improvements in academic and school behaviour and performance, entering employment and gaining vocational skills; wellbeing, including confidence and perceptions of self-worth; and greater social capital and access to support networks (Meltzer, Powell & Saunders, 2019; OECD, 2004; Whiston, Sexton, & Lasoff, 1998).
Targeted Wrap Around Services for Under 17 year olds at TAFE NSW (Pilot 9)	Early school leavers or under 17s already at TAFE	
Support and mentoring for Regional VET Pathways (RVP) on the North Coast (Pilot 10)	Early school leavers	
New Model of Careers Education (Head teacher - careers and Careers immersion team) (Pilot 2)	Years 7-12 Careers advisers and teachers	Combined Research findings from across the experiential learning, resource and mentoring approaches apply to Pilot 2.

Note: Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

Pilot evaluation of the Educational Pathways Pilot Program

The pilot evaluation aimed to: 1. Understand the views and experiences of all key stakeholders (students, parents/carers, educators, training organisations and businesses/employers); 2. Identify the EPPP intervention related benefits; and 3. Identify the strengths and areas for improvement to inform future delivery and scalability for the pilots.

Ethical review

Ethical approval was first granted by Western Sydney University's Human Ethics Committee on 8th April, 2020 and approved by the State Education Research Applications Process (SERAP) 14th July, 2020. The NSW Department of Education used the participant information and consent documents prepared by the evaluation team to recruit participants from July, 2020. To address the poor parental/carer and student active consent returns, the evaluators applied for opt out consent. This was approved by SERAP in December 2020 and by Western Sydney University's Human Ethics Committee in March 2021.

Evaluation project team

Associate Professor Katrina Barker lectures in Educational Psychology and is a senior researcher in the Centre for Educational Research, School of Education at Western Sydney University. As Principal Investigator in the study, Katrina had overall responsibility for the evaluation design, delivery of the evaluation within budget and leading the evaluation team and the final report.

Professor Kathryn Homes is the Director of the Centre for Educational Research in the School of Education at Western Sydney University. She has conducted research on student educational and career aspirations. Kathryn had oversight of the qualitative component of the evaluation, drawing on interview and focus group data from five case study schools.

Professor Michele Simons is the Dean of Education in the School of Education at Western Sydney University. She has conducted research on many aspects of vocational education and training policy and practice including apprenticeships and traineeships. She has contributed to the development of the Work Studies subject developed for years 9 and 10 by ACARA. Michele had responsibility for the development of the theory of change and program logics for the evaluation design, contributed to the design of questionnaires used with businesses and industry representatives and the conduct of interviews with stakeholders from those groups.

Associate Professor Maria Estela Varua is the Associate Dean, Research in the School of Business at Western Sydney University. As a Senior Economist and Western Sydney University's Research Theme Champion for Education and Work. Maria led the Cost Benefit Analysis component of the evaluation.

Dr Heath Spong is an Economics lecturer in the School of Business at Western Sydney University. As a researcher contributing to this study, Heath supported the Senior Economist in the development of the Cost Benefit Analysis and assisted the team in the completion of the final report.

Associate Professor Nida Denson is in the School of Psychology at Western Sydney University. She has been a Chief Investigator on an Australian Government's Department of Education Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme National Priorities Pool that examined the success from the perspective of the successful: Low SES students, success and completion in higher education. Nida had oversight of the quantitative component of the evaluation, consisting of the student and stakeholder surveys.

The evaluation team would like to acknowledge the expertise and support from Research Assistants who included Martha Waugh, Dr Russell Thomson, Minami Iizuka, Rachel White, Dr Daniel Perell, Dr Georgia Ovenden and Daniel Pitman. Additionally, the evaluation team recognises the extraordinary effort, time and organisational skills of Martha Waugh (2020) and Rachel White (2021) in the evaluation's Project Manager role.

This report

- Section 2 provides a brief overview of the methods used in the evaluation (with further detail available in the appendices).
- Section 3 to 6 provide an in-depth discussion of the findings on:
    - Implementation fidelity of EPPP
    - Strengths and challenges with the EPPP implementation
    - Stakeholders' views and experiences with the EPPP
    - Cost Benefit Analysis
- Section 7 provides a concluding summary of the key findings and suggests future research directions.
- Section 8 presents a list of references used in the report.
- Appendices 1 to 6 supplement the final report by providing detailed information relating to:
    - Appendix 1 describes each of the 10 pilot initiatives and their Program Logics.
    - Appendix 2 present technical details regarding the student survey analysis and results.
    - Appendix 3 presents technical details regarding the stakeholder survey analysis and results.
    - Appendix 4 presents the 5 in-depth case studies and cross-case analysis results.
    - Appendix 5 documents the program implementation for each of the 10 pilots.
    - Appendix 6 presents technical details regarding the analysis of the Cost Benefit Analysis.

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2. The Pilot evaluation

The evaluation was informed by quantitative and qualitative sources of data. Surveys were used to capture the views and experiences of all stakeholder groups including students, parents/carers, educators, training organisations and businesses/employers. Interviews with all stakeholder groups and various NSW Department of Education datasets were used to examine the implementation of the EPPP and informed five in-depth school case studies. An accompanying cost-benefit analysis drew from both the survey and interview findings, to assess the benefits and costs for each EPPP pilot.

Surveys

Data was obtained from students, parents/carers, educators (teachers, careers advisers, principals, Head teacher - careers), training organisations and businesses/employers using online surveys. Student and stakeholder surveys were developed by the Western Sydney University evaluation team in collaboration with the NSW Department of Education (DoE).

The survey data reports on response frequencies, means, standard deviations, rank order scores, difference scores between pre- and post-surveys and the probability value of the difference, and 95 per cent confidence intervals. The 95 per cent confidence intervals are included in this report to account for the fact that we have surveyed only samples of respondents (of students, parent/carers, educators, training organisations and businesses/employers). Consequently, there is uncertainty around how confident we can be in making inferences to the broader populations. For the statistic of interest, we use 95 per cent confidence intervals to indicate a range of plausible values. Appendices 2 and 3 outline the evaluation's methodological approach, survey design and composition, data screening processes, survey analysis and results for the student and stakeholder surveys. The key findings from the survey results are discussed in Section 5 of this report.

Student surveys

The EPPP student participants completed an online pre- and post-pilot survey for the experiential and mentoring pilots (Pilots 3, 5, 7 - 10). The resource pilots involved a standalone post-pilot only survey (Pilots 1, 4 & 6). A true baseline measure could not be captured for Pilot 2 due to challenges experienced by the NSW DoE with administering the pre-pilot survey and instead, a standalone post-only survey was administered in term 4. The pre-pilot surveys were conducted in September 2020 and post-only in December 2020. Pilots 9 and 10's post-pilot surveys were administered halfway through delivery (at 12 weeks of the total 26 weeks) in mid-February 2021. Unfortunately, the NSW DoE were unable to secure students' completion of Pilot 9's post-pilot surveys. Pre- and post-pilot surveys were used to examine the intervention related benefits of the EPPP (evaluation aim 2).

Table 3 reports the sample of matched cases used to examine the aim 2 of the pilot evaluation. The views and experiences of students (evaluation aim 1) was examined using the cleaned post-pilot surveys for the pilots where the data was deemed reliable and valid. Appendix 2 presents the technical details regarding the student survey data screening, analysis and results. The key findings from the student survey data are discussed in Section 5 of this report.

Table 3. EPPP student sample for matched cases and post-only surveys

	EPPP participants prior to data screening		Screened data totals			
EPPP initiative	EPPP population	EPPP sample (% of EPPP population)	POST-only	PRE	POST	Sample % remaining after screening
Experiential Pilots						
PILOT 3: TAFE YES+	558	368 (65%)		133	133	36%*
PILOT 7: EDGE workshops	315	309 (98%)		97	97	31%*
PILOT 8: Fee free "test and try" VET	63	27 (43%)		27	27	100%
Resource Pilots						
PILOT 1: Digital Careers Toolbox	536	127 (24%)	106			83%
PILOT 4: NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	315	97 (31%)	52			54%*
PILOT 6: Promoting Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway - MBA	unknown	9	9			100%*
Mentoring Pilots						
PILOT 5: Increasing Uptake of SBATs, interested & enrolled students	95	37 (39%)		34	34	92%
PILOT 9: Wrap Around Services for U17s	71	16 (23%)		16	0	0%*
PILOT 10: Regional VET Program (North Coast)	50	30 (60%)		30	30	100%
Combined Pilot						
PILOT 2: New Model of Careers Education	2,289	584 (25%)	565			97%

Note: EPPP population as reported by the NSW DoE EPPP dashboard reporting and Pilot implementation data. * Indicates surveys comprising sampling or non-sampling errors.

Stakeholder surveys

Four online stakeholder surveys captured responses from parents/carers (n = 40), educators (n = 123), training organisation staff (n = 21), and businesses/employers (n = 26) who were involved directly or indirectly in the EPPP initiatives. The stakeholder surveys were primarily designed to examine the views and experiences with the EPPP initiatives (evaluation aim 1). They were also developed to provide a baseline measure of attitudes towards Vocational Education and Training (VET) and to assist in understanding the provision of careers education and what stakeholders perceive to be their needs in order to better support students. The educators and training organisations provided a representative sample however, this was not the case for parents/carers or businesses/employers. Appendix 3 presents the technical details regarding the stakeholder survey data screening, analysis and results. The key findings are discussed in Section 5.

Focus groups and interviews

The pilot evaluation included five in-depth case studies to address the three aims of the pilot evaluation. Three of the schools were from South West Sydney and the remaining two were from the NSW North Coast. Individual and focus group interviews were conducted with 134 EPPP stakeholders who were involved in one or more of the 10 pilots (see Table 4). The project team developed a coding framework and organised data according to emerging themes (Allen, 2017). The case studies report on the themes for each of the five school sites (refer to Appendix 4). It was not possible to report all of the stakeholders' findings based on what participant group they represented because the sample demographics and school affiliations would reveal their identity. Ethical protocols require anonymity and therefore stakeholders external to the school were reported as a single group. Key findings from the case studies and cross-case analysis are reported in Sections 4 and 5 of this report.

Table 4. Focus group and interview participants

Participant groups		School A (n)	School B (n)	School C (n)	School D (n)	School E (n)
School-based participants	Principal	1	1	1	1	1
	Careers adviser	1	1	1	1	1
	Transition adviser	0	1	0	0	0
	Teachers*	4	0	5	4	5
	Stage 4* students	4	0	5	4	3
	Stage 5* students	4	6	4	4	4
	Stage 6* students	4	4	6	4	3
	Parents/carers*	1	0	2	3	4
External Stakeholders	TAFE NSW representative	1	1	1	1	1
	Group Training Organisation representative	1	1	1	1	1
	Head Teacher - Career	1	1	1	1	1
	SBAT mentor	1	1	1	1	1
	TAFE NSW student support representative	0	0	1	0	1

	Business representative	2	2	2	2	2
RVP (Pilot 10) North Coast region only	RVP counsellor	1				
	RVP leaders	3				

Note: * indicates interviews conducted as focus groups

Administrative data

The pilot evaluation included administrative data provided by the NSW DoE to assist in addressing the pilot evaluation's aims. The datasets were used to assess adherence of the EPPP's delivery to the Program Logic models and utilised for the Cost Benefit Analysis. Table 5 details the administrative data used in the evaluation.

Table 5. Details of administrative data used in the evaluation

Data	Notes
School enrolments by grade	Full-time equivalent enrolments Years 7 – 12 for 24 trial schools.
SBATs enrolment	A list of students interested in SBAT and another comprising SBAT enrolled students was collated for the duration of the evaluation.
EPPP implementation	Pilot leads and EPPP implementers documented delivery of the pilots to assist the WSU evaluation team to assess program fidelity. Delivery documentation recorded details such as: date, participant/s, nature of the activity, duration of the activity and deliverer of the activity. The quality of the implementation data varies according to the pilot and the individuals responsible for contributing to recording implementation. Appendix 5 uses the available implementation data to record the EPPP's delivery of the 10 pilots across South West Sydney and NSW North Coast clusters.
Program Logics	At the commencement of the evaluation in April 2020, the NSW DoE identified the inputs, activities, primary and secondary target participants as well as the short- and long-term outcomes for the full EPPP program and for each of the 10 individual pilots. The evaluation team represented this information in the form of Program Logic models. Appendix 1 presents the 10 pilot Program Logic models and overarching EPPP Program Logic model.
EPPP 2019/2020 budget	EPPP budget approved by the Minister's Office and Secretary 21 Jan 2020.
School Budget Allocation Report 2018 - 2020	Five case study school's allocated budget for 2018-2020 provided by the NSW DoE.
Dashboard reports	EPPP Working Group dashboard reports from 21 July 2020 to 16 February 2021 were utilised to evaluate the EPPP. Pilot leads prepared and presented their fortnightly report on the implementation progress of their pilot. Also present at the working group meetings were the Deputy Chief of Staff at Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, Director Skills Policy and National Reform NSW DoE, EPPP Secretariat including Senior Project Officer and Policy Officer from NSW DoE and a member of the evaluation team.

Cost Benefit Analysis

The Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) was completed with the use of administrative data provided by the NSW DoE as well as student and stakeholder surveys and case studies completed for the EPPP evaluation. Estimates of the long-term labour market outcomes of program participants were created using survey responses from student participants, and data from recent studies of early school leavers. Net Present Value and Cost-Benefit Ratios were also calculated, in addition to estimations of the marginal benefit of each pilot. Appendix 6 discusses in more detail the methods used to calculate the in-kind costs associated with the pilots, as well as the fiscal and social benefits of completing a VET degree. It briefly discusses the approach commonly used in other studies of VET programs to estimate the costs and benefits of education, and also outlines the assumptions used in this analysis. Appendix 6 details the methodology and presents tables with the results for the individual pilots. Section 6 of this report presents the key findings from the CBA.

3. Evaluation Findings: Implementation of the EPPP

How were the EPPP Pilots implemented and was it implemented as intended?

Implementation for four of the 10 pilots that comprised the EPPP did not match the Program Logic models developed at the outset of the evaluation, April 2020. The four pilots (*Pilot 1: Digital careers toolbox, Pilot 2: New model of careers education, Pilot 3: TAFE NSW Youth Engagement Strategy Yes Plus (Yes+), & Pilot 5: Increasing the uptake of SBATs*), where delivery was inconsistent with the Program Logic models, had components which were either not implemented, varied in some way, or did not reach the target participant group. Table 6 presents the findings on how pilot implementation deviated from the Program Logic models and describes the nature of the deviation. Appendix 1 details the implementation of the 10 pilots across the 24 pilot schools.

Table 6. EPPP program fidelity and challenges

EPPP Pilot	Measure of Program Logic adherence	Variation to target participants	Delivery variation	Program Logic variations and implementation challenges
Pilot 1: Digital careers toolbox	Partial adherence	✓	✓	Schools did not follow the recommended sequence of engagement with the three online careers advice and guidance tools. Not all schools received the presentation on how to use the toolbox. Pilot 1 was to include parents/carers as a primary target group however, none of the case study schools implemented activities or events with them. Only one of the 24 pilot schools introduced the Digital careers toolbox (DCT) to Year 8 students. The Liverpool cluster almost exclusively delivered the DCT to Year 9 students whereas the Cowpasture and Campbelltown clusters included delivery to students in Years 10-12.
Pilot 2: New model of careers education	Partial adherence	✓	✓	The scope of delivery changed in October to focus almost exclusively on Year 10 students. There were large variations to the number of events and activities in each school. South West cluster activities focused more on subject selection whereas North Coast clusters organised more independent workshops and training days with a variety of employers. Planned parent/carer engagement did not occur.
Pilot 3: YES+	Partial adherence		✓	Reduced online primer from 6 hours to 5 hours due to COVID-19 restrictions (i.e. TAFE and school shutdowns). Consistent with the objectives of YES+, the offerings of YES+ courses varied as a function of job opportunities in the regions. The two North Coast clusters included courses focused on health, building and plumbing, aviation, photography, construction and primary industries. In contrast, the three clusters in South West Sydney focused on courses related to transport, health and wellbeing, fashion and beauty, hospitality, IT and robotics, electrical and carpentry.

Pilot 4: Training Awards Ambassadors	Full adherence			Awards ambassadors transitioned delivery to online with COVID-19 however, they engaged in the activities with consistency and in line with the Program Logic model for the pilot. Pilot 7's challenges with workshop cancellations applied to Pilot 4 given its delivery was embedded in Pilot 7's workshops.
Pilot 5: Increasing uptake of SBATs	Partial adherence	✓	✓	Planned parent/carer engagement activities and the roll out of the online training system did not occur in 2020. SBAT Mentors commenced their roles at the beginning of Term 3 2021, instead of Term 1 as originally intended. Careers advisers from the five case study schools reported in interviews the challenge with finding workplaces for SBAT students and that none of their students secured a workplace. However, by Dec 2020 95 young people had enrolled in an SBAT and secured a workplace (an increase of nine SBATs from the June 2020 "baseline"). By Feb 2021 this number had risen to 246 enrolments and secured workplaces. A policy change was made to enable Year 12 students to commence a School Based Apprenticeship (SBA). Schools were formally notified to commence recruitment in Oct 2020. 57 Year 12 students expressed interest in SBATs in Term 4. It was too late in the year to finalise workplaces but as of 26 Feb 2021, 35% of these students (n = 20) had secured a workplace. Schools were exempt from reporting SBATs on the 2021 Anticipated/Actual Enrolment Return (AAER) from Oct 2020. The two North Coast clusters organised presentations with specific employers and specifically included pilot activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
Pilot 6: Promoting MBA pathway	Full adherence			Consistent with the Program Logic model, a range of resources were developed and made available on the EPPP website and through EPPP TV.
Pilot 7: EDGE Workshops	Full adherence			There were workshop cancellations/rescheduling (mostly during COVID-19 restrictions), provider quality and value for money issues were the most notable challenges for Pilot 7. The delivery transitioned to online during COVID-19. The target participants were engaged in the pilot. Notably however four schools from South West Sydney did not run an EDGE workshop in 2020. Student attendance ranged from 8 – 150 students and both of these extremes were for the webinar offering of the EDGE workshops.
Pilot 8: Fee free "test and try" VET	Full adherence			Students progressed through the program as planned. Only 13 of the 24 schools participated in Pilot 8. Notably, recruitment of students for the pilot and timing for delivering the units of competency was a challenge. The pilot commenced later in the year due to COVID-19 and businesses only becoming available to students at this time.
Pilot 9: Wrap around u17's	Partial adherence		✓	Four contact points per pilot participant over a term was anticipated instead, 2.3 contact points was achieved. The pilot was 12 weeks through its 26 week delivery at the conclusion of the evaluation and therefore the distribution of the big ticket item or scholarship would have continued into 2021. However, during 2020, 49% (35) of students received a scholarship or big ticket with the target for the program being 100%. In March

				2021, there were 85 enrolled students and 60% (51) had received a big ticket item or scholarship.
Pilot 10: RVP	Full adherence			All nine schools from the North Coast cluster had students participating in Pilot 10. Consistent with the Program Logic, Pilot delivery was tailored to the needs of a student and usually entailed supporting the removal of barriers to encourage re-engagement with learning or work.

4. Evaluation Findings: Strengths and challenges with the EPPP implementation

What were the strengths and what worked well with the implementation of the EPPP?

Collaboration

For the EPPP to be successfully implemented the importance of collaboration between school-based staff and external stakeholders was paramount. Implementation varied across the case study schools depending on the degree of collaboration and flexibility of school staff and external stakeholders in managing the complexity of the EPPP.

Existing partnerships

Implementation of EPPP was optimised when there were quality existing school partnerships with training organisations and businesses. Having established, well-functioning networks to access placements for work, traineeships or apprenticeships was critical to the success of implementing the EPPP.

Consolidating students' thinking and aspirations through experiential learning and mentoring

The EPPP initiatives have the potential to expose students to workplace experiences and mentoring opportunities that can extend students' thinking and aspirations for previously unknown futures. There was evidence across all case study schools that the EPPP achieved this aim for many students, particularly through the experiential pilot initiatives. These aims were particularly effective when aligned with parental/carer and family support for their students and where the student aspirations were achievable within their school and local community context.

Tailored advice and opportunities for the local context

Tailored advice and opportunities for local contexts was highly valued by students, educators and parents/carers. When presentations to students were being conducted by local speakers giving careers advice, this was positively received and made the talks more meaningful for students. Educators reported that the EPPP increased the quality of careers advice in each school. The exposure of school personnel to a greater variety of career options and pathways had enhanced the advice that students were given, allowing it to be both more tailored to the local context but also more expansive in terms of the variety of opportunities on offer. Other local context factors influencing the success of the EPPP implementation related to a school's location and access to transport.

What challenges were faced in implementing the EPPP?

Time and workload

Stress points arose when insufficient time was provided to school-based staff to deliver the EPPP pilots. At times, this was a result of external stakeholders being unaware of relevant school policies and procedures that had to be adhered to. The workload of school-based personnel, and in particular the careers adviser, was an issue across all case study schools. In some schools, additional school-based staff, such as the transition adviser, were able to assist the careers adviser, but this role was not present in every case study school. Generally, the workload for careers advisers was found to be higher in larger schools, and in these schools the successful implementation of the EPPP depended on a high functioning team.

School structures

Careers education was perceived to be the primary responsibility of the school's careers adviser and careers transition adviser, if the school had a staff member allocated to this role. School staff reported challenges with fitting the EPPP activities into the school timetable structures and with an already full curriculum.

Communication

Communication about the EPPP initiatives was crucial to the success of their implementation. Several communication issues were noted across all case study schools. There was lack of clarity of key roles and a lack of clear implementation guidelines. Communication, particular in relation to parents/carers was one of the most frequently reported challenges with implementing EPPP as reported by educators. Schools generally used their regular communication channels to communicate about the EPPP with parents/carers, however, given the increased messaging during 2020 due to COVID-19, it was felt that parents/carers did not always engage with these communications, except for when they had a student directly involved in the EPPP.

COVID-19

Across 24 March to 14 August 2020 (5 months), COVID-19 impacted the delivery of core school curriculum while most students learnt from home (March to May). During this period, the EPPP was implemented through online learning, videos and resources to meet some of the program aims. Students, educators and parents/carers shared in interviews that there was a saturation of online learning and poor quality internet access which affected students' motivation, interest and engagement with online resources (particularly in the North Coast settings).

Low levels of EPPP engagement

The case studies revealed a lack of student and parent/carer awareness of the names of the EPPP initiatives and a lack of teacher engagement with the EPPP, except for awareness of student absences to participate in the EPPP.

5. Evaluation Findings: Stakeholders' views and experiences of the EPPP

What do key stakeholders think of the EPPP pilot initiatives?

Pilot 1: Digital careers toolbox

The Digital careers toolbox was found to be a useful resource for students across all case study schools, with some caveats. Educators in the non-metropolitan schools felt that the resources had a 'metropolitan' feel in terms of the careers included, causing students to question the relevance of some of the content. Also, for schools with a high proportion of students from language backgrounds other than English, educators believed that the resources required significant levels of teacher support, in order for the students to engage with the resources meaningfully. Students with low literacy levels, or who were from a non-English speaking background were sometimes unable to use the resources independently. Also, in 2020, with COVID-19 impacting on how regular schooling was delivered, and with more classes being delivered online, the digital resources were less popular with students than they might have been in a regular school year. The students and stakeholders who engaged with the Digital careers toolbox reported in their survey responses that they were generally satisfied with the digital resources (*Mean /5, students M = 3.21, 95% CI [2.99,3.34]; educators M = 4.09, 95% CI [3.74,4.43]*). There was little evidence that students in Years 7 and 8 were exposed to these resources. Also, some aspects of the Digital careers toolbox were viewed more positively than other parts (Myfuture), indicating that educators valued the flexibility to implement the resources as required rather than being directed to use the entire package.

Pilot 2: New model of careers education (Head teacher - careers and Careers immersion team)

The case studies revealed that the Head teacher – careers (HTC) was seen as a pivotal and welcomed new role in the successful implementation of the EPPP, however, in the early stages of the pilot program there was some confusion about the role and associated responsibilities. Clear communication channels were vital in establishing the most effective ways for the HTC to work with the careers adviser and other school-based staff to maximise the effectiveness of the EPPP initiatives. In schools with inexperienced careers advisers, additional pressure was placed on the HTC to lend support, leading some to suggest that more professional learning for careers advisers was needed. In most case study schools, the additional personnel, in combination with the school-based staff, did see themselves as a cohesive careers team who were able to work together productively to offer the best levels of support for students. The HTC was also able to take on some of the burden of communicating with parents/carers about the EPPP across numerous social media channels, to reinforce messages sent via the schools' regular communication channels. Careers events were reported by school leaders and careers advisers in interviews at all five case study schools to have increased in relevance, efficiency, and convenience as a result of the Careers immersion teams (CITs) and appointment of the HTC. Also, the HTC was seen as a valuable link by business owners as they were able to support their needs in carefully matching students with businesses. Stakeholders reported in their survey responses high levels of satisfaction with the New model of careers education pilot (Mean /5, *educators M = 4.44, 95% CI [4.14,4.75]; training organisations M = 4.50, 95% CI [3.87,5.13])*. In particular, principals and careers advisers showed strong support for the role of the HTC. While the introduction of the HTC role was overwhelmingly seen as a positive development across the case study schools by careers advisers, a reservation was expressed that their distance from any particular school could lead to unrealistic expectations being placed on that school in terms of the short turnaround times that were sometimes given for the EPPP initiatives.

Pilot 3: TAFE NSW Youth Engagement Strategy plus (YES+)

Across the case study schools, the YES+ program was perceived positively across all schools by educators, parents/carers and students, with reports of high levels of student engagement through enabling them to experience potential careers in a 'hands-on' way which was tailored to their local context. Students who completed YES+ reported high satisfaction levels as did stakeholders (*Mean /5, students M = 4.14, 95% CI [4.12:4.64]; educators M = 4.42, 95% CI [4.16:4.68]; training organisations M = 4.38, 95% CI [3.92,4.85]*). These practical experiences allowed students to determine if a particular career and educational pathway was of interest to them or not. In the focus groups, students reported gaining an increased sense of clarity about potential career pathways through being exposed to the 'reality' of that work. Sometimes this 'reality' lead students to decide that particular careers were not for them, and in other cases, these 'tasters' ensured that the student saw new relevance in the content that they were studying in school subjects, providing them with more motivation to do well at school. Difference testing revealed that students' knowledge increased about what career they want for the future and they were more informed about what training study and/or training they need for their future career after completing. YES+ appeared to positively influence students' attitudes because after completing the program, students reported an increase in their views that there were many paths to a good job regardless of getting good grades at school. In addition, YES+ students had more confidence in their skills and ability to get a job (Appendix 2, Table 29).

A challenge for YES+ was that in some areas demand outstripped supply of student places, particularly in large schools. School-based staff expressed the opinion that the mix of careers on offer was not always optimal. An issue in smaller schools was related to the proportion of students who might be absent on any one day due to participation in YES+ making it difficult for teachers to complete their regular teaching programs. Despite this inconvenience the teachers also spoke of the enthusiasm for YES+ that they witnessed in their students, and of the value they saw in its positive impact on their career development. Relative to the South West offering of YES+ where students experienced three industries over 10 weeks, the delivery in the North Coast involved students engaging in one industry for six weeks. There was no statistically significant difference in the students' experiences or outcomes because of engaging in the South West or North Coast YES+ delivery model (Appendix 2, p. 73).

An additional challenge for YES+ related to student readiness and maturity for participation in the initiative, which required their integration into the world of work. Students and training organisations wanted more realistic expectations of the YES+ program to be promoted before students enrol. The practical components of YES+ tended to be exclusively promoted by educators however, students also need to be informed and expect theory components.

Students, parents/carers and educators conflated the industry experience pilots with each other. It was apparent in the interviews that YES+ (Pilot 3) and the fee free "test and try" VET subjects for high school students (Pilot 8) were discussed interchangeably with the occasional linking to SBATs. These pilots were indistinguishable at times and showed poor engagement with the specific pilot names and associated activities for students, parents/carers and for some educators.

Pilot 4: NSW Training awards ambassadors

The effectiveness of this pilot was unable to be determined from the case studies as this pilot was not specifically mentioned in the interviews with students, parents/carers, educators, principals, HTCs, training organisations or business/employers. Despite being specifically asked about each of the pilots in their interviews, not a single participant spoke to Pilot 4 and instead focused their interview responses on the other pilots. This shows minimal engagement with Pilot 4 relative to the other pilots. Non-sampling errors with the student and stakeholder surveys render this data unreliable for determining the impact of Pilot 4.

Pilot 5: Increasing the uptake of School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs)

The increased support for SBATs was viewed positively across the five case study schools. While these opportunities were somewhat limited in terms of the numbers of students involved, they were viewed as transformational opportunities for those students. In one school the success of SBATs was viewed as 'significant' as it may influence a greater number of local businesses to participate in future, building on the success of the EPPP pilot. The SBAT mentor was consistently viewed as a positive element of this initiative and vital to its success. An important aspect of this success was the capacity of the SBAT mentor to get to know the students individually so that their needs could be met. The mentors were also able to trouble-shoot on behalf of the business owners, so that the best possible matches between businesses and students were in place. Businesses and employers mentioned that having an SBAT mentor helped make hosting students undertaking an SBAT easier.

Students reported being highly satisfied with their experiences in SBATs (*Mean /5, M = 4.38, 95% CI [4121:4.64]*) The most highly rated component of Pilot 5 were the presentations and information sessions about the industries available for an SBAT and how SBATs worked (*Maximum score of 6, M = 4.59*). The personal careers advice and guidance they received about SBATs was also highly rated (*Score /6, M = 4.35*). Pilot 5's related benefits where revealed, were marginal with no statistically significant gains to students' knowledge and skills or career confidence (Appendix 2, Table 39). There was a decline in students' motivation for getting as much as possible out of the SBATs program. It is hypothesised that this was as a result of the challenges students experienced securing a workplace.

Not only did these SBAT opportunities have the potential to lead to employment, but they also gave the students new skills, such as interpersonal skills, that could be transferable to any workplace. Many stakeholders emphasised the importance of students having a positive attitude towards the workplace, and these types of attitudes were able to be fostered during the SBAT experience. It should be noted, however, that no students from the case study schools secured a work placement in 2020.

Educators could not comment directly on whether exemption from reporting Anticipated/Actual Enrolment Return (AAER) exemptions had impacted on the schools. This is because the policy was implemented in October 2020, however, they did speculate that the impact would become clearer in 2021. One principal believed that the exemption would benefit smaller schools more than larger schools, where the relative impact on enrolments was smaller compared to smaller schools.

Pilot 6: Promoting the tertiary apprenticeship pathway with the Master Builders Association (MBA)

The effectiveness of this pilot was unable to be determined from the case studies as this pilot was not specifically mentioned in the interviews with students, parents/carers, educators, principals, business/employers, or training organisations. Despite being specifically asked about each of the pilots in their interviews, not a single participant spoke to Pilot 6 and instead focused their interview responses on other pilots. Despite sampling the EPPP student population, only 9 students and 15 stakeholders were able to report in their surveys engagement with Pilot 6. The sampling for case studies and surveys shows minimal reach of Pilot 6's

resources. Implementation data shows no explicit school activities connecting students or parents/carers with the resources. Instead, the implementation data reveals that delivery of Pilot 6 involved meeting with the Careers Adviser Association and industry groups. The resources created for Pilot 6 included informational videos, newsletters, and interviews with students as well as an employer and university lecturer used to promote the MBA pathway. These resources were available from the EPPP web site and EPPP TV.

Pilot 7: EDGE workshops

The EDGE workshops for students in Years 9 and 10 were viewed positively across all case study schools by educators and students, as a means of supporting student readiness to engage in the EPPP, although the sequencing of the workshops in relation to other EPPP initiatives was an issue. Ensuring that the EDGE workshops were held before students were engaged in visits to the workplace or training organisation would optimise the value of these workshops because students would be better prepared to engage with the other EPPP initiatives. Through the focus groups, students also expressed that the EDGE workshops provided them with skills and readiness for job interviews that they may have outside of the EPPP. After completing the EDGE workshops, students reported in their post-surveys an increase in their confidence levels for approaching an employer about work experience or employment and that they were less nervous about interviewing for jobs. The EDGE workshops helped students increase their knowledge about studying an SBAT at school (Appendix 2, Table 31).

Given the popularity of the EDGE workshops by students and educators, we found that large schools were not granted sufficient places to meet demand, with one careers adviser suggesting that additional places should be allocated based on the size of the school. Also, given the prevalence of online learning in 2020, the webinar version of the EDGE workshop was not as well received as the face to face version. There was variability in the quality of the providers running the EDGE workshops.

Pilot 8: Fee free "test and try" VET subjects for high school students – under NSW Smart and Skilled

Despite every interview including questions about what participants thought about each of the pilots, no student, parent/carer, educator, principal, HTC, training organisation or business/employer, explicitly discussed or shared their views on Fee free "test and try". It was apparent however, that participants conflated the experiential industry-related pilots (YES+, Increasing the uptake of SBATs, and Fee free "test and try"). The industry-related experiential pilots were the most positively viewed by all stakeholders. This was because a taster in an industry was seen to assist students with decision making about their future study and career plans.

In surveys, students reported the best component of the Fee free "test and try" was their engagement in site visits and work experience, followed by the mentoring and support provided by Vocational Education and Training educators (Appendix 2, Table 26). Difference testing revealed that students' future study plans changed with more reporting that they planned to do a higher level Vocational Education and Training (VET) course in the future (Appendix 2, Table 27).

Pilot 9: Targeted wrap around services for under 17 year olds at TAFE NSW

The Targeted 'wrap-around services' for under 17 year olds at TAFE NSW initiative provides students with a supported transition between school to TAFE NSW, helping them adapt to the adult learning environment. This support can be financial, paying TAFE enrolment fees, or providing students with equipment such as a laptop, so that they can be successful in their chosen pathway. Halfway through delivery in December 2020, the support that had been provided to students through Pilot 9 included 19 laptops, 10 students applied for scholarship payments to cover mostly meals, stationery and transport costs. Some local customisation items included a voucher for tools, a welding helmet, course materials and a TAFE NSW course fee which a student was unable to afford to pay. Also, support with literacy and numeracy was provided when needed, either in class, or via learning study centres. Although students in Pilot 9 have access to additional support to improve their language, literacy and numeracy skills, only 51% (n = 31) enrol in this free supplementary tutorial support. In the case studies, Pilot 9's initiative was viewed as successful by the TAFE NSW staff in providing mentoring and support for students to keep them engaged and not overwhelmed.

A challenge for this pilot was related to the application process, which was necessarily strict, according to the stakeholders responsible for the screening. The process did take some time and involved assessments by teachers, interviews with the students to assess readiness and maturity to move into more adult learning environments, and assessments of academic, cultural and linguistic competencies. To make the program more effective, stakeholders felt that more assistance was needed from school careers advisers and CITs prior to the point of application to the program, because the students and parents/carers often communicate more with the school staff compared to the TAFE NSW staff, who do not have the same connection with the student.

Pilot 10: Support and mentoring for Regional VET Pathways (RVP) on the North Coast

This pilot ensures that young people receive a personal Career Plan and get supported to finish school or start training or work. The program allows for students to be supported one-on-one with both vocational and non-vocational barriers that they may experience through a tailor-made support program. A key factor in the success of the program related to the RVP staff being situated 'outside of the school' as the students were distanced from the anxieties that they may feel at school and were able to be open with the RVP staff. In some instances, however, the RVP staff were physically located within school buildings, leading students and parents/carers to assume that they were school staff, potentially creating a barrier for students wishing to access this

service. Also, RVP staff noted competing interests between their recommendations for students and the school, sometimes leading to a misalignment in the advice provided to students. The RVP staff did feel that outcomes for students were improved when parents/carers were engaged with the program and learning about new pathways for their child so that support was provided from multiple perspectives.

The students accessing support through this pilot were often dealing with multiple issues that could impact on their long term progress including mental health issues, trauma, housing uncertainty and social phobias. The pilot assisted students in feeling less nervous about returning to study or training (Appendix 2, Table 43). These complex issues have often impacted on their progress through school leading to a lack of confidence in themselves as learners, behavioural issues and disengagement. The RVP pilot helped to mitigate these issues though the personalised approach, however, there were tensions noted between the schools' desire to keep students enrolled, thereby delaying their enrolment in the RVP program.

The full RVP program comprises 26 delivery weeks however, the post-pilot surveys were administered 12 weeks into the program. Despite being only halfway through the delivery of Pilot 10, RVP students reported being less nervous about returning to study or starting training (Appendix 2, Table 43).

6. Evaluation Findings: Cost Benefit Analysis

What pilots appear to be cost-effective?

Insights from the Cost Benefit Analysis of student surveys

The Cost Benefit Analysis was used to identify those pilots that appear to be cost-effective based on the current cost data, in addition to developing longer term projections based on forecasts of both costs and benefits, and potential numbers of students in future years. Appendix 6 outlines the methodology, presents a table with the results for the individual pilots and recommendations. Key insights from the CBA are presented in Table 7. Following this summary is a presentation of the results of the CBA for the 10 EPPP initiatives, and then CBA insights for the five case study schools. Recommendations, based on cost benefit analysis, are then presented. Appendix 6 comprises the supplementary CBA tables reported in this section.

Based on the current costs data, and assumptions regarding enrolment and completion rates, the pilots in Table 7 have emerged as the most cost-effective for the single year pilot evaluation. The analysis demonstrates that the pilots delivered in the form of a resource were particularly cost-effective. Further consideration of the pilot costs and delivery are presented below.

Table 7. Cost-effective pilots

Key findings: The following programs appear to be most cost-effective	
Analysis based on total benefits: • 1. Digital careers toolbox • 6. Promoting the tertiary apprenticeship pathway with the MBA • 7. EDGE workshops • 8. Fee free "test and try" • 9. Wrap around u17's	Analysis based on marginal benefits (more rigorous measure: • 2. New model of careers education • 4. Training awards ambassadors • 6. Promoting the tertiary apprenticeship pathway with the MBA • 7. EDGE workshops • 8. Fee free "test and try"

Experiential pilots

The experiential pilots comprised YES+ (Pilot 3), EDGE workshops (Pilot 7), and Fee free "test and try" (Pilot 8). The cost of these pilots varied considerably, with one of the group being particularly expensive, while the others relatively cost-effective. In terms of short run analysis, both YES+ was and Fee free "test and try", were two of the more expensive pilots. EDGE workshops, however, were relatively inexpensive compared to these other two experiential pilots. Over the longer time all of the per-student costs decrease. The biggest reduction comes from YES+, and while still relatively expensive, its costs fall much further than the other pilots when extended to 10-year projections.

In terms of Benefit-Cost Ratio, both the EDGE workshops and Fee Free "test and try" deliver a strong Benefit-Cost Ratio, while YES+ delivers a lower Benefit-Cost Ratio that is still positive over the longer term. When we introduced a more robust analysis, wherein we measured only the additional (or marginal) benefit of a successful pilot program, the benefit-cost ratios decline. Though these are reductions, given the limited data and relatively high setup costs, these pilots obtained good results.

Mentoring pilots

The group of mentoring pilots comprised Increasing the uptake of SBATs (Pilots 5), Wrap around u17's (Pilot 9), and Regional VET pathways (Pilot 10). In terms of the cost of provision, these are some of the more expensive pilots, and given their nature this is unsurprising. Generally, the initial setup costs for these programs appears to be quite high, and in two of the cases the cost per student does not decrease; some of these pilots remained relatively expensive even when considered over the longer time period.

Increasing the uptake of SBATs and RVP (Pilot 10) were both very costly per student, and both present a relatively low Benefit-Cost Ratio of approximately 2. The stand-out pilot of this group, in terms of cost-effectiveness, is Wrap around u17's (Pilot 9), which reports a very high initial Benefit-Cost Ratio, and also demonstrates a substantial per unit cost reduction over the long term. When we apply the more rigorous analysis to these programs, and examine the Benefit-Cost Ratio solely based on the present value of their marginal benefits, the value for all three of these Pilots falls to below 1.

Resource pilots

The group of resource pilots comprised the Digital careers toolbox (Pilot 1), Training awards ambassadors (Pilot 4) and Promoting the MBA pathway (Pilot 6). These programs were very inexpensive per student over the short run period, and were the cheapest of all the EPPP initiatives. The projected per student costs over the longer term remains low. The initial Benefit-Cost Ratio all three of these programs suggests they are two quite efficient programs, based on the long-run projections.

The more rigorous approach to these pilots again results in a reduction of the Benefit-Cost Ratio. In the case of the Digital careers toolbox, the survey response of some sections of the student groups was less positive than anticipated, and this impacted the Benefit-Cost Ratio. The Promoting the MBA pathway maintains a positive Benefit-Cost Ratio, even in the context of the more rigorous marginal analysis, and suggests that it has the potential to deliver benefits on investment. The most interesting insight from this more rigorous analysis, however, is delivered in the case of the Training awards ambassadors pilot, which demonstrated an increase in Benefit-Cost Ratio. This demonstrates that not only was it inexpensive, but it is inexpensive relative to the additional benefits it might create—an important finding.

Combined pilot

The New model of careers education (Pilot 2), includes a combination of resource, mentoring, and experiential delivery modes. Similar to the resource pilots, this initiative is very inexpensive when measured per student over the short-run. In fact, the New model of careers education is identified as being the least expensive of all programs in these estimates. This is, however, slightly misleading, as the qualitative analysis reveals that the schools often invested their own resources to support this program, a point which is discussed further below. Pilot 2 obtain a Benefit-Cost Ratio of slightly above 1, which is primarily due to the strong student response. This pilot is clearly effective, but also costly due to the fact that it is labour intensive. Obtaining scale efficiencies for this pilot, while not impossible, is of course more challenging.

Insights from the Cost Benefit Analysis of case study schools

The cost benefit analysis of the five case study schools reveals that the costs of the EPPP for individual schools are less to do with student to teacher ratios and even the size of the school, but related to whether the school already has some existing programs that are similar or overlap with the EPPP, and existing relationships with Group Training Organisations. If they do, then such schools may experience some efficiency gains with the introduction of the EPPP.

- Schools that do not have an extant commitment to the EPPP initiatives, such as School A, will find the setup costs significant, and the initial delivery and management of the pilots challenging.
- Schools that have a stronger foundation and existing commitment to the EPPP initiatives, may find some efficiency gains in terms of how the EPPP pilots overlap with their existing efforts, and can benefit from this if they can align them.

The case studies have also provided an important opportunity to explore those pilots that appear to be expensive per student in the base analysis, and explore the issues that these schools highlight during the interviews. This additional analysis demonstrates that the Benefit-Cost Ratio and the general cost-effectiveness of the experiential pilots is heavily dependent upon obtaining a critical number of enrolments for the costs to be spread. Pilots such as YES+ (Pilot 3) and Increasing uptake of SBATs (Pilot 5), which are relatively expensive to set up, can deliver a positive return on investment when numbers of students participating is at a level approaching what might be considered an average class size. We would estimate, that groups of 30-40 students make these pilots viable and deliver significant long term benefits that outweigh costs.

Recommendations based on the Cost Benefit Analysis

The cost benefit analysis should be interpreted tentatively at this stage, as offering insights for decisions rather than binding rules. Given the first delivery of the pilots is continuing during 2021, and the data collection is ongoing, we would encourage further review. However, there are some early lessons to be learned from this analysis, that can be considered in the future expansion of the programs. The analysis suggests that the following pilot programs appear to be immediately cost-effective, delivering a positive return on investment when considered over the long term:

- Pilot 1. The Digital careers toolbox
- Pilot 2. New model of careers education
- Pilot 4. Training awards ambassadors
- Pilot 6. The tertiary apprenticeship pathway with the MBA
- Pilot 7. EDGE workshops
- Pilot 8. Fee Free “test and try”

The common characteristic of these pilots is that they all appear to be initiatives with a low per-student cost, given the current data. These pilots were integrated at the schools and obtained the number of students necessary to achieve sufficient spread of the costs, and deliver (projected) long-run benefits. Indeed, a number of these were resource based pilots, which means their costs are relatively low, and it is easier to expose larger numbers of students to these resources. The EDGE workshops were the costliest of this group, but the demand from students was strong, and the ability of schools to ensure significant numbers of participants in this pilot resulted in a cost-effective delivery of a generally well-received pilot capable of delivering significant long-run benefits. While the Digital careers toolbox’s cost structure allows relative inexpensive upscale, the case studies revealed some caveats to the online careers resource. The students’ responses to this resource is sensitive to content, and it may benefit from customisation according to the needs of specific student characteristics.

We suggest caution in the interpretation of the CBA findings, and advise the need to consider the significant benefits that can be generated by those pilots that are not presently cost-effective due to lower student enrolments. The New model of careers education appeared to draw larger in-kind support from teachers at schools than is likely represented in the cost data, an insight we garnered from the qualitative analysis at the case study schools. This is potentially a much more expensive program than we can currently

verify. However, the additional analysis, based on the fourth case study school, demonstrates that even with these costs, this pilot can indeed be cost-effective when considered over the long term.

Furthermore, a number of other pilots obtained endorsement from all stakeholders during the evaluation, and would likely generate significant benefits if they could be delivered to a larger number of students. In particular, both the YES+ pilot (Pilot 3) and the Wrap around u17's (Pilot 9), obtained support from the qualitative case study analysis. Furthermore, the latter program obtained the highest rating in the index created to rank the pilots according to student feedback. However, during the roll-out of the EPPP over the last 18 months they have not obtained student enrolments sufficient to spread the costs and present a cost-effective program.

The case-study analysis suggests that these pilots can be cost-effective once student groups rise above 30 at a school. A scale up of the following initiatives would benefit from ensuring a base number of enrolments in such pilots before set up costs are incurred:

- Pilot 3. YES+ program
- Pilot 5. Increasing uptake of SBATs
- Pilot 9. Wrap around u17's

In the case of YES+ and Increasing uptake of SBATs, we would recommend minimum numbers of students attending per school or combining schools if possible so that a critical number can participate. The pilots are relatively expensive, but can deliver important outcomes, so delivering them to significant groups is important. Similarly, the Wrap around u17's, is also a relatively expensive pilot per student, but can have enormous benefits. Indeed, these services are highly valued by the students, and work to raise completion rates of TAFE programs. We would emphasise that the numbers of students required to cover these costs is not enormous, but that running these pilots for groups that is relatively small does not appear to cover the per unit costs.

The RVP (North Coast) program (Pilot 10), is perhaps the most difficult to assess at this stage. Like the three pilots discussed above, this was shown to be particularly expensive per individual student, and it was administered to a selected regional cohort. At this point we would only note the cost of the pilot and categorise it with the above three as benefiting from increased enrolments until further information is gathered about this program.

The Cost Benefit Analysis was used to identify those pilots that appear to be cost-effective based on the current cost data, in addition to developing longer-term projections based on forecasts of both costs and benefits, and potential numbers of students in future years. Appendix 2 outlines the methodology, presents a table with the results for the individual pilots and recommendations.

7. Conclusions and Future Considerations

Educational Pathways Pilot Program key findings

2020 implementation of EPPP

Implementation for four of the 10 pilots that comprised the EPPP did not match the Program Logic models developed at the outset of the evaluation, April 2020. The four pilots (*Pilot 1: Digital careers toolbox, Pilot 2: New model of careers education, Pilot 3: TAFE NSW Youth Engagement Strategy Yes Plus (Yes+), & Pilot 5: Increasing uptake of SBAT*), where delivery was inconsistent with the Program Logic models, had components which were either not implemented, varied in some way, or did not reach the target participant group. Appendix 1 provides an assessment of implementation for each pilot and how this varied from the program logic models.

Partial implementation of some pilots were due to a number of factors:

- COVID-19: From 24 March to 14 August 2020 (five months) schools focused on delivering core curriculum while most students learnt from home (March to May). Additionally, the Department of Education restricted student excursions (until 12 Oct) and all external visitors who deliver pilots or services (until 14 August). During this period EPPP implemented some online learning, videos and resources to meet some of the program aims.
    - The saturation of online learning and poor quality internet access affected motivation, interest and engagement with online resources (particularly in the North Coast settings)
- Lack of clarity of key roles
- Lack of clear implementation guidelines
- School size
    - Larger schools did not have the same access to pilot activities compared with smaller schools (eg. EDGE Workshops)
    - Allocation of staff to careers education (e.g.one careers adviser to each school disproportionately impacted on the workload of careers advisers in large schools)
- Different priorities placed on career education by schools
- School timetable structures
- An already full curriculum.
- Quality of existing school partnerships with training organisations and businesses
- Established, well-functioning networks to access placements for work, traineeships or apprenticeships was deemed critical for EPPP's success.
- School location and access to transport.

Effectiveness of the EPPP and future research

The single year pilot evaluation assessed the achievement of the EPPP's short-term outcomes. Table 8 illustrates the collective outcomes achieved across the 10 pilots for student and stakeholder participants.

Table 8. Outcomes achieved for students and stakeholders

Student outcomes			
Short-term outcomes	Fully achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved at all
Improve knowledge, skills and confidence in career decision making		X	
Increase awareness, uptake and completion of SBATs and VET	X		
Access and engage with career resources	X		
Increase number and variety (across different industries) of SBAT training opportunities - achieved	X		
Stakeholder outcomes			
Satisfaction with career development support, resources and activities		X	
Increase participation and engagement with each of the toolboxes		X	
Positive attitude towards SBATs and VET		X	
Positive working relationships among stakeholders	X		

Based on these assessments of the EPPP related benefits, as well as considering participants' experiences and costs affiliated with the pilots, a number of recommendations for implementation and scaling have been identified. Table 9 overviews the evaluation's recommendations for pilot implementation and scaling.

Table 9. Recommendations for pilot implementation and scaling

Continue and Scale	Continue and scale with modifications	Continue with no scaling	Continue through a merge and with modifications
• TAFE NSW's Youth Engagement Strategy Plus (YES+) (Pilot 3) • Increasing the uptake of School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (including SBAT Mentors) (Pilot 5) • Targeted wrap-around services for under 17-year-old at TAFE NSW (Pilot 9) • Support and mentoring for Regional VET Pathways (RVP) on the North Coast (Pilot 10)	• Digital careers toolbox (Pilot 1) • New model of careers education (Careers Head Teachers and Careers immersion team) (Pilot 2) • EDGE workshops (Pilot 3)	• Fee free 'test and try' VET subjects for high school students - under NSW Smart and Skilled (Pilot 8)	• NSW Training Awards Ambassadors promote VET pathways to students, parents and local communities Training Awards Ambassadors (Pilot 4) • Promoting the Tertiary Apprenticeship pathway with the Master Builders Association (Pilot 7)

Future research

The Western Sydney University evaluation team suggests the below research activities to extend on this report's findings:

- Conduct an effectiveness evaluation, once recommendations relating to the EPPP's fidelity is addressed. The effectiveness evaluation should compare intervention and non-intervention cohorts to provide more rigorous evidence for the impact of the program's effect to bring about change in the target population and to assess whether the outcomes were achieved to determine the success of the EPPP.
- Conduct an empirical CBA which requires longitudinal data and review the current CBA results.
- Test the 'value adding' of the additional $700 assigned to YES+ students for the big ticket item. Compare the Yes+ program with the YES program delivery.
- Conduct an evaluation of the user's experience of the Digital careers toolbox to examine how students and parents in particular, access and use the web materials with the goal to improve the satisfaction rating.
- Use the monitoring and reporting surveys for the evaluation to track the quality of the EPPP's delivery (ie. student experience; increases to knowledge and skills and career confidence).

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Appendix 1: EPPP Program Logics

EPPP Initiative 1: The Digital Careers Toolbox

Initiative purpose

The Digital Careers Toolbox contains three quality online careers advice and guidance tools that give students access to inspiration and information to help uncover their career learning path.

- LifeLauncher
- Myfuture
- Skillsroad Virtual 360 Workplace

The purpose of the Digital Careers Toolbox is to bring together three respected digital tools to help students get on the path to success after school. These tools are supported by the NSW Department of Education.

Rolling out the initiative

To support students, teachers and parents to use the Toolbox the Department of Education, in partnership with the NSW Business Chamber, have developed

- A how to guide
- Activity sheets
- Fact sheets for parents and community.

The initiative team have also held information sessions with Careers Advisers and Head teacher – careers on using the Toolbox and promoting its use in school communities.

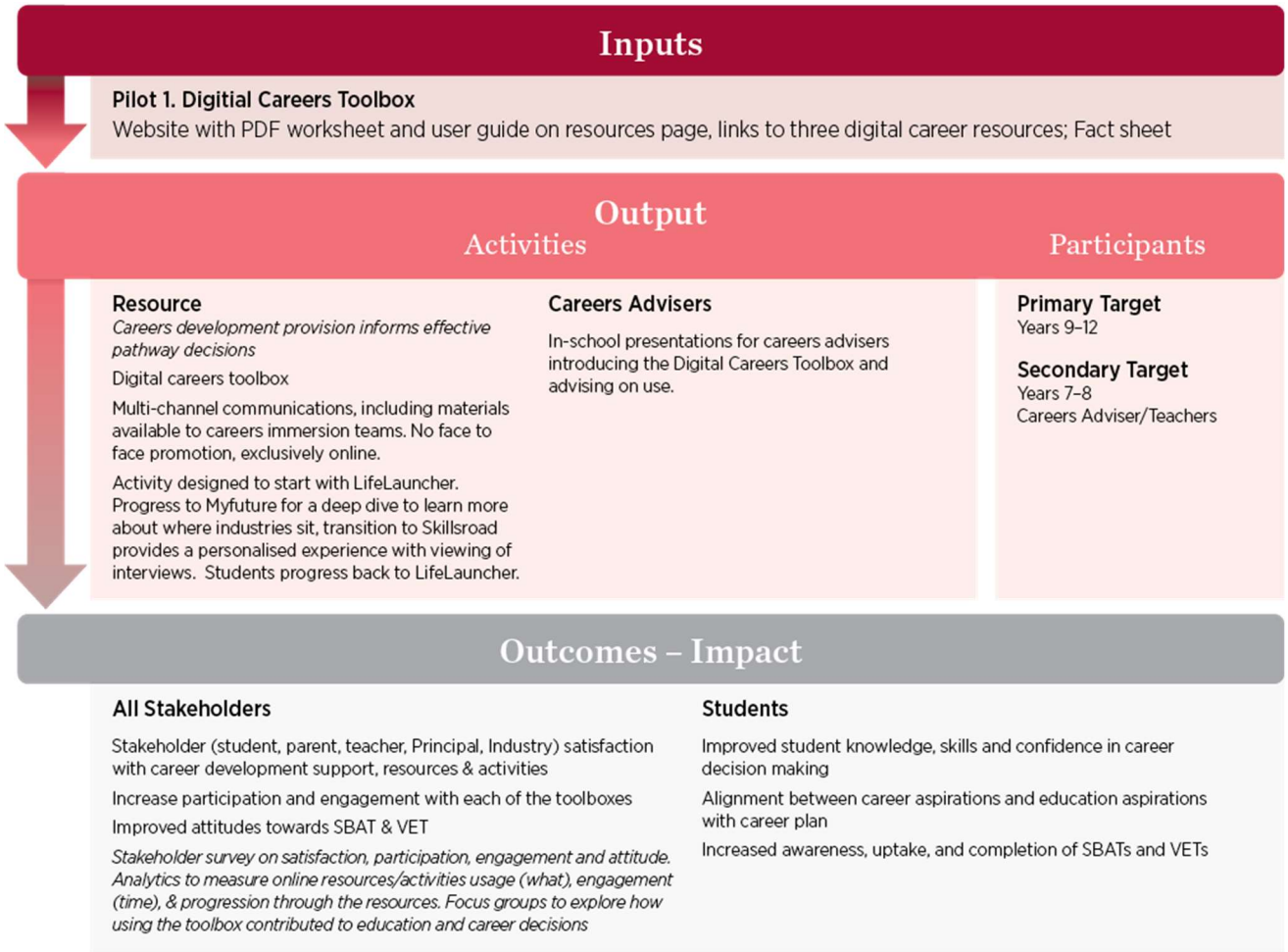

Figure 3: Program logic Pilot 1

EPPP Initiative 2: New Model of Careers Education (Head teacher - careers and Careers immersion team)

Initiative purpose

The purpose of this initiative is to increase the delivery of careers education in schools and create improved connections between schools and industry leaders and tertiary training organisations.

The Careers Immersion Teams drive and coordinate industry-specific programs, career education and career exploration events. Led by five Head teacher - careers, the teams support schools to help students to make informed decisions about post school options and appropriate pathways.

Implementation of the initiative

The Careers Immersion Teams have been established in networks of schools, each led by a Head teacher – careers.

The Careers Immersion Teams includes the school principals and school executive, careers and transition advisers, Regional Industry Education Partnership (RIEP) Officers, school services staff, SBAT Mentors, local industry and training providers.

Each Careers Immersion Team is:

- developing stronger relationships with local industry and businesses
- working closely with the RIEP officers
- developing an industry specific engagement and communication strategy
- engaging with students, parents and school communities through targeted industry visits and guest speakers
- organising additional career learning opportunities for students.

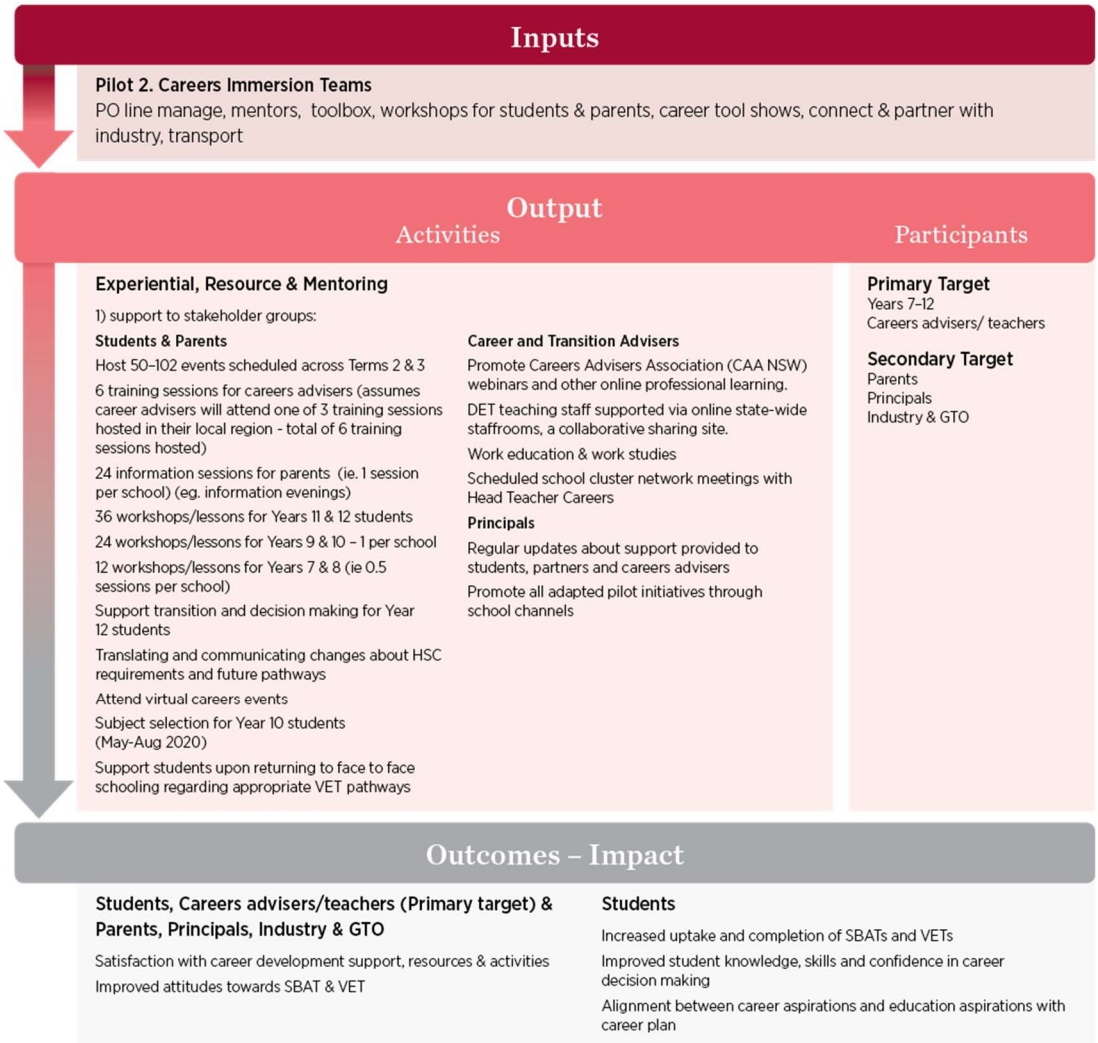

Figure 4: Program logic Pilot 2

EPPP Initiative 3: TAFE Youth Engagement Strategy Plus (YES+)

Initiative purpose

TAFE NSW's Youth Engagement Strategy PLUS (the YES+ program) helps students identify potential career pathways, through taster courses in several different industries and experience learning in simulated industry environments at TAFE NSW.

This initiative is an intervention program aimed at students at risk of disengagement from school, to provide them with support with career guidance and employability, language, literacy and numeracy skills in a vocational context. The initiative provides the students with support to make informed decisions regarding school subject choices and post-school pathways.

Initiative process

The TAFE YES+ program is a six-to-ten week program where Year 10-12 students attend a TAFE campus one day per week. Students develop individual learning plans, engage in vocational taster courses and receive ongoing mentoring, counselling and career advice. The program gets students out of the school setting and into TAFE-style learning, including visits to real workplaces.

Every student enrolled in the YES program three core components:

- Enrolment in the TAFE NSW Statement of Youth Engagement, requiring completion of the following three non-accredited modules: Learning engagement; Introduction to the workplace; and Vocational tasters
- Wrap around support provided to all students covering services such as mentoring, counselling, careers advice and learner support.
- An Individual Learning Plan for every student to identify his or her education, training and employment goals and the pathways to achieving them.

The PLUS (+) includes tailored local customisation that responds to the needs of the students, for example providing:

- transport solutions for students who would otherwise have no reasonable means of travelling to TAFE NSW campus
- Language Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) staff for students who require additional support
- Access to training equipment or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

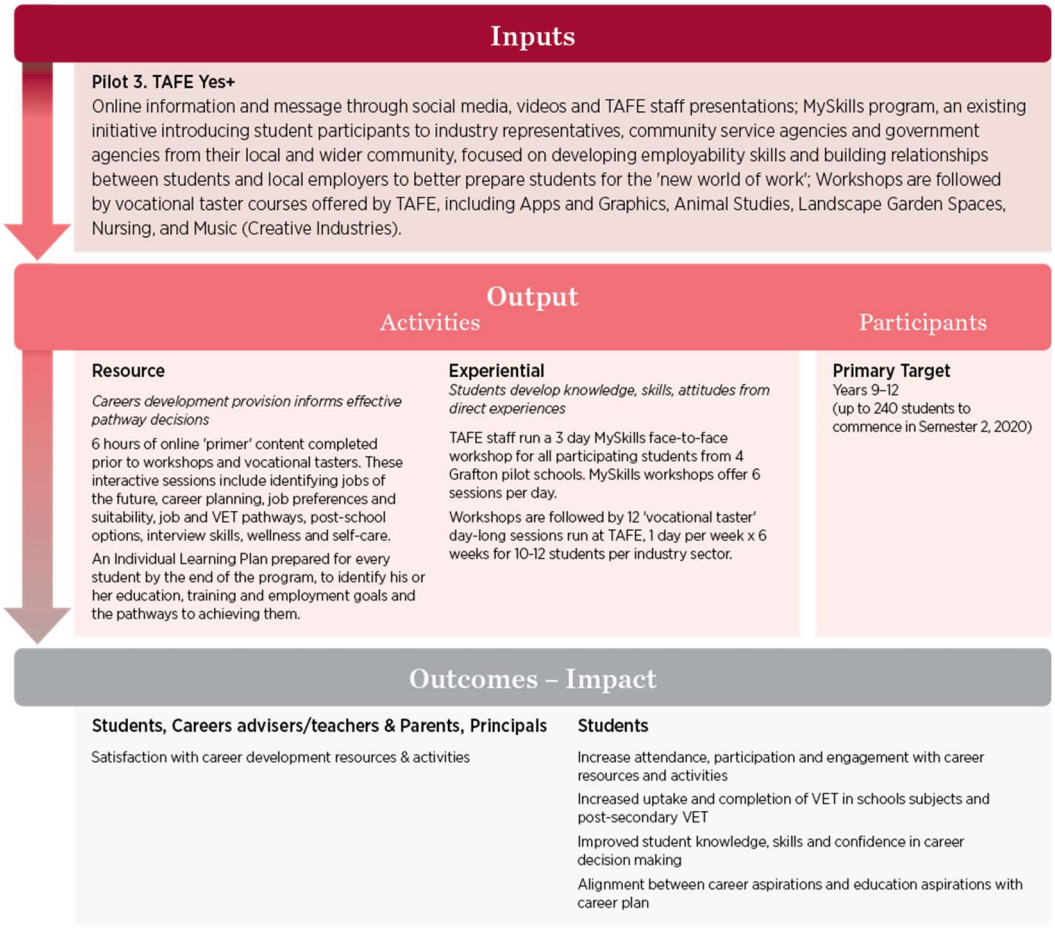

Figure 5: Program logic Pilot 3

EPPP Initiative 4: NSW Training Awards Ambassadors promote VET pathways to students, parents and local communities

Initiative purpose

This EPPP initiative aims to highlight to students the opportunities, pathways and benefits offered by Vocational Education and Training (VET) pathways by promoting and recognising previous winners and finalists of the NSW Training Awards (Training Awards Ambassadors).

In order to promote VET opportunities and pathways prior to HSC subject selection, the Training Awards Ambassadors engagement is aimed at students from Years 7 to 10. The ambassadors will focus on:

- raising awareness of the benefits of studying VET for future careers
- positive stories linked to the experiences of the Training Awards Ambassadors
- leveraging the RIEP program to facilitate access to schools that support VET pathways and connections with local industries.

Implementation of the initiative

As part of the roll out of this initiative, the Training Awards Ambassadors engage with students in EPPP schools to share their personal journey and insights to inspire other young people to achieve their goals. The Ambassadors receive training to improve their skills as influencers within their industry and learn how to increase engagement with cohorts of students. Case study videos have been produced for each of the Ambassadors to tell their personal career story. The Ambassadors also leverage the RIEP program and their connection with schools, as well as existing career/skills showcases.

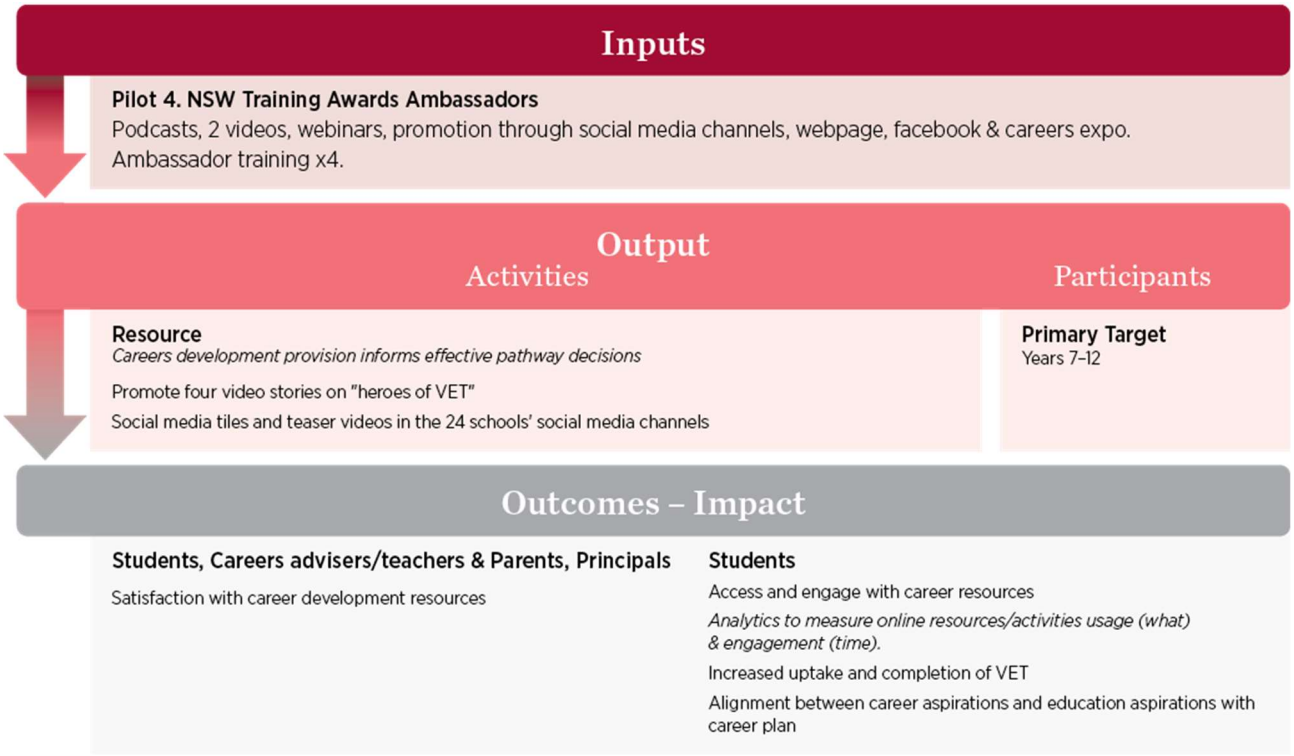

Figure 6: Program logic Pilot 4

EPPP Initiative 5: Increasing the Uptake of School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs)

Initiative purpose

This EPPP initiative aims to increase the uptake of School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships in NSW by providing increased support for SBATs and removing disincentives to undertaking an SBAT.

School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships are more than just part-time jobs - they're a great way to set students up for the career they want while completing the HSC. An SBAT combines paid work, training and school; as well as gaining an industry recognised national qualification and credit towards the HSC.

Some apprenticeships and traineeships can contribute towards the ATAR.

Rolling out the initiative

A key component of the implementation of this EPPP initiative is each school School Being appointed a dedicated SBAT mentor who:

- promotes the program to students, parents/carers and employers,
- provides tailored support for the student undertaking an SBAT, and
- liaises between the schools and employers in collaboration with the RIEP officer to make the process as easy as possible.

This initiative has enabled Year 12 students to commence a School Based Apprenticeship. This allows Year 12 students flexibility and makes Apprenticeships an accessible pathway for more students. This initiative has also exempt schools from reporting SBATs on the Anticipated/Actual Enrolment Return (AAER).

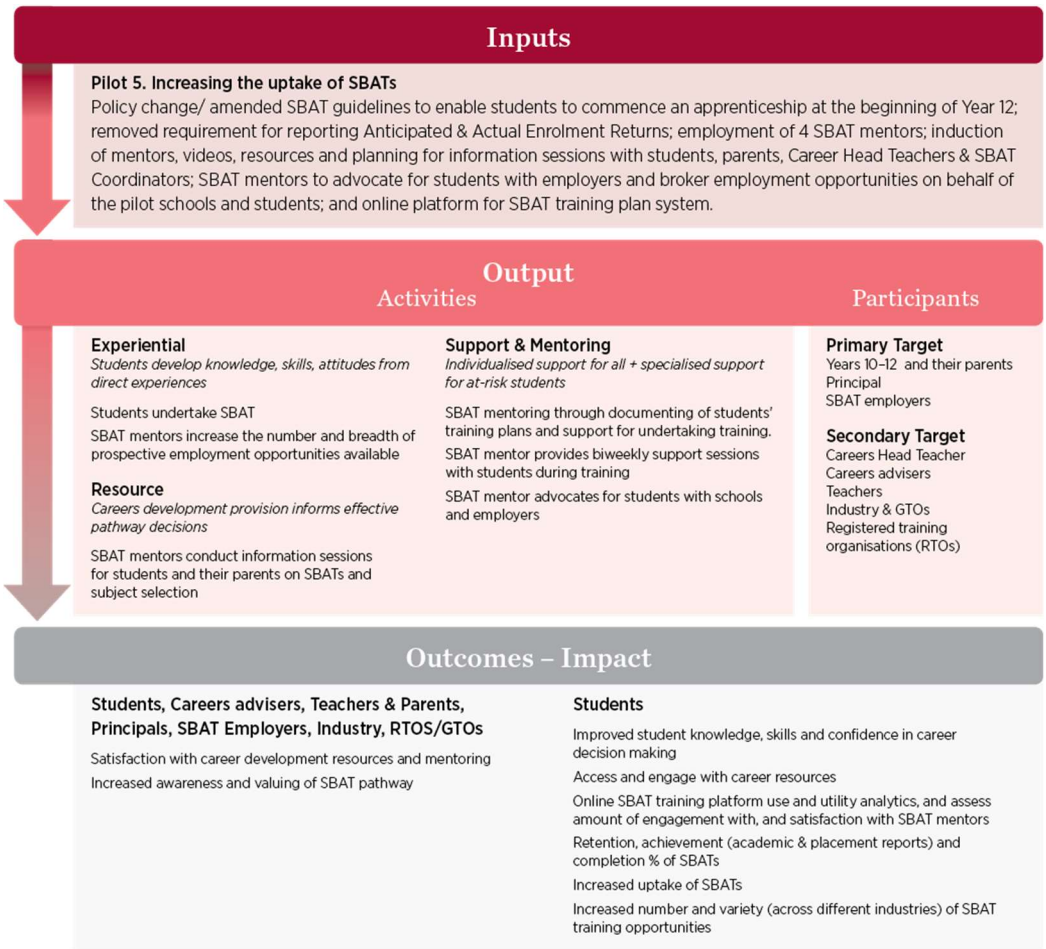

Figure 7: Program logic Pilot 5

EPPP Initiative 6: Promoting the Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway with the Master Builders Association

Initiative purpose

This EPPP initiative promotes tertiary apprenticeship pathways to students, parents/carers and schools. This initiative aims to increase awareness about the opportunity to study apprenticeship or traineeship units at school which could lead to higher level vocational education and training (VET) and university qualifications.

The Construction Management Tertiary Apprenticeship pathway, designed by the Master Builders Association (MBA), is an example of a "tertiary apprenticeship", which extends traditional apprenticeships or traineeships to higher level qualifications.

Starting with a school-based apprenticeship, this pathway is attractive to students who want to "earn while you learn" and have the potential to complete higher level study.

Rolling out the initiative

The Department of Education in partnership with the Master Builders Association is promoting the tertiary apprenticeship pathway to students, parents/carers and schools through:

- a range of new resources including:
  - fact sheets for use by teachers, principals and careers advisors as well as students and parents/carers
  - Language translation of fact sheets
  - informational video with MBA to promote study/employment opportunities
  - case studies for newsletters
- Engagement with the Careers Advisors Association (CAA) and industry groups

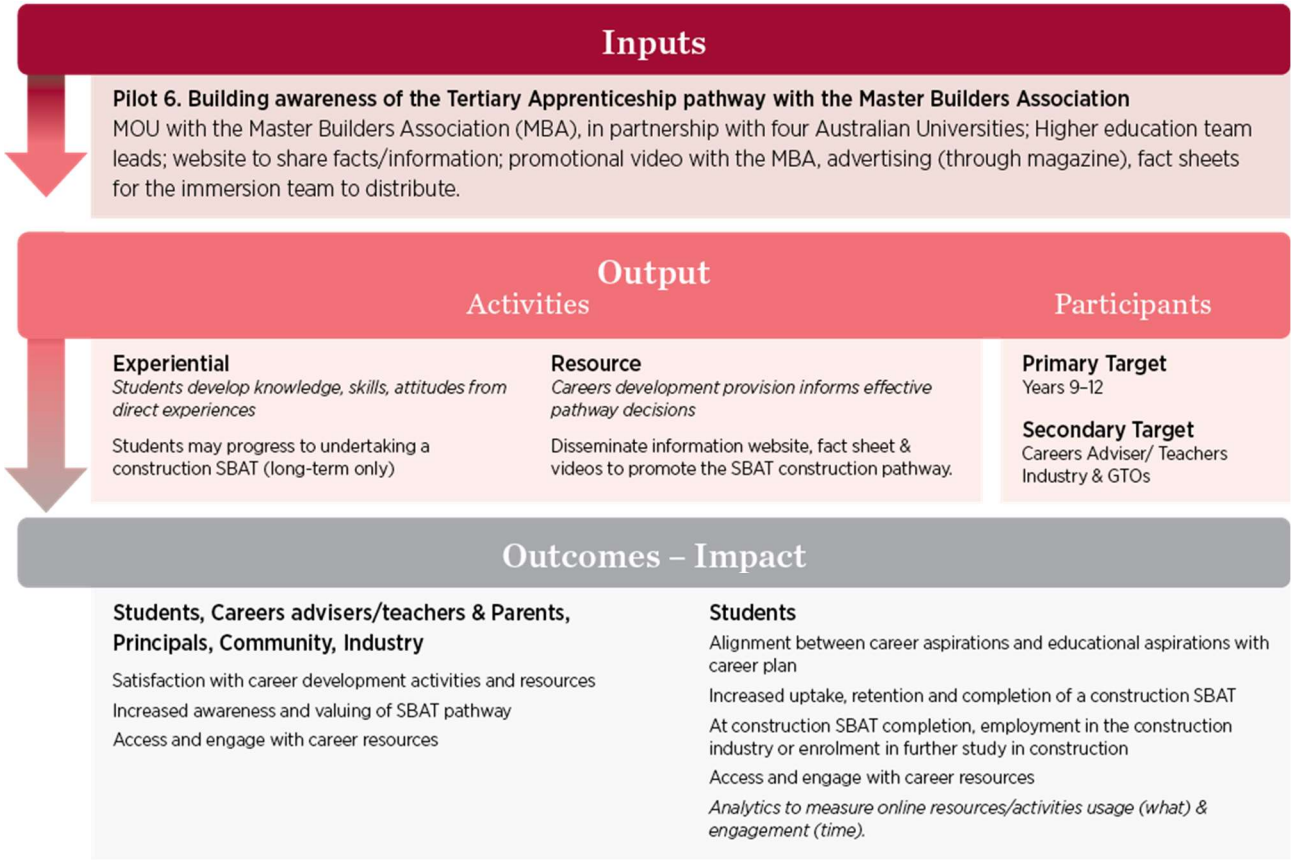

Figure 8: Program logic Pilot 6

EPPP Initiative 7: EDGE Workshops

Initiative purpose

This EPPP initiative aims to better equip young people for the successful transition from school to further education, training or employment. The initiative delivers Education, Deportment, Grooming & Employability (EDGE) Skills Workshops to students in pilot schools to help address gaps between student perceptions and the reality of employer expectations.

The "Giving Students the EDGE for Work" workshops are day-long workshops which aim to get students employment ready. By the end of the day, the students will be prepared to secure work experience, and any other employment opportunities.

The workshops are a fun and engaging way to introduce students to the world of work and what employers are looking for in young people seeking work. Students will build confidence and learn about everything from how to tackle a job interview and write up a cover letter, to how they present themselves and communicate with employers.

Rolling out the initiative

The initiative was delivered in schools and online by the Department of Education in partnership with an external provider. Schools nominated up to 38 students to participate in the workshops.

The workshops included content on:

- Education – employers and Work Placement Service Providers speak to students about their expectations in the workplace
- Deportment – how to present to a potential employer including role plays with local industry
- Grooming – how to get ready for job interview, advice on clothing and presentation
- Employability skills including communication, self-management, initiative and attitude.

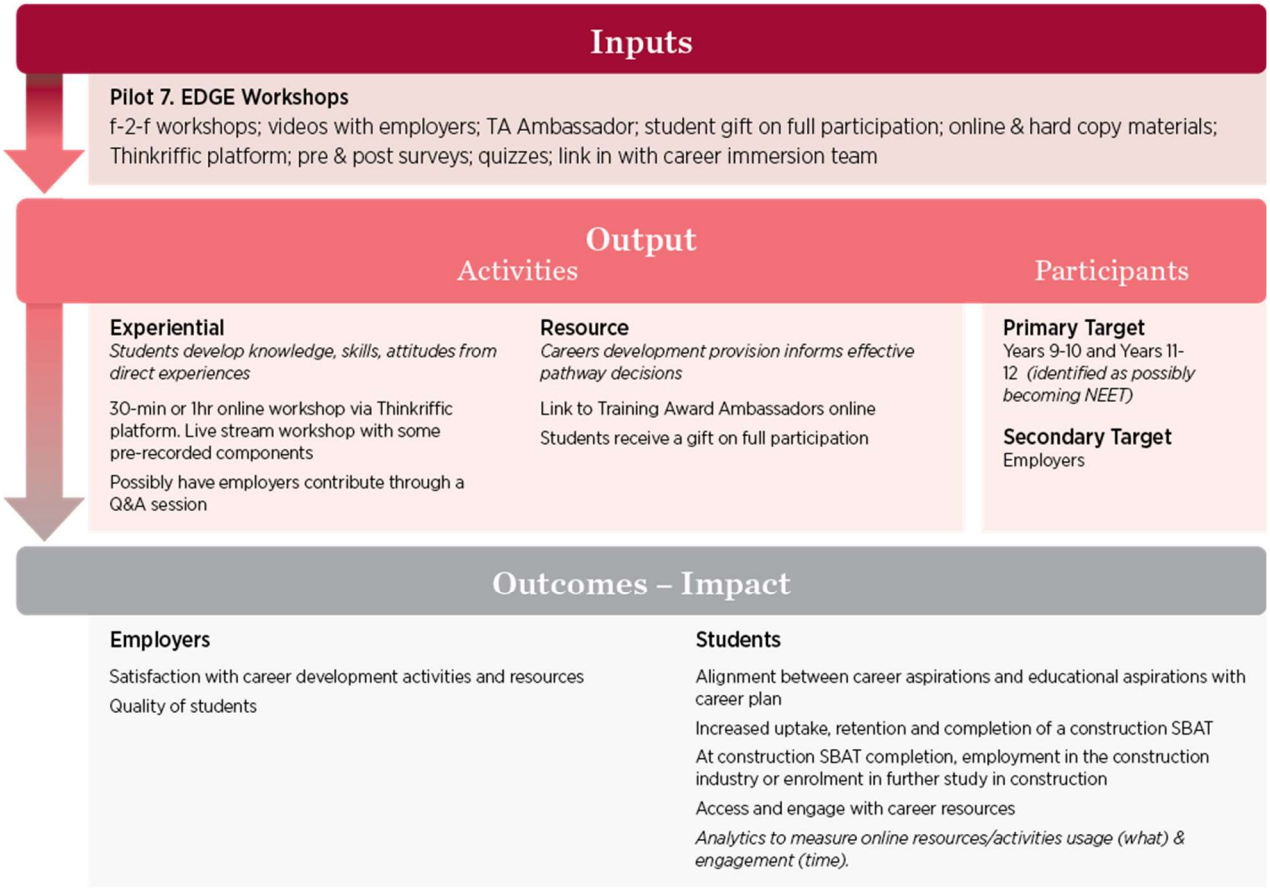

Figure 9: Program logic Pilot 7

EPPP Initiative 8: Fee free "test and try" VET subjects for high school students - under NSW Smart and Skilled

Initiative purpose

This EPPP initiative allows students to "test & try" pre-vocational and part-qualification subjects (or 'units of competency') through a Group Training Organisation (GTO).

Smart and Skilled VET funding is not available for school students, which limits the choices for school students who might be interested in undertaking vocational training but unsure if they wish to:

- commence a formal School Based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SBAT),
- undertake a full time Apprenticeship or Traineeship, or
- are trying to decide between industry areas.

This initiative enables high school students aged 15 and over to complete accredited training of approximately four Units of Competency (UoCs). This accredited training accelerates a student's study if they continue to an apprenticeship or traineeship pathway.

The GTOs also broker valuable industry experience or provide students with local employer contacts. The initiative gives students the ability to explore a local industry and gain hands-on experience that will get them "job-ready". For many students, this initial course will give them a taster of applied learning, making them better informed to consider a vocational pathway.

Rolling out the initiative

To implement this initiative, Group Training Organisations:

- worked with schools to promote the advantages of undertaking pre-vocational UoCs
- worked with schools to identify potential students
- negotiated with schools and training providers to deliver the UoCs over a certain number of weeks/over particular school days

Each GTO can enrol up to 15 students to enable class sizes to be efficient.

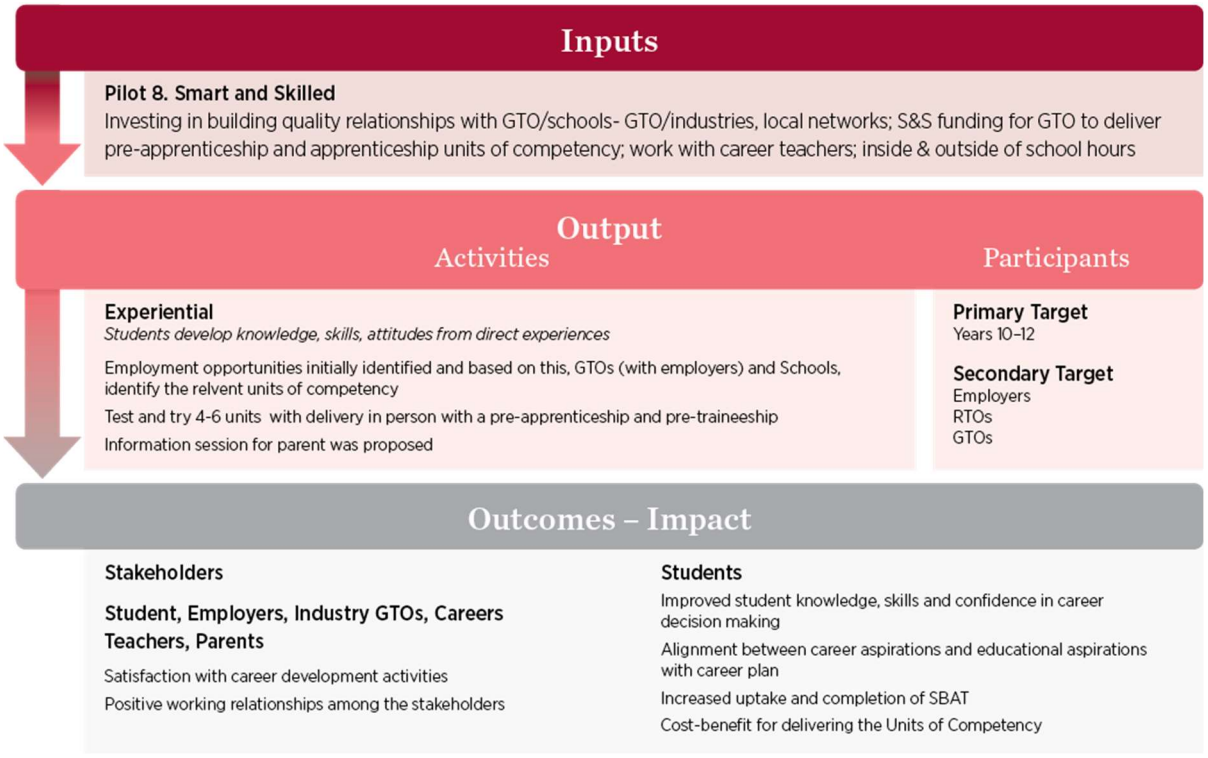

Figure 10: Program logic Pilot 8

EPPP Initiative 9: Targeted Wrap Around Services for Under 17 year olds at TAFE NSW

Initiative purpose

Through this EPPP initiative, TAFE NSW is providing extra support and services for young people aged under 17 years old who have decided that they want to pursue vocational education at TAFE NSW.

Younger students who leave school before Year 12 may find it difficult to adapt to the adult learning environment at TAFE NSW, putting them at them at risk of discontinuing their studies. The targeted Wrap Around Services for Under 17-year-olds at TAFE NSW initiative provides students with a supported transition between school to TAFE NSW, helping them adapt to the adult learning environment and hit the ground running in their chosen course.

Implementation of the initiative

To implement this initiative, TAFE NSW works in partnership with pilot schools for referrals of early school leavers to TAFE. The early school leavers enrolling in TAFE have their learning requirements assessed through a language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) needs assessment. Participants are co-enrolled in the TAFE NSW Attainment in Vocational Support and Pathways which is designed to assist them to complete their qualification.

The suite of support available through this initiative also includes: regular check-ins with their Student Support Officer; financial support for transport; study materials or a computer to address barriers to learning; and access to support services such as career counselling, Aboriginal or disability student support.

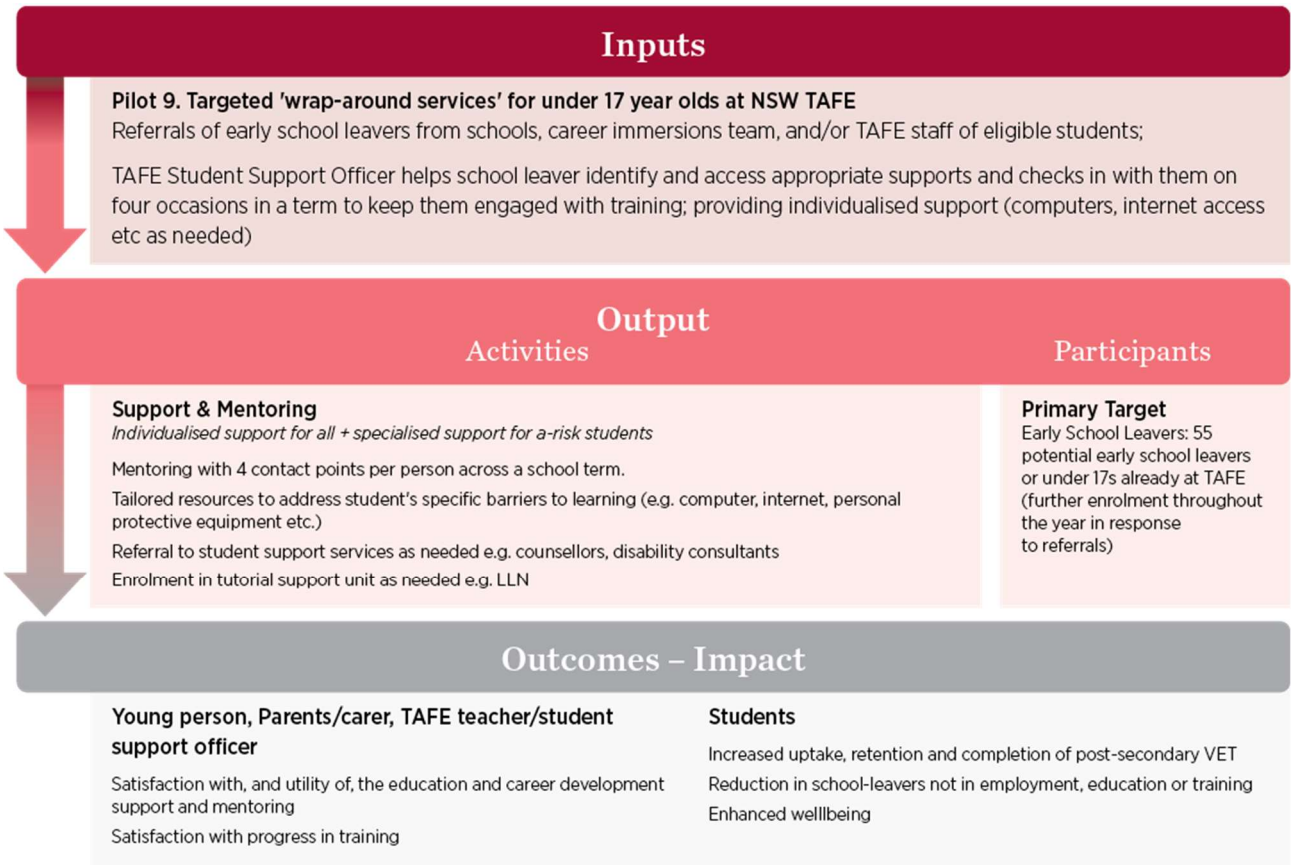

Figure 11: Program logic Pilot 9

EPPP Initiative 10: Support and mentoring for Regional VET Pathways (RVP) on the North Coast

Initiative purpose

This EPPP initiative aims to effectively prepare young people for the future of work with the skills to manage and navigate employment. The Regional VET Pathways (RVP) Program on the North Coast provides support to young people (aged 15 to 19) in order to re-engage them in education or training and move into employment using tailor transition plans.

Young people on the program will receive tailored mentoring, guidance, and assistance to continue their education, or start training or work.

Rolling out the initiative

To implement this initiative, the RVP initiative contracts a local organisation (Northern Rivers Connect) to provide services to young people experiencing complex barriers to accessing school, training or employment, for example homelessness, drug and alcohol use or engagement with juvenile justice.

The initiative established a referral process for North Coast Pilot schools to nominate young people to the program.

Young people in the program are supported for up to 26 weeks to identify their school, training or employment goals and to develop tailored transition plans. Young people are given practical support and advice to overcome barriers for example

- navigating government processes to gain a birth certificates
- support to buy Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required for work sites

The initiative offers a holistic approach to education and employment where areas of the participants' life are addressed such as social, monetary and accessibility barriers. The service is a 'one stop shop' that provides unified, engaging, high quality and easily accessible information and support.

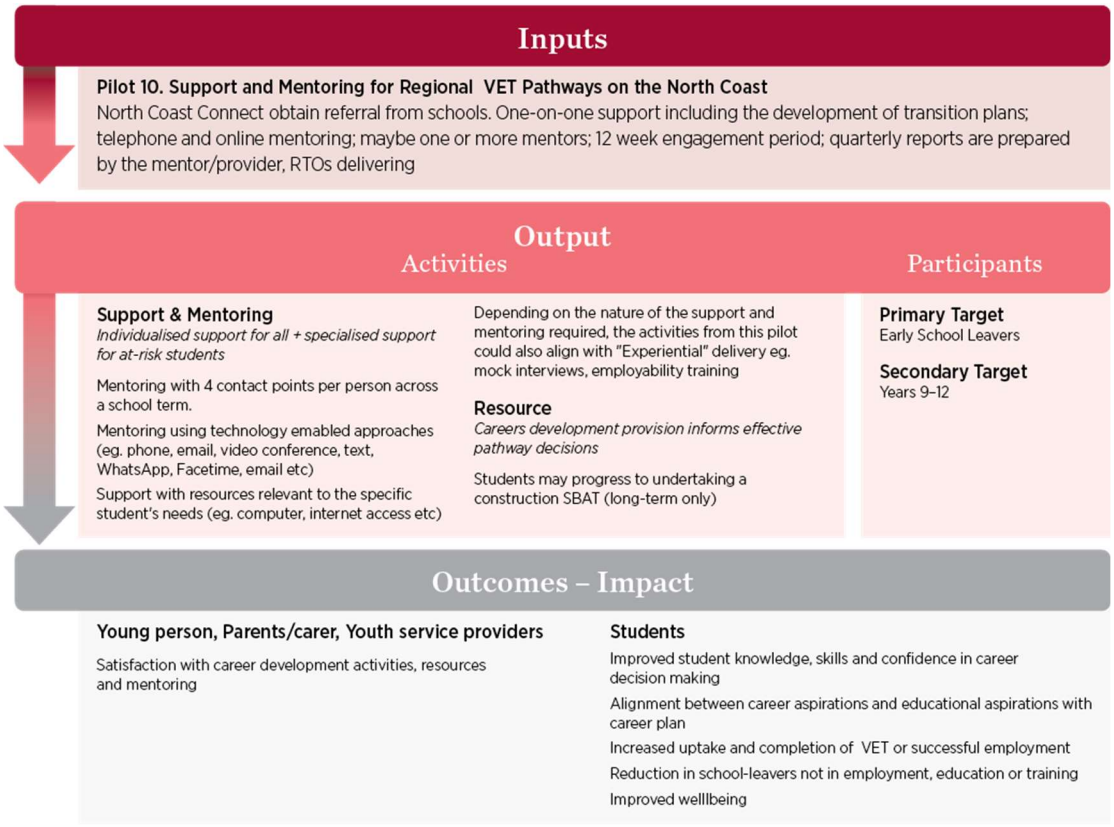

Figure 12: Program logic Pilot 10

Program Logic model for the EPPP

Collectively, the 10 initiatives comprising the EPPP work to improve the provision of career guidance, expand opportunities for students at school to explore their career pathway options and, participate with SBATs and VET. They culminate to increase the number of young people engaged on a pathway of lifelong learning. An overarching EPPP program logic (Figure 13**:** EPPP Overarching program logic) defined what constituted the program through the sequencing of inputs, outputs and outcomes.

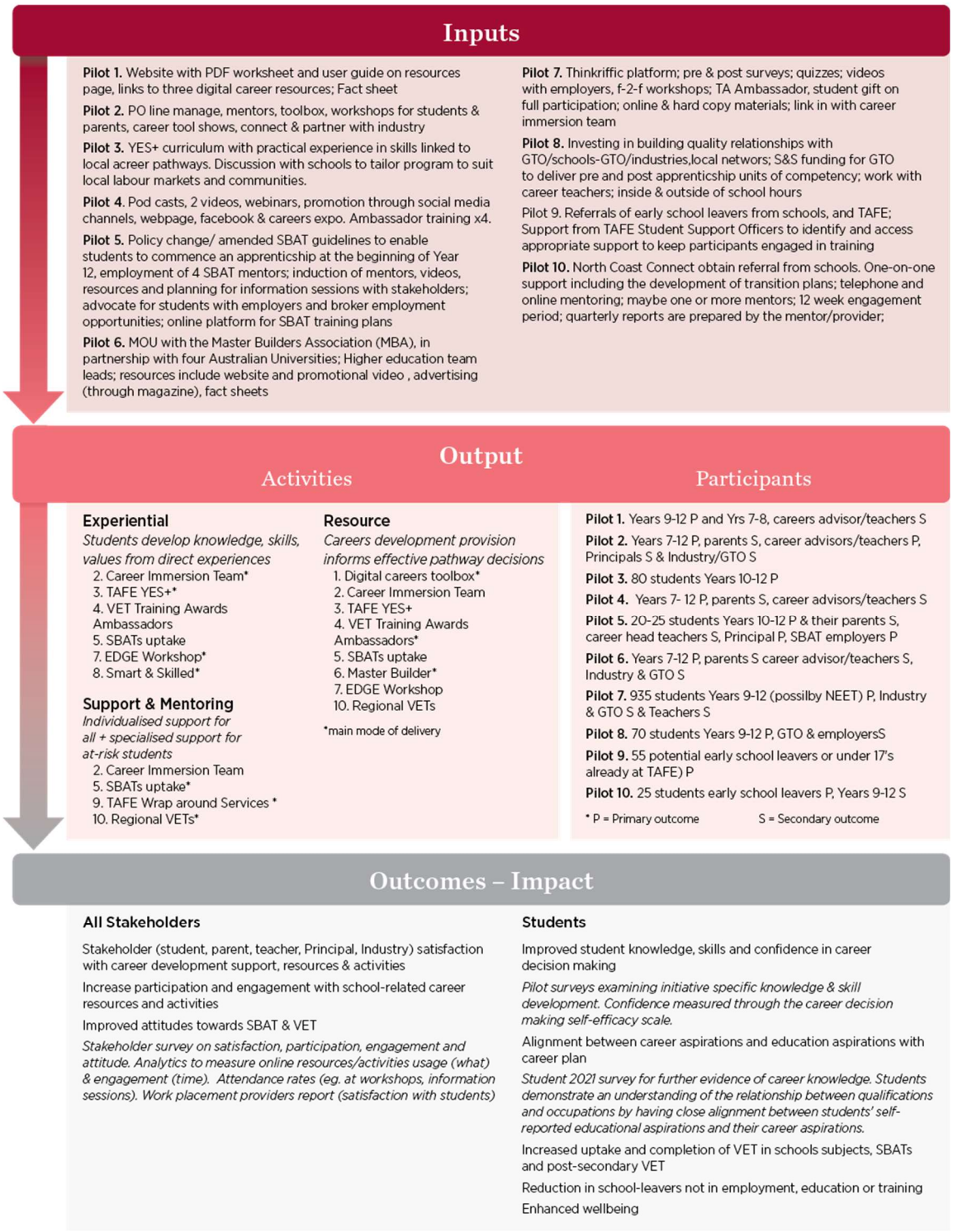

Figure 13: EPPP Overarching program logic

The Theory of Change (**Figure 14**) is a representation of the 'real world' picture of effective career education and the possible pathways that will realise this outcome. It shows the 'how' and 'why' of change that the EPPP aimed to bring about and provided a basis for the development of the Program logics.

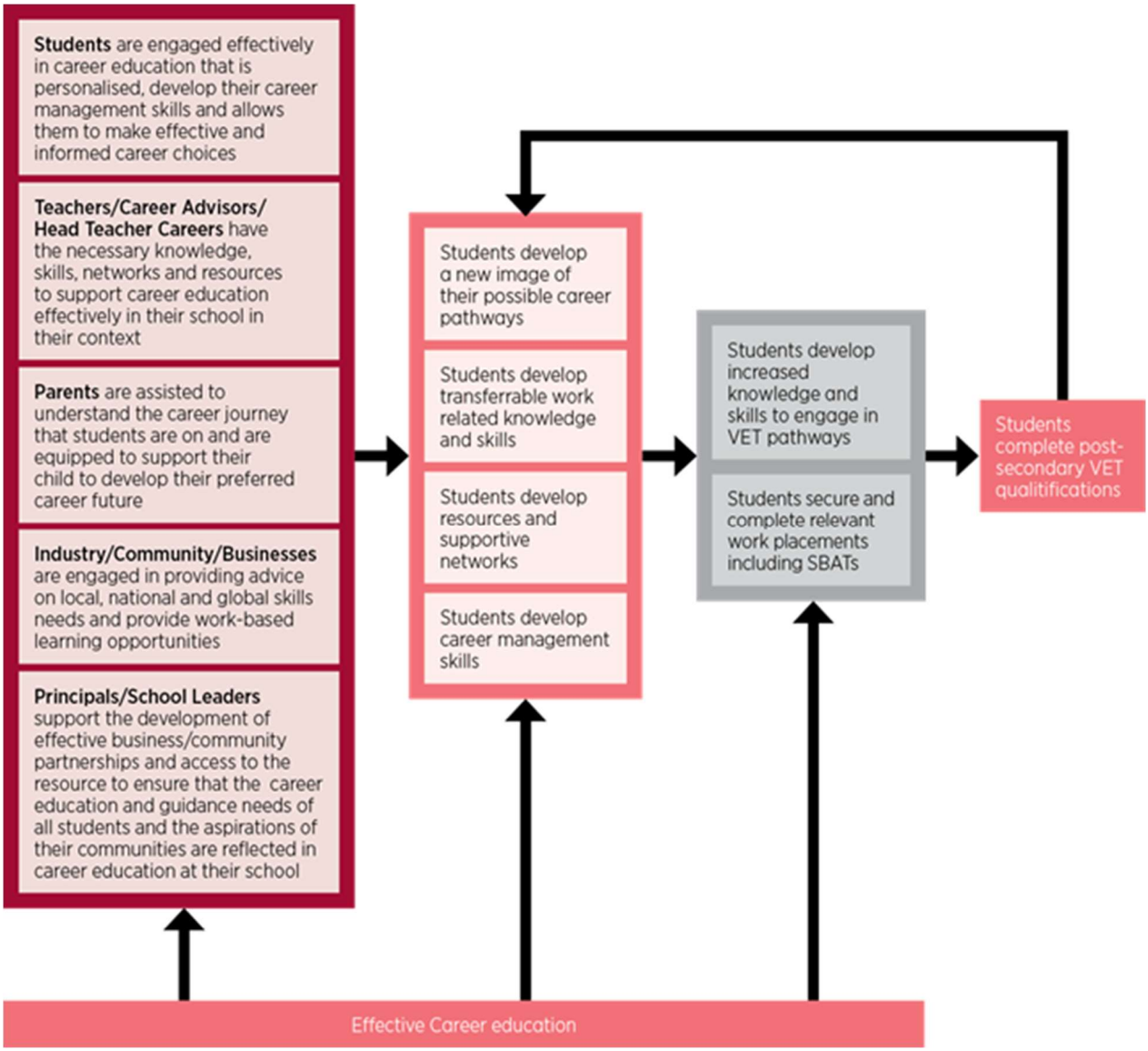

Figure 14: Theory of change applied to EPPP

The Program logics (for the overall Program and each initiative) 'zoom in' on the specific pathways that EPPP provides. These logic models provided the basis for the monitoring of the EPPP program that is outlined in this report.

Drawing on criteria specified Funnell and Rogers (2011) and empirical evidence from the case studies,
Table 10 provides an assessment of program logics and theory of change used in the EPPP evaluation. In making this assessment, it is important to note that no Program Logic can be 'perfect'; it is not possible to capture all of the contextual factor that impact on a Program and its implementation. The value of such an assessment of Program Logics lies in their usefulness and the contributions they can make to continuous improvement of programs as they are repeated or scaled up for further implementation.

Table 10: Assessment of Program Logics and Theory of Change for EPPP

Criteria*	Assessment/Ideas for improvement
Did the Theory of Change present a plausible solution to the challenge of proving	The Theory of Change identified the key points of intervention that were the focus of the initiatives. These, in turn made implicit assumptions about the key enablers of quality career education program. Partnerships (and by inference good communication) and defined of key

effective career education to students?	roles for those engaged in the career education process where identified in the empirical findings which emphasise these as key success factors. Key stakeholders in the career education process were validated in the descriptions of their engagement with the EPPP.
Did the Program Logics demonstrate the logical and defensible relationships between what the program does and the outcomes that it is trying to achieve?	While the initial Program logic provided some connections between what the EPPP sought to do and the outcomes it was trying to achieve, the logics needed to provide greater specificity around relationships between activities and outcomes for specific stakeholders. This was particularly evident for parents as a key stakeholder group. Empirical evidence suggests that while parents and families are key influences of their children's career aspirations, they were not sufficiently engaged in the career education process. Specific initiatives within the program (or the delineation of the specific initiatives that directly relate to this outcome) would assist with making these relationships clearer and more likely to be achieved.
Did the Program Logics specify the intended outcomes so that it is possible to ascertain that they have been achieved?	The empirical evidence suggests that the specification of outcomes has led to them being able to be recognised in the implementation of the program. Empirical evidence from the case studies has shown that outcomes attached to experiential (Yes+, SBATs) and mentoring/ support initiatives (SBATs) made significant contributions to the observed outcomes. Outcomes from other initiatives (e.g. outcomes from the use digital resources) were less clear. As noted in the outcomes from the field work in the case study sites, this can largely be attributed to the implementation of the program during COVID and the pivot to largely online delivery at a time when students were spending a majority of their time online. As noted above, outcomes for parents were less clear and, under the circumstances, challenging to achieve when face to face contact was not possible for a large part of the implementation period.
How do the Program Logics articulate the mechanisms for change?	The initial Program Logic placed the initiatives into three groups (experiential, support/mentoring, and resource). It assumed that all three groups of initiatives would act equally in driving the changes/outcome desired for the program. However, evidence from the case studies suggested that experiential interventions provided the greatest drivers of change, supported by mentoring/support and resource initiatives. Moreover, mentoring and support initiatives that were provided *outside* of the school appeared to contribute to the observed outcomes. These findings suggest that the mechanism for change for EPPP need to better articulate a causal chain that better differentiates between what the different types of initiatives have to offer. – e.g. *If* students have access to experiential initiatives, supported by mentors and supports, and after the provision of readiness initiatives, then they will better understand the wider possibilities for their futures.
How do the Program Logics articulate the outcomes chains?	The Program Logics attempted to articulated both outcomes and impact. The nature of the evaluation and the state of the Program (early/initial implementation) meant that assessment of outcomes (impressions of what worked well, what stakeholders liked and did not like, what worked and did not work and assessment of learning outcomes for students) featured in the empirical findings. These intermediate outcomes need to be linked to the longer-term outcomes (impact) of the program which can be only ascertained over time. These are articulated in the theory of change (students complete post-school VET programs).

* Funnell, S.C & Rogers, P.J. (2011), *Purposeful Program Theory.*

Assessment of the fidelity of implementation using the Program Logics

While the Program Logics provided a clear description of how the EPPP program might work, they were not able to account for the ways in which the program was implemented at each school. Details of the actual implementation of the EPPP Initiatives across the case study sites, show variations both in terms of the extent of the implementation of the various initiatives in terms of numbers of events as well as the reach of the implementation across school levels (see Appendix 4).

Data from implementation indicates that the reach of the EPPP into the lower levels (Years 7 and 8) does not appear to be as significant as that for the upper secondary years. In addition, some initiatives were not able to be implemented as intended because of COVID. This had a particular impact on the experiential initiatives which appear to play a key role in driving the outcomes for EPPP (see below).

Outcomes described in the case studies illustrate that the EPPP was implemented in contexts where schools were also offering a range of other initiatives to support students learning about their future career pathways. These initiatives would have shared some of the outcomes named for the EPPP. However, outcomes from the case studies indicated the value of EPPP initiatives to *amplify and increase the quality* of various aspects of careers education offered to students (for example, in enhanced relationships with TAFE, building the quality of connections between stakeholders). Further, fidelity of implementation was enhanced where certain sets of enabling conditions were present including:

- there was support from families for students' career aspirations
- students' aspirations were achievable given the resources that were available in the school and the wider local community.
- there were local business/industry partners available to engage in the initiatives
- resources were reflective of the context in which EPPP was being implemented (e.g. they were not metrocentric in their content)

In other words, fidelity of implementation required alignment amongst a number of key enabling factors. In the absence of these enablers, which need to be made explicit when seeking to expand the EPPP into new contexts, additional resources/initiatives may need to be considered.

Fidelity of program implementation also rested on the presence of certain 'hygiene' factors that impacted on various stakeholders' motivations for engagement with EPPP. Some of these factors identified in the cases studies that potentially mitigated motivation/engagement included:

- access to transport (for students and potentially families and schools)
- a sufficiently flexible school curriculum within which to EPPP (for teachers) and to accommodate participation within school hours (for students)
- access to professional learning (for careers advisers)
- understanding of what it takes to engage with schools and students in workplaces (for business/industry stakeholders)

Appendix 2: Student surveys

Materials and methods

Student survey content: Primary factors

The key components of the student surveys are outlined in Table 11. Survey items corresponding to those key components which are listed in Table 11. Some survey items, particularly Expectancy-Value (and Cost) items, were included in student surveys for all of the EPPP pilots, while some items were specific to the type of pilot being delivered (experiential, resource, or support and mentoring), and some items were relevant to only a single pilot (e.g. feedback on the acceptability and usability of the different online resources included in the Digital careers toolbox resource).

Table 11. Key components of the student surveys

Student survey factors		Survey type
Engagement with the EPPP initiatives including general and specific feedback **Kirkpatrick Level 1**	Overall awareness of and satisfaction with the EPPP initiatives. Ranking of pilot activities. Specific factors: Digital resources user experience and evaluation of resources.	Post surveys only
EXPECTANCY for success	Expectancy refers to how probable it is to successfully complete the pilot activities. This includes beliefs about how well they learn new information or skills. It involves appraisals about how motivated and engaged they are and the support they receive to increase beliefs about succeeding.	Post surveys only
Perceived VALUE of experiences, resources and/or mentoring	Value refers to how important, useful or worthwhile the pilot is perceived to be for the respondent.	Post surveys only
Perceived COST of experiences, resources and/or mentoring	Cost refers to what the respondent has given up to do the pilot, or effort needed to be exerted to complete the pilot.	Post surveys only
Knowledge and skills: **Kirkpatrick Level 2**	Developed knowledge and skills to support their study and future career. Specific factors: Improved employability; learning about SBAT and VET pathways.	Pre-post surveys
Education and career aspirations including attitude to SBAT & VET and VET pathways (general & pilot specific)	Study plans and career goals. Specific factors: Aspirations to pursue VET pathways.	Pre-post surveys
Career confidence	Career confidence refers to self-awareness of a students' interest, purpose and career plan.	Pre-post surveys

	Specific factors: Confidence to approach employers regarding potential work or work placements, perceived appropriateness of career choice, perceived barriers to future study and work.	
Demographics	Information about respondents, their gender, school, Year level (or age), self-reported grades/achievement.	All

Table 12. Sample survey items for the general factors considered in the EPPP student surveys

Student survey items – general factors	
Engagement with the EPPP initiatives including general and specific feedback **Kirkpatrick Level 1**	General items (all pilots): Please give [*pilot name*] an overall rating out of 5 Can you put the different parts of the [*pilot name*] in order from best to worst?
EXPECTANCY for success	General items (clustered by pilot type – resource, experiential, mentoring): I learned lots of new skills and information using/during/completing [*pilot name* I was motivated to get as much as possible out of [*pilot name*] The information and experiences in [*pilot name*] kept my attention all the way through The presenters kept my attention all the way through the [*experiential pilot name*] The [*mentorship provider*] helped me all the way through the [*support and mentoring pilot name*]
Perceived **VALUE** of experiences, resources and/or mentoring	General items (clustered by pilot type – resource, experiential, mentoring): [*Pilot name*] was useful for helping me understand what I need to do/preparing me to get a job and career The [*pilot name*] offered information and advice that was relevant to me Overall, the [*pilot name*] helped me plan for the future Compared to other careers programs I have done, the [*pilot name*] was really worthwhile The support on offer through [*support and mentoring pilot name*] was important to me The help on offer through [*support and mentoring pilot name*] was relevant to me
Perceived **COST** of experiences, resources and/or mentoring	General items: Doing [*pilot name*] has taken up too much of my time Doing [*pilot name*] was not worth the effort
Knowledge and skills (general & pilot specific):	PRE-POST Pilots only (sample items):

Kirkpatrick Level 2	I know what work tasks are involved in the jobs I am considering for my future I know what study and/or training I need to do for my future career I know what employers are looking for
Education and career aspirations including attitude to SBAT & VET and VET pathways (general & pilot specific)	PRE-POST Pilots only (sample items): I am thinking about doing a Vocational Education and Training (VET) course, apprenticeship, or traineeship My future study plans are to do higher level Vocational Education and Training (VET) I have a good understanding of how my Vocational Education and Training (VET) subject will fit in with my schoolwork
Careers confidence (general & pilot specific)	PRE-POST Pilots only (sample items): There are obstacles that will make going back to study or getting a job challenging for me I feel confident about approaching an employer about work experience or employment I know what job or career I want in the future

Student survey respondent recruitment and survey distribution

24 EPPP trial schools were invited by the NSW Department of Education (NSW DoE) to implement the pilot initiatives and participate in the accompanying pilot evaluation in 2020. The Human Ethics Committee at Western Sydney University (8 April 2020) and State Education Research Applications Process (SERAP) (14 July 2020) approved the initially agreed upon evaluation protocol which involved an intervention study comparing EPPP students to non-intervention (control) students and standalone stakeholder surveys to be conducted at the end of the EPPP delivery in December. However, the NSW DoE requested changes to the evaluation protocol and instead approved a quasi-experimental design in September 2020, which comprised pre- and post-pilot student surveys for the experiential (Pilots 3, 7 & 8; Pilot 2 combined) and mentoring pilots (5, 9 & 10) and a standalone post-only survey for the resource pilots (Pilots 1, 4, & 6). Ethics amendments were submitted and approved and data collection for the pre-pilot surveys commenced in mid-September 2020.

The NSW DoE delivered the EPPP initiatives, recruited students for the pilot evaluation and administered the surveys. The WSU evaluation team prepared participant information and consent documents and social media messages for the NSW DoE's recruitment. We developed pilot specific surveys with web links and QR codes for distribution. Feedback and input on the surveys was provided by the EPPP Evaluation Reference group which included members from SteerCo, NSW Skills Board, Director Educational Leadership, and a representative from the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation. In addition, most Pilot leads provided feedback and input into the student and stakeholder surveys. Pilot leads were responsible for distributing the online surveys to their teams in order to be administered. Survey administration protocols, a checklist and scripts for reading aloud to survey respondents were created by the WSU evaluation team. These survey guidelines were circulated prior to the NSW DoE administering the surveys to assist with avoiding non-sampling errors. We provided weekly updates on returned consent numbers, survey response rates and incomplete survey numbers. At the fortnightly EPPP working group meetings, the WSU evaluation team shared the updates and provided strategies to the Pilot leads to bolster student survey response rates and reduce the likelihood of incomplete survey responses.

Students enrolled at school had their surveys administered by the EPPP deliverer:

- Careers advisers administered Pilots 1 and 2's surveys.
- Vocational Education and Training teachers administered Pilots 3, 5 (which included Pilot 6 in the post- survey) and 8's surveys.
- EDGE workshop providers administered a pre- and post-workshop survey (which included Pilot 4 in the post-survey).

The workload attributed to implementing the EPPP for careers advisers was overwhelming. Adding the evaluation activities (such as distributing information and consents, following up consent returns from parents and students, administering Pilot 1 and 2's surveys) further burdened careers advisers (refer to Appendix 4 findings). Head teacher – careers informed the WSU evaluation team that some schools from the Cowpasture and Campbelltown clusters refused to conduct Pilot 2's survey (Table 20).

Students not regularly attending school or who previously left school, had their surveys administered by:

- Mentor assigned to the student for Pilots 9 and 10.

Students in Pilots 1-9 completed online surveys whereas Pilot 10 participants completed their survey over the phone with their mentor. The Pilot lead recommended phone interviews as opposed to completing an online survey because Pilot 10 participant were known to have limited or no internet access, limited access to a device to complete an online survey and reduced motivation to access and/or complete the survey. Social desirability was examined given the trend in responses tend to be more positive when a respondent is providing feedback to a mentor (Leary, 2001). Relative to the other pilots, Pilot 10's results were not more positive, and did not follow the positive trend in line with social desirability.

The student surveys were estimated to take between 10–15 minutes. To reduce the burden of survey administration and survey fatigue, Pilot 4's survey was embedded in Pilot 7's post-pilot survey and Pilot 6's survey was embedded in Pilot 5's post-pilot survey. The pilot-specific surveys were created to function as a monitoring and reporting system and applied Expectancy – Value Theory (EVT) and the New World Kirkpatrick model for program evaluation. Despite strong advocacy from the NSW DoE for schools to administer the surveys with students, the participation rate from schools was lower than anticipated (eg. 33% of schools did not conduct Pilot 2's survey), particularly in South West Sydney (Table 19; Table 20).

Statistical methodology and data analysis

Data cleaning and screening

Surveys with a large amount of incomplete data (>75% of total data missing) were removed from the analysis. Surveys with straight lining responses and duplicates were also removed. Missing data for items were imputed using both demographic data and related survey items, using ordinal logistic regression. For pilots employing both pre-pilot and post-pilot surveys, respondents who had completed both pre and post surveys were matched by name and school.

Expectancy-Value Scales: Survey validation and evaluation methodology

Prior to conducting descriptive and inferential statistical analysis, the Expectancy-Value (and Cost) scales developed for the evaluation of the pilots were assessed for internal consistency reliability and construct validity using Cronbach's alpha and Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Analyses were employed only for pilots with a sample size of $n > 95$. Goodness-of-fit (GOF) indices were estimated: chi-square/degrees of freedom, Comparative fit index (CFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) with cut off values more than .90 for the CFI and less than .10 for the RMSEA (Byrne, 2006). Where the majority of the scales for different pilots achieved beyond goodness-of-fit thresholds we determined the models were robust and conclusions and were extended to the Expectancy-Value items and scales featured in the student surveys for the remaining pilots with insufficient sample sizes to conduct psychometric testing. Expectancy-Value scale items were summed and averaged across the number of items per factor for each pilot to obtain an overall score /5.

Descriptive and inferential statistics

To establish sample representativeness, we performed extensive mapping of student respondent sample characteristics. The student survey respondents are presented:

1. Students with complete surveys as proportion of the total pilot participants
2. Total number of surveys completed (after missing data removal) for each survey per pilot
3. Number of surveys per pilot by school year level or student age (for students not at or currently attending school)
4. Proportion (%) of surveys completed by students in each geographical cluster for each pilot
5. Number surveys completed per school (grouped by cluster) for each pilot, and total number of surveys completed by each school

To understand the differences in the student pilot participants between pilots, further sample characteristics displayed are proportion (%) of female respondents per pilot and mean (SD) self-reported academic achievement (in grades low-high) per pilot. The total number of respondents that placed themselves in each grade category is also included in the sample characteristics.

Shapiro-Wilks tests were conducted on the Expectancy-Value factors and individual items to test assumptions of normality. To evaluate engagement with the EPPP initiatives for all pilots, item-level means (M), standard deviations (SD) and 95% confidence intervals (95% CI) for the point estimates are displayed. For the pilots with post-program surveys, students were asked to rank different components of the pilots from best to worst, and the means (for comparison within the pilots) and total number of responses received are presented. Additional regression analysis investigated if the pilot ratings were influenced by student academic achievement (self-reported grades).

For pilots that surveyed student participants before and after the pilot (pre- and post- surveys), analysis of change in Expectancy-Value was conducted using parametric testing if assumptions of normality are met, or non-parametric testing as the alternative. Results displayed are difference scores (Diff) between pre and post scores for each item and the probability value (p) of the difference. Additional regression analysis investigated whether the ratings the pilot received is influenced by student academic achievement (self-reported grades). Group differences in change in career certainty (I know what job or career I want in the future), understanding what study or training is required for a chosen career path (I know what study and/or training I need to do for my future career) and a range of other factors was also examined. The student and stakeholder surveys were not examined in terms of differences between the pilots were not examined given the uniqueness of each pilot including: participants' year level; mode of delivery (experiential, resource, mentoring); form of delivery (individual, small group, large group, single school delivery, co-school delivery); site (school, TAFE, workplace); pilot student target characteristics (Not in education, employment or training, enrolled but not attending school, whole year levels); pilot overlap (Pilot 2 subsumed Pilots 1, 4 & 7).

Assumptions of normality were variable across the different items and scale factors and both parametric and nonparametric tests were conducted.

Screening and missing data

Missing data analysis was conducted (Table 13). For the Expectancy-Value items (post-program surveys), some pilots had substantial remaining data missing and some had no missing data. Promoting tertiary apprenticeship pathway with the MBA had no Expectancy-Value items as the pilot was subsumed into 'Increasing the uptake of SBATs' student survey.

Table 13. Missing data report

EPPP Initiative	Sample size before removal	Sample size after removal	Remaining % data missing
PILOT 3: TAFE YES+	368	202	19.1%
PILOT 7: EDGE workshops	309	97	2.5%
PILOT 8: Fee free "test and try" VET	27	27	0.2%
PILOT 1: Digital Careers Toolbox	127	106	0.5%
PILOT 4: NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	97	52	2.5%
PILOT 5: Increasing Uptake of SBATs, interested & enrolled students	37	34	2%
PILOT 9: Wrap Around Services for U17s	0	n/a	n/a

PILOT 10: Regional VET Program (North Coast)	30	30	0%
PILOT 2: New Model of Careers Education	584	565	0.2%

Expectancy – Value evaluation: Survey validation

CFA was performed using R software. Pilots 1, 2, 3, and 7 had sufficient numbers (n > 95) of respondents to conduct reliability and validity testing. The items included in each domain for each pilot are displayed in Table 14.

Table 14. Expectancy-Value survey items included in each domain per pilot

DOMAIN	ITEM	Item#	Pilot 1	Pilot 2	Pilot 3	Pilot 7
EXPECTANCY	I learned lots of new skills and information *using/during/ completing pilot*	EXP-1	1	1	1	1
	I was motivated to get as much as possible out of *pilot*	EXP-2	1	1	1	1
	The information and experiences in *pilot* kept my attention all the way through	EXP-3	1	1	1	1
	I was interested in using *pilot resources*	EXP-4	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
	I found *pilot resources* easy to use	EXP-5	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
	The presenters kept my attention all the way through the *experiential pilot*	EXP-6	n/a	1	1	n/a
VALUE	*Pilot* was useful for helping me understand what I need to do/preparing me to get a job and career	VAL-1	1	1	1	1
	The *pilot* offered information and advice that was relevant to me	VAL-2	1	1	1	1
	Overall, the *pilot* helped me plan for the future	VAL-3	1	1	1	1
	Compared to other careers programs I have done, the *pilot* was really worthwhile	VAL-4	1	1	1	1
COST	Doing *pilot* has taken up too much of my time	CST-1	1	1	1	1
	Doing *pilot* was not worth the effort	CST-1	1	1	1	n/a

Pilot 1 (Digital careers toolbox) had 106 surveys retained after screening, with 10 Expectancy-Value items. Pilot 2 (New model of careers education) had 565 surveys retained after screening, with 9 Expectancy-Value items. Pilot 3 (TAFE YES+) had 202 surveys retained after screening, with 9 Expectancy-Value items. Pilot 7 (EDGE workshps) had 309 surveys retained after screening, with 7 Expectancy-Value items. Figure 15 displays the factor structure of the scale for Pilot 2.

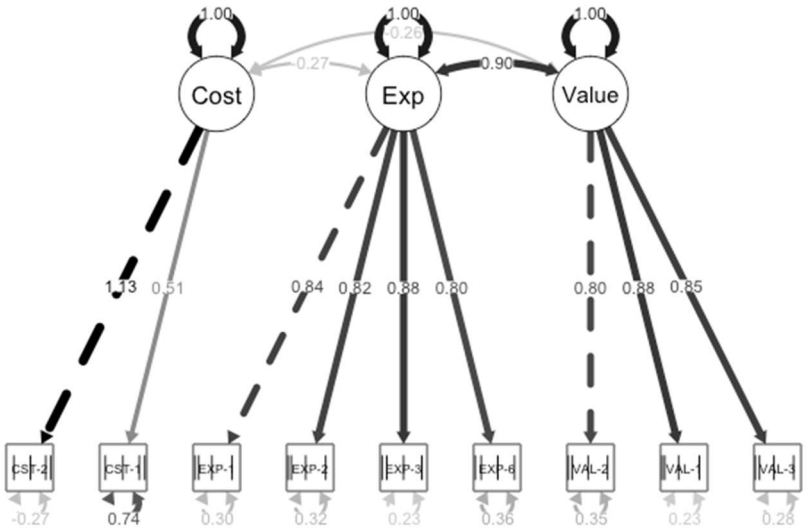

Figure 15. Expectancy-Value factor structure for Pilot 2
The Cronbach alphas (

Table 15) and the CFA goodness-of-fit statistics (see Table 16) for each pilot confirm the three scales provide a good fit to the data for Pilots 1, 2, and 7. All Cronbach alphas ranged from acceptable to excellent indicating good internal consistency scale reliability overall. For the CFAs, except for Pilot 3 where fit was marginally weaker and failed to reach the validity threshold for one of the two goodness-of-fit indicators, all thresholds were met. The performance of the scales over all four pilot sample groups was adequate to recommend the scales for evaluation across all pilots and sample groups.

Table 15. Reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha statistic) of the Expectancy - Value scales for each pilot

Pilot	Expectancy (Number of items)	Value (Number of items)	Cost (Number of items)
Pilot 1	.91 (5)	.88 (3)	.81 (2)
Pilot 2	.90 (4)	.88 (3)	.73 (2)
Pilot 3	.75 (4)	.81 (3)	.78 (2)
Pilot 7	.91 (3)	.81 (3)	n/a (1)

Table 16. Confirmatory factor analysis: goodness-of-fit indicators for Expectancy - Value Theory scales

Pilot	χ^2	*df*	$\chi 2$ /*df*	CFI	RMSEA
Pilot 1 (n = 106)	63.03	32	1.97	.97	.096
Pilot 2 (n = 565)	79.15	24	3.30	.99	.064
Pilot 3 (n = 202)	90.46	24	3.77	.98	.117*
Pilot 7 (n = 97)	13.79	11	1.25	.99	.051

Note: X^2 = chi-squared; *df* = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; * = failed to reach threshold.

Overall student survey respondent demographic information

The number of student surveys that met the minimum data threshold requirements for each survey per pilot and by student year level is displayed in Table 17. Administrative data including pilot implementation and the EPPP reporting dashboard were used to determine the total student sample for each pilot. Pilot 6 initiatives included creating and distributing fact sheets, information videos which were distributed on the EPPP website and through EPPP TV. Data was unavailable on who from the 24 schools accessed and used these resources. Proportion of survey responses by cluster for each of the EPPP surveys is recorded in Table 18.

Table 17. Student survey response rate for each survey and by school year level

	# Pilot participants	Total # surveys			Matched cases	School year level						Age		
EPPP Initiative	(% Total response rate)	POST ONLY	PRE	POST	PRE & POST	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11	Yr 12	15	16	17
PILOT 3: TAFE YES+	558 (24%)		133	202	133	0	0	11	165	22	3	-	-	-
PILOT 7: EDGE workshops	315 (31%)		97	97	97	0	0	1	95	1	0	-	-	-
PILOT 8: Fee free "test and try" VET	63 (43%)		27	27	27	0	0	2	23	2	0	-	-	-
PILOT 1: Digital Careers Toolbox	536 (20%)	106			-	0	0	46	59	0	1	-	-	-
PILOT 4: NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	315 (17%)	52			-	0	0	0	52	0	0	-	-	-
PILOT 6: Promoting Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway MBA	unknown		9	9	9	0	0	0	6	1	2	-	-	-
PILOT 5: Increasing Uptake of SBATs, interested & enrolled	95 (36%)		34	34	34	0	0	0	20	3	11	-	-	-
PILOT 9: Wrap Around Services for U17s	71 (23%)		16	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	7	4
PILOT 10: Regional VET Program (North Coast)	50 (60%)		30	30	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	13	8
PILOT 2: New Model of Careers Education	2,289 (25%)	565			-	0	8	223	319	9	6	-	-	-
TOTAL (per YEAR level)	-	-	-	-	-	0	8	283	739	38	23	14	20	12

Table 18. Proportion of survey respondents from each area cluster per survey

EPPP Initiative	SURVEY	% Ballina	% Grafton	% Campbelltown	% Liverpool	% Cowpasture
TAFE YES+	PRE	19	1	16	33	32
	POST	18	0	25	28	28
EDGE workshops	PRE	0	0	24	47	28
	POST	0	0	26	45	29
Fee free “test and try” VET	PRE	0	48	22	15	15
	POST	0	48	22	15	15
Digital Careers Toolbox	POST ONLY	3	18	39	19	21
NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	POST ONLY	0	0	39	42	19
Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway - MBA	PRE	0	0	11	56	33
	POST	0	0	11	56	33
Increasing Uptake of SBATs	PRE	12	0	18	32	38
	POST	12	0	18	32	38
Wrap Around Services for U17s	PRE	31	69	0	0	0
	POST	0	0	0	0	0
Regional VET Program (North Coast)	PRE	57	43	0	0	0
	POST	57	43	0	0	0
New Model of Careers Education	POST ONLY	17	25	12	22	24

NORTH COAST school clusters

For the EPPP schools in the North Coast cluster only, survey response rates per school are displayed in Table 19.

Table 19. Student survey response rates per EPPP initiative per North Coast EPPP school

		Ballina Cluster					Grafton cluster			
EPPP Initiative	SURVEY	School A-1	School A-2	School A-3	School A-4	School A-5	School B-1	School B-2	School B-3	School B-4
TAFE YES+	PRE	14	0	0	7	4	1	0	0	0
	POST	16	8	0	7	6	0	0	0	0
EDGE workshops	PRE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	POST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fee free “test and try” VET	PRE	0	0	0	0	0	6	4	2	1
	POST	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	2	1
Digital Careers Toolbox	POST ONLY	2	0	1	0	0	2	0	16	1
NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	POST ONLY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway - MBA	PRE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	POST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Increasing Uptake of SBATs	PRE	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0
	POST	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0
Wrap Around Services for U17s	PRE	1	2	1	1	0	5	4	0	2
	POST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Regional VET Program (North Coast)	PRE	5	4	5	1	2	4	4	0	5
	POST	5	4	5	1	2	4	4	0	5
New Model of Careers Education	POST ONLY	21	31	1	35	9	9	75	50	6
TOTAL per North Coast school	-	36	49	15	58	23	36	96	70	21

SOUTH WEST SYDNEY school clusters

For the EPPP schools in the South West cluster only, survey response rates per school are displayed in Table 20.

Table 20. Student survey response rates per EPPP initiative per South West Sydney EPPP school

		Campbelltown Cluster					Cowpasture Cluster					Liverpool Cluster				
EPPP Initiative	SURVEY	School C-1	School C-2	School C-3	School C-4	School C-5	School D-1	School D-2	School D-3	School D-4	School D-5	School E-1	School E-2	School E-3	School E-4	School E-5
TAFE YES+	PRE	17	1	0	3	13	13	1	6	7	2	4	14	7	6	13
	POST	39	4	3	5	14	14	4	8	15	3	8	19	8	7	13
EDGE workshops	PRE	17	0	0	6	9	11	16	0	0	0	20	4	12	0	0
	POST	17	0	0	7	8	11	15	0	0	0	18	4	12	0	1
Fee free “test and try” VET	PRE	3	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	1	0	0	1
	POST	3	0	2	1	0	0	3	0	3	0	3	1	0	0	1
Digital Careers Toolbox	POST ONLY	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	18	1	0	22
NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	POST ONLY	13	0	0	7	5	5	5	0	0	0	7	7	7	0	0
Apprenticeship Pathway - MBA	PRE	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
	POST	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
Uptake of SBATs	PRE	5	0	1	0	3	1	1	3	5	0	0	5	3	0	3
	POST	5	0	1	0	3	1	1	3	5	0	0	5	3	0	3
Wrap Around Services for U17s	PRE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	POST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

New Model of Careers Education	POST ONLY	66	0	0	0	0	12	1	0	0	0	37	50	36	0	126
TOTAL per SW Sydney school	-	227	5	11	30	61	68	47	20	42	5	101	128	89	13	185

Sample characteristics: Gender and self-reported academic achievement

For each the EPPP initiative, the proportion of female students, average self-reported academic achievement (grades) and the distribution of grade responses in each category is displayed in Table 21. Pilot 4 survey items were subsumed in Pilot 7's survey.

Table 21. Across all 10 EPPP Pilots, survey respondent gender and self-reported overall academic achievement (grades low to high)

EPPP Initiative	% Female	Grades M	Grades SD	Grades 95% CI	% Low grades	% Low-average grades	% Average grades	% Average-high grades	% High grades
PILOT 3: TAFE YES+	50	3.26	1.08	3.11:3.41	6	17	32	33	11
PILOT 7: EDGE workshops	51	3.47	1.02	3.27:3.68	4	11	33	36	16
PILOT 8: Fee free "test and try" VET	26	3.07	0.96	2.70:3.45	7	15	44	30	4
PILOT 1: Digital Careers Toolbox	47	3.36	1.01	3.16:3.55	4	16	32	37	11
PILOT 4: NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	51	3.47	1.02	3.27:3.68	4	11	33	36	16
PILOT 6: Promoting Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway - MBA	22	3.22	0.83	2.58:3.86	0	11	67	11	11
PILOT 5: Increasing Uptake of SBATs	35	3.18	0.72	2.93:3.43	0	15	56	27	3
PILOT 9: Wrap Around Services for U17s	63	2.94	0.77	2.53:3.35	0	31	44	25	0
PILOT 10: Regional VET Program (North Coast)	43	2.47	0.86	2.15:2.79	3	67	10	20	0
PILOT 2: New Model of Careers Education	47	3.32	0.94	3.24:3.39	4	14	37	37	8

Student sample representativeness

Table 22. Sample representativeness for all pilotsoutlines the student sample representativeness for each of the student surveys.

Table 22. Sample representativeness for all pilots

EPPP initiative	Sample representativeness
Experiential Pilots	
PILOT 3: TAFE YES+	Data missingness was high at 19.2%. Data screening included the removal of participants missing >75% and duplicates, as well as straight lining responses and confirming data was Missing At Random (MAR). Multiple Imputations were subsequently used for missing data. Simulation studies show confidence intervals perform well, even when data MAR is high (Liang, Su, & Zou, 2008) however, examination of the representativeness of the sample to the population also requires consideration. The sample included each of the industries and represented the portion of females in the industries traditionally studied by them (eg. hospitality, hairdressing & beauty, children's education). Consistent with delivery of YES+ by the dashboard data, more South West (20%) students accessed TAFE NSW than the North Coast and this proportion is reflected in the sample. Regression analysis was performed to determine whether there were differences in their experiences with the 2 variant models of delivery. No differences were found and therefore combining the two cohorts to assess YES+ was viable. Results for Pilot 3 need to be interpreted with caution mostly due to the small retained (55% post-only; 36% matched cases) sample of respondents. 95 percent confidence intervals have been used to provide a range of plausible values.
PILOT 7: EDGE workshops	The sample captured 98% of the population however once participants with >75% were removed, as well as duplicates and straight liners, the sample was reduced to 31% of the population. Inspection of the missing data revealed that it was MAR and multiple imputations were used for missing data. Despite the large volume of missing data, which effect parameter estimates, the sample was representative of the EDGE workshop population in terms of gender, cohort characteristics including students' year levels, although self-reported grade levels were marginally more positive than expected. Caution with interpreting Pilot 7's student survey results is necessary, and 95% confidence intervals have been used to provide a range of plausible values.
PILOT 8: Fee free "test and try" VET	43% of the Pilot's population were captured in the sample and 100% maintained for the pre- and post-survey with only 0.2% missing data. Pilot 8's sample is inherently diverse given students undertake work placements in different industries and with different employers.
Resource Pilots	
PILOT 1: Digital Careers Toolbox	24% (n = 127) of the Digital careers toolbox (DCT) population were captured in the survey responses and after data screening this was reduced to 20% (n = 106). Missingness was reported at 0.5%. The sample is representative given the portion of respondents are from the South West cluster schools where delivery was more prominent. In addition, gender and year are consistent with the DCT population.
PILOT 4: NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	Training awards ambassadors presented as part of the EDGE workshops. To reduce survey fatigue for the EPPP pilot evaluation, this pilot's evaluation was subsumed in the post-pilot survey for the EDGE workshops (Pilot 4). It would be expected that all 309 respondents from the EDGE workshop would answer questions relating to the Training awards ambassadors. However, after data screening there were 97 valid responses to the post-pilot 7 survey, and this reduced to 52 respondents who continued on to answer Pilot 4's questions. Non-response errors were apparent for Pilot 4's survey however, they did represent the year level and gender portion. The EDGE

	workshops were delivered by different providers. These providers facilitated the administration of the surveys. Unlike the other pilots, students would not have had a longstanding relationship with the administrators of the survey and may not have felt the as compelled to follow through with their requests given the nature of the relationship. Pilot 4's questions were located at the end of the survey and students did not continue to the remaining section relating to the Training awards ambassadors. This report avoids drawing conclusions based on the student surveys for Pilot 4.
PILOT 6: Promoting Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway - MBA	Sampling error occurred with Pilot 6 as the number of students from the 24 trial schools engaging with Pilot 6 resources is unknown and was not able to be confirmed for circulation of the survey. Sampling involved capturing students undertaking an SBATs in construction. Consequently, students who self-identified as interested in a career in construction through the SBATs Pilot 5's post-survey had skip logic to ask them about the resources for Pilot 6. 9 respondents completed 100% of the questions relating to Pilot 6. The samples representation and size render the findings unreliable for generalising. This report avoids drawing conclusions based on the student surveys from Pilot 6.
Mentoring Pilots	
PILOT 5: Increasing Uptake of SBATs, interested & enrolled students	39% of the SBAT population responded to the survey. There was 2% missing data and after data screening 34 (92%) from the initial 37 respondents were available for the pre- and post-pilot data analysis. There were less females than males and this was representative of the portion undertaking SBATs in Years 10-12 population.
PILOT 9: Wrap Around Services for U17s	23% of the population responded to the pre-pilot survey and no students completed the post-pilot survey despite relentless efforts from the Pilot lead and the student's mentors. Similar to Pilot 10's population, these students are traditionally a population that are challenging to engage. This report does not draw conclusions for the benefits of Pilot 9 given there was not post-pilot survey.
PILOT 10: Regional VET Program (North Coast)	60% of the Pilot's population were captured in the sample and 100% maintained for the pre- and post-survey. 43% were female and the Pilot was external to the school setting. Students were exclusively from the North Coast where the pilot was delivered. The pilot was only 12 weeks into a 26 week delivery when the post-pilot survey was conducted in February 2021. The full intervention effects will not have been captured given the premature administration of the post-survey. Surveys were completed over the phone with the student's mentor. Social desirability was examined with research showing that phone interviews with a mentor can increase favourable responses. This was not the case, Pilot 10's responses across the common survey items were not high relative to the other Pilots. The survey distribution method was validated because the sample was maintained for the duration of the study whereas Pilot 9's sample, which is a comparable group, was lost. Conducting Pilot 10's surveys over the phone was therefore a justifiable approach.
Combined Pilot	
PILOT 2: New Model of Careers Education	33% (n= 8) of the 24 schools declined to administer Pilot 2's survey (Table 11) due to the burden of activities in schools for the careers advisers (*refer to case study findings and confirmed by the Head teacher – careers for the clusters*). The Campbelltown cluster had the lowest representation 12%, with only 1 of the 4 schools administering the survey. It was not possible to weight the sample given the population of Pilot 2 involved individual, group and on occasions full year level activities. Not enough is known about Pilot's 2 composition given that it had reach to different cohorts and also subsumed activities/students related to Pilots 1, 7 and 4.

EPPP Initiatives

Overall satisfaction with the EPPP initiatives

All student survey respondents were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the EPPP initiative they were evaluating. Feedback is displayed in Table 23. Post pilot feedback data was unavailable for Pilot 9.

Table 23. Mean student satisfaction ratings (out of 5) and n number of ratings received for each EPPP initiative

	TOTAL			
EPPP Initiative	M	SD	95% CI	n
PILOT 3: TAFE YES+	4.14	0.93	4.01:4.27	202
PILOT 7: EDGE workshops	4.43	0.80	4.27:4.59	97
PILOT 8: Fee free "test and try" VET	4.22	0.64	3.97:4.48	27
PILOT 1: Digital Careers Toolbox	3.21	1.11	2.99:3.42	106
PILOT 4: NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	4.07	0.88	3.80:4.35	41
PILOT 6: Promoting Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway - MBA	4.44	0.73	3.89:5.00	9
PILOT 5: Increasing Uptake of SBATs	4.38	0.74	4.12:4.64	34
PILOT 9: Wrap Around Services for U17s	-	-	-	-
PILOT 10: Regional VET Program (North Coast)	3.07	2.02	2.31:3.82	30
PILOT 2: New Model of Careers Education	3.30	1.10	3.21:3.40	565

Note: No students completed the post-pilot survey for Pilot 9. Data on pilot satisfaction was therefore unavailable.

Expectancy, value, and cost evaluation for all EPPP initiatives

The primary theoretical framework employed to evaluate different aspects of the EPPP initiatives was the Expectancy - Value framework including Expectancy of success, Value & Utility of the activity and Cost associated with participation. High E-V and low costs are a strong predictor of students' future enrolment intentions. The results for each factor per pilot is displayed in Table 24. Please note that cost is expected to negatively associate with perceptions of expectancy and value of the pilot. Post pilot feedback data was unavailable for Pilot 9. Expectancy for success and value were relatively low for three pilots (Pilots 8, 5 and 10) with the means being reported below the mid-point. However, estimations of 'cost' related to these pilots were also low relative to the others.

Table 24. For each EPPP initiative, student perceptions of 'Expectancy' of success, 'Value' and utility of participation, and 'Cost' associated with participation

	EXPECTANCY				VALUE				COST			
EPPP Initiative	M	SD	95% CI	n	M	SD	95% CI	n	M	SD	95% CI	n
PILOT 3: TAFE YES+	3.92	0.79	3.81:4.03	199	3.80	0.90	3.68:3.93	199	2.24	1.01	2.10:2.38	199
PILOT 7: EDGE workshops	2.88	0.62	2.75:3.00	97	3.70	0.55	3.59:3.81	97	3.10	0.94	2.91:3.29	97
PILOT 8: Fee free "test and try" VET	2.41	0.47	2.22:2.60	27	2.36	0.55	2.14:2.58	27	1.83	0.99	1.44:2.23	27
PILOT 1: Digital Careers Toolbox	3.47	0.83	3.31:3.63	106	3.47	0.88	3.30:3.64	106	2.72	0.91	2.55:2.90	106
PILOT 4: NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	4.13	0.46	3.98:4.28	41	4.01	0.56	3.83:4.18	41	2.46	1.05	2.13:2.80	41
PILOT 6: Promoting Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway - MBA	4.14	0.65	3.64:4.64	9	3.89	0.73	3.33:4.45	9	2.06	0.77	1.47:2.65	9
PILOT 5: Increasing Uptake of SBATs	2.95	0.63	2.73:3.17	34	2.31	0.59	2.11:2.52	34	2.03	0.85	1.73:2.33	34
PILOT 9: Wrap Around Services for U17s	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PILOT 10: Regional VET Program (North Coast)	2.58	0.54	2.38:2.79	30	2.87	0.59	2.65:3.09	30	1.70	0.50	1.51:1.89	30
PILOT 2: New Model of Careers Education	3.52	0.82	3.45:3.59	565	3.55	0.78	3.49:3.62	565	2.56	0.88	2.48:2.63	565

Note: No students completed the post-pilot survey for Pilot 9. Data on Expectancy – Value scales were unavailable.

Pilot-specific outcomes: Combined pilot

New Model of Careers Education

Overall satisfaction ratings for the New model of careers education were moderately positive (M = 3.30, SD = 1.10, 95% CI [3.21,3.40], n = 565). Ordinal logistics regression assessed trends between pilot rating and student academic achievement (self-reported). The regression trended towards significance. For each unit increase in self-reported grades, the odds of the student rating the 'New model of careers education' more highly is increased 1.15 times (ß = 0.14, SE = 0.07, $\chi 2$ = 1.89, df = 548, OR = 1.15, 95% CI [1.00,1.33], p = .06).

Students were asked to order the six main components of the New model of careers education pilot from best to worst, with the option of not providing a rank for parts of the pilot they were not familiar with or did not use. Components, overall scores and the number of responses provided for each component (reach) are displayed in Table 25.

Table 25. Different components of the 'New model of careers education' pilot ranked (n = 376; mean comparative rating out of a maximum score of 5)

PILOT COMPONENT	Mean Score
Careers workshops at school (and TAFE) such as the EDGE workshop, and the YES+ program	4.17
Careers and subject selection advice and post school options guidance	4.13
Online careers activities e.g. Careers expo, LifeLauncher, Myfuture, watching EPPP TV	3.89
Meeting and talking to people working in different industries, either at their workplace, at school, or online	3.75
Presentations and talks from VET teachers and professionals	2.53
Presentations and talks on School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships	2.52

Pilot-specific outcomes: Experiential pilots

Fee free "test and try" VET

Overall satisfaction ratings for the Fee free "test and try" VET pilot were positive (M = 4.22, SD = 0.64, 95% CI [3.97,4.48], n = 27). Ordinal logistics regression assessed trends between pilot rating and student academic achievement (self-reported). For each unit increase in self-reported grades, the odds of the student rating the Fee free "test and try" VET pilot more highly is increased 0.34 times (ß = -1.09, SE = 0.58, t = -1.89). The results did not reach significance but trended in that direction. This tentatively implies a stronger preference for the Fee free "test and try" VET pilot among lower achieving students, particularly as the power to detect an effect was weaker among this small sample. Students were asked to order the three main components of the Fee free "test and try" VET pilot from best to worst. Components, overall scores, and the number of responses provided for each component (reach) are displayed in Table 26.

Table 26. Different components of the Fee free "test and try" VET pilot ranked (n = 24; mean comparative rating out of a maximum score of 3)

PILOT COMPONENT	Mean Score
Site visits and work experience	2.46
Mentoring and support provided to you by the VET educators	1.96
Completing the theory and/or curriculum of the VET subject/s	1.58

Fee free "test and try" VET: Pilot-related change

Pre- and post-surveys captured change in education aspirations, knowledge and skills, and careers confidence in students who completed the Fee free "test and try" VET pilot. Direct industry experience was expected to improve students' confidence to approach employers, inspire more students to consider VET courses, and improve understanding of VET Pathways and how to manage VET alongside schoolwork. Results are reported in Table 27. There were no changes pre-pilot to post- pilot on any of the items, but again, the sample may have been inadequate to detect change. There was a significant and noticeable increase in the intention to pursue higher VET (ß = 0.56, SE = 0.18, $\chi 2 = 2.96$, df = 24, p < .01). For SBAT school knowledge, 11 participants changed their response from NO 'students can't start an SBAT when they are still at school' to YES, and 1 participant shifted from No to UNSURE. Improved motivation for VET also trended towards significance. Taken together, these results indicate strong student enjoyment of the industry experiences and exposure, and substantial positive change in understanding of VET and motivation towards VET pathways.

Table 27. Pre-pilot to post- pilot item-level change for Fee free "test and try" VET pilot respondents (n range = 26:27)

FACTOR	ITEMS	Diff	p
Education and Career Aspirations: VET pathways	I know what job or career I want in the future	0.07	0.34
	I know what study and/or training I need to do for my future	0.25	0.17
	My future study plans are to do higher VET	0.56	0.00*
Expectancy for success	I am/was motivated to get as much as possible out of the VET subject/s	-0.19	0.06
Knowledge and skills: VET pathways	Students can start/do an SBAT when they are still at school (no/unsure/yes)	Sig shift	-
	I have a good understanding of how my Vocational Education and Training (VET) subject will fit in with my schoolwork	0.19	0.17
Career confidence	There are many paths to a good job whether or not you get good grades in school	0.04	0.77
	I believe I have the skills and ability to get a job	0.04	0.75

Note: * = statistically significant at p < .05; R – negatively framed items

TAFE NSW YES+

Overall satisfaction ratings for the TAFE YES+ were positive (M = 4.14, SD = 0.93, 95% CI [4.01,4.27], n = 202). There was no difference in pilot rating at different levels of academic achievement. Students were asked to order the six main components of the YES+ pilot from best to worst, with the option of not providing a rank for parts of the pilot they were not familiar with or did not use. Components, overall scores, and the number of responses provided for each component (reach) are displayed in Table 28. Different components of the YES+ pilot ranked (n = 164; mean comparative rating out of a maximum score of 6)of the YES+ pilot. Of the components of the TAFE program that were exclusive to the pilot (the '+' in YES+), the personal support was ranked highly, along with the workshops and, to a lesser extent, the career plan. The online job skills workshops and online career resources did not rank highly.

Table 28. Different components of the YES+ pilot ranked (n = 164; mean comparative rating out of a maximum score of 6)

PILOT COMPONENT	Mean Score
The personal support provided (mentoring, careers advice, learning support)	4.33
Doing the taster courses at TAFE	4.17
YES+ workshop with presenters from different industries	4.13
Developing a plan to achieve my career goals (Individual Learning Plan)	3.90

Doing the online job skills workshops	2.70
Online career resources such as the TAFE videos and social media content	1.93

TAFE YES+: Pilot-related change

Students who completed the TAFE YES+ pilot in North Coast and South West Sydney were also surveyed separately about their potential future VET plans and career confidence in terms of fit and suitability. The career planning workshops and support available for each student was expected to improve confidence in career selection and career fit, as well as inspire more students to consider VET courses. Results are reported in Table 29. There were no between group statistically significant differences in change ratings from pre-pilot to post-pilot for any factor. However, the degree of change from pre-pilot to post-pilot varied significantly in many factors.

Table 29. Pre-pilot to post-pilot item-level change for TAFE YES+ pilot overall, and differences between responding from students completing the pilot in North Cost NSW and South West Sydney

FACTOR	ITEMS	Overall Diff	Overall p	Item response count NC/SW Syd
Education and Career Aspirations: VET pathways	I know what job or career I want in the future	0.10	0.02*	26/107
	I know what study and/or training I need to do for my future	0.19	0.03*	27/107
	I am thinking about doing a Vocational Education and Training (VET) course, apprenticeship or traineeship	-0.04	0.59	26/97
Expectancy for success	I am/was motivated to get as much as possible out of the VET subject/s	-0.20	0.02*	26/97
Career confidence	There are many paths to a good job whether or not you get good grades in school	0.19	0.01*	27/106
	I believe I have the skills and ability to get a job	0.17	0.03*	27/105
	I am well-suited and a good fit for the career I am considering	-0.10	0.22	26/100

Note: * = statistically significant at $p < .05$; R – negatively framed items

There was significant positive change in career aspirations 'I know what job or career I want in the future' (MD = 0.10, SE = 0.04, $t = 2.30$, $p < .02$). There was also significant change in career aspirations 'I know what study or training I need to do for my future career' (MD = 0.19, SE = 0.09, $t = 2.20$, $p < .03$), and 'I believe I have the skills and ability to get a job' (MD = 0.17, SE = 0.08, $t = 2.16$, $p < .03$). There was also higher agreement that 'there are many paths to a good job whether or not you get good grades in school' (MD = 0.19, SE = 0.07, $t = 2.59$, $p = .01$). However, motivation for the YES+ program declined significantly from pre to post survey (MD = -0.20, SE = 0.08, $t = -2.47$, $p = 0.02$), and there was no increase in students interested in further VET study.

Overall, the pilot was highly rated, although it perhaps conflated elements of the pilot that were unique to the YES+ program and elements that are widely available in other schools, such as the TAFE taster courses. There was appreciation for the support, careers advice and mentoring provided. Participation in the pilot appears to have improved career aspirations, and career confidence. Aspirations for further VET study did not appear to be impacted by TAFE YES+.

EDGE workshops

Overall satisfaction ratings for the EDGE workshops were strongly positive (M = 4.43, SD = 0.80, 95% CI [4.27,4.59], n = 97). Ordinal logistics regression assessed trends between pilot rating and student academic achievement (self-reported). For each unit increase in self-reported grades, the odds of the student rating the EDGE workshops more highly is increased 1.75 times (ß = .56, SE = 0.28, t = 2.02, OR = 1.75, 95% CI for OR: [1.02,3.02]). This indicates that higher achieving students tended towards rating the pilot more highly. It is also notable that, despite the EDGE workshops being designed for students who are disengaged in school, EDGE workshop participants gave the highest average self-report academic achievement ratings of any of the pilots. This may suggest that, due to increased availability perhaps, the EDGE workshops were attended more broadly by students who were not the original target demographic.

Students were asked to order the five main components of the EDGE workshops from best to worst, with the option of not providing a rank for parts of the pilot they were not familiar with or did not use. Components, overall scores and the number of responses provided for each component (reach) are displayed in Table 30.

Table 30. Different components of EDGE workshops pilot ranked (n = 46; mean comparative rating out of a maximum score of 5)

PILOT COMPONENT	Mean Score
EDGE workshop activities on how to present yourself for a job (appropriate clothing and communication skills in the workplace)	4.52
Gift pack at the completion of the EDGE workshop	3.13
EDGE workshop activities on how to apply for a job (writing a cover letter and job interview skills)	2.85
NSW Training Awards Ambassadors' presentations	2.59
Panel with employers	1.91

EDGE workshops: Pilot-related change

The EDGE workshops were designed to improve readiness for work and work-related study and training opportunities. The EDGE pilot surveys captured change in knowledge and skills for approaching employers, being interviewed, and knowing what employers want and expect from students and employees more generally (Table 31). This includes appropriate work attire and background (social media) checks. Students were significantly more confident to approach an employer about work experience or employment (ß = 0.34, SE = 0.06, $\chi 2$ = 5.95, df = 79, p < .01), were less nervous about interviewing for jobs (ß = -0.35, SE = 0.06, $\chi 2$ = -5.67, df = 79, p < .01), and had a better understanding of the potential implications of inappropriate personal social media content (ß = -0.18, SE = 0.08, $\chi 2$ = -2.31, df = 79, p = .02). 12 more students went from unsure to being aware that it is possible to start an SBAT while at school, although there was a high level of awareness of this possibility at baseline.

Table 31. Pre-pilot to post-pilot item-level change for EDGE workshops pilot survey respondents (n range = 82:97)

FACTOR	ITEMS	Diff	p
Education and Career Aspirations	I know what job or career I want in the future	0.10	0.65
	I know what study and/or training I need to do for my future	0.38	0.16
Expectancy for success	I am/was motivated to get as much as possible out of the VET subject/s	0.14	0.67
Knowledge and skills: VET pathways and employability	Students can start/do an SBAT when they are still at school	0.18	0.00*
	I know what employers are looking for	0.74	0.17
	I can wear whatever I want to a job interview, because it is me they are interested in, not my clothes - R	0.40	0.64
	What I post on social media is my business and it won't have any impact on my future job prospects - R	0.18	0.02*

Career confidence	I feel confident about approaching an employer about work experience or employment	0.34	0.00*
	I am nervous about interviewing for jobs- R	0.35	0.00*
	I believe I have the skills and ability to get a job	0.28	0.55

Note: * = statistically significant at $p < .05$; R – negatively framed items reverse coded

Pilot-specific feedback: Resource pilots

Digital Careers Toolbox

Overall satisfaction ratings for the Digital careers toolbox (DCT) were moderately positive (M = 3.21, SD = 1.11, 95% CI [2.99,3.42], n = 106). Ordinal logistics regression assessed trends between pilot rating and student academic achievement (self-reported). For each unit increase in self-reported grades, the odds of the student rating the Digital Careers Toolbox more highly is increased 1.45 times (ß = 0.37, SE = 0.18, $\chi 2 = 2.07$, df = 106, OR = 1.45, 95% CI for OR [1.01,2.05], p = 0.04). This indicates a stronger preference for the DCT among higher achieving students, and perhaps that the DCT is more suitable for higher achieving students.

Students were asked to order the three online tools that make up the Digital careers toolbox from best to worst, with the option of not providing a rank for parts of the pilot they were not familiar with or did not use. Components, overall scores and the number of responses provided for each component (reach) are displayed in Table 32. Different components of the Digital Careers Toolbox ranked (n = 60; mean comparative rating out of a maximum score of 3)

Table 32. Different components of the Digital Careers Toolbox ranked (n = 60; mean comparative rating out of a maximum score of 3)

PILOT COMPONENT	Mean Score
Myfuture	2.38
LifeLauncher	1.85
Skillsroad	1.77

Digital Careers Toolbox: User experience

Students were surveyed about their experiences using the Digital Careers Toolbox. Items included ratings of perceived ease of use, preferential use, and the degree of support that the students felt they needed to use and navigate the online resources (Table 33. User experience evaluations for the Digital Careers Toolbox

Table 33. User experience evaluations for the Digital Careers Toolbox (n = 106)

FACTOR	ITEMS	Yes #	Total responses	(No)
User experience: Support	I preferred to use LifeLauncher on my own rather than at school	31	106	75
	I preferred to use Myfuture on my own rather than at school	50	106	56
	I preferred to use Skillsroad on my own rather than at school	25	106	81
	I needed support to use LifeLauncher	20	106	86

	I needed support to use Myfuture	21	106	85
	I needed support to use Skillsroad	17	106	89
		M	SD	95% CI
User experience	I found the Digital Careers Toolbox easy to use	3.58	1.00	3.38,3.77
	I accessed and explored only a small part of the Digital Careers Toolbox - R	3.36	0.93	3.17,3.54
	My Careers Advisor helped me use the Digital Careers Toolbox - R	3.35	1.00	3.15,3.54
	Rather than doing it on my own, I went through some of the Digital Careers Toolbox with an adult - R	3.07	1.04	2.87,3.27

Note: R – negatively framed items

Taken together, the results indicate that the Digital Careers Toolbox is underexplored, rated better by higher achieving students and user experience can be improved. Myfuture appears to be preferred over LifeLauncher and Skillsroad with a higher overall rating, and more students wanting to use the website independently. Approximately 20% of all students reported needing support to use all the sites.

NSW Training Awards Ambassadors

Although overall satisfaction ratings for Pilot 4's NSW Training awards ambassadors were positive (M = 4.07, SD = 0.88, 95% CI [3.80,4.35], n = 41), less than half of the EDGE workshop participants provided ratings for the pilot (*note: Pilot 4 was subsumed in Pilot 7's post-pilot survey*), which could signify less than ideal recognition. However, sampling and non-sampling errors were large for this pilot and the results should not be considered reliable and are therefore not included in the final report.

Students were asked to order the four main components of the NSW Training awards ambassadors pilot from best to worst, with the option of not providing a rank for parts of the pilot they were not familiar with or did not use. Components, overall scores and the number of responses provided for each component (reach) are displayed in Table 34. Students were enthusiastic about listening to the Ambassadors experiences of VET and their personal perspectives. They were less enthusiastic about the social media resources and websites.

Table 34. Different components of the NSW Training awards ambassadors pilot ranked (n = 45; mean comparative rating out of a maximum score of 4)

PILOT COMPONENT	Mean Score
Videos of NSW Training Awards Ambassadors sharing their experiences with Vocational Education and Training (VET)	3.07
NSW Training Awards Ambassadors sharing their perspectives in the employer workshop	2.58
Talking to the Training Awards Ambassadors about Vocational Education and Training (VET)	2.27
Social media and website for the NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	2.09

NSW Training Awards Ambassadors: Evaluation of video and podcast resources

Surveys included questions about resources made created for the NSW Training awards ambassadors pilot such as videos, podcasts and webinars. Some students were exposed to these through the EDGE workshops delivered online or during school careers education. Students agreed the resources were useful and, to a lesser extent, found them motivating.

Table 35. Evaluation of the resources available through the NSW Training awards ambassadors pilot in terms of usefulness and motivating qualities (n = 42)

FACTOR	ITEMS	M	SD	95% CI
Resource evaluation	The information in podcasts, videos and webinars about Vocational Education and Training (VET) were useful	4.07	0.71	3.85,4.29
	The videos I watched about people sharing their experiences with Vocational Education and Training (VET) motivated me to want to follow a VET pathway	3.43	0.91	3.14,3.71

Promoting the Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway with the Master Builders Association

Overall satisfaction ratings for the Tertiary apprenticeship pathway with the Master Builders Association (MBA) were overwhelmingly positive (M = 4.44, SD = 0.73, 95% CI [3.89,5.00], n = 9). However, only nine students rated this pilot, suggesting poor reach and name recognition but most likely due to sampling errors as the targeting of the surveys distribution did not capture an adequate number of pilot participants. There was insufficient data to assess trends between pilot rating and student academic achievement (self-reported).

Students (n = 6) who indicated their interest in doing a construction SBAT were directed to answer a further set of questions about what motivated their choice of SBAT. These items cover a range of factors including motivation to pursue a construction SBAT and perceptions of the local construction industry job market. Items and results are displayed in Table 36. Please note that students interested in construction SBATs were also asked about their overall goals for training in construction including whether they intended to complete or partially complete their SBAT, working in construction directly after finishing their SBAT, or studying construction is an undergraduate or postgraduate pathway. One student indicated their intention to finish a construction SBAT and to start working in the industry. No other students answered those questions. Students enrolled in a construction SBAT were also given these items, but there was only a single Construction SBAT student surveyed.

Table 36. Item level responses from students INTERESTED in a Construction SBAT (n = 6)

FACTOR	ITEMS	M	SD	95% CI
Construction SBAT feedback	A positive feature of the construction SBAT is that you can earn money while you learn	4.33	0.50	3.95,4.72
	My parents/carers really want me to choose a construction SBAT	3.00	0.71	2.46,3.54
	Being able to continue on to higher level VET and university study after I finish my construction SBAT was an important part of my decision to do a construction SBAT	3.22	1.20	2.30,4.15
	It will be challenging for me to get a job in the construction industry	3.00	0.71	2.46,3.54

Pilot-specific feedback: Support & mentoring

Increasing Uptake of SBATs: Students INTERESTED in SBATs

Overall satisfaction ratings for the 'Increasing uptake of SBATs' were very positive (M = 4.38, SD = 0.74, 95% CI [4121,4.64], n = 34). There was no difference in pilot rating at different levels of academic achievement. Students who were potentially interested in enrolling for an SBAT in the future were asked to order the six main components of the SBAT uptake pilot from best to worst, with the option of not providing a rank for parts of the pilot they were not familiar with or did not use. Components, overall scores and the number of responses provided for each component (reach) are displayed in Table 37.

Table 37. Different components of the 'Increasing uptake of SBATs': Interested students pilot ranked (n = 17; mean comparative rating out of a maximum score of 6)

PILOT COMPONENT	Mean Score
The presentations and information sessions I did about what SBATs are available and how they work	4.59
The personal careers advice and guidance I received about SBATs	4.35
The SBAT incursions and/or excursions I did, like the taster courses	3.71
The websites, flyers and other resources with information about SBATs	2.88
The help and support I had from the school SBAT Mentor e.g. to organise work experience, choose a SBAT, broker a job, provide information about SBATs	2.76
The work experience that I did to prepare me for an SBAT	2.71

Increasing Uptake of SBATs: Students ENROLLED in SBATs

Students who were enrolled in an SBAT in 2020 were asked to order the six main components of the SBAT uptake pilot from best to worst, with the option of not providing a rank for parts of the pilot they were not familiar with or did not use. Components, overall scores and the number of responses provided for each component (reach) are displayed in Table 38.

Table 38. Different components of the 'Increasing uptake of SBATs': Enrolled students pilot ranked (n = 7; mean comparative rating out of a maximum score of 6)

PILOT COMPONENT	Mean Score
Working for my employer (duties and tasks of the job you were doing for you SBAT)	5.86
Doing the formal training part of the SBAT (through TAFE, a private RTO or school RTO)	3.71
The support I received from my school, the RTO or TAFE, and my employer	3.57
Studying for my other HSC subjects while I was doing an SBAT (e.g. balancing schoolwork and SBAT work and training)	3.00
The extra help from my SBAT Mentor	3.00
Information and resources (e.g. information sessions where I found out what I needed to do for my SBAT)	1.86

Students who were interested in completing an SBAT in the future and students enrolled on SBATs in 2020 were asked in the pre and post surveys about a range of factors including their education and career aspirations, motivation for VET, the degree to which they valued the support and help received from the SBAT Mentor, their knowledge about VET pathways and career confidence. Participation in the pilot was expected to improve responses to all these factors. Results are reported in Table 39. There was no change in any factor other than reduced motivation for VET subjects (ß = -0.43, SE = 0.18, $\chi 2$ = -2.33, df = 19, p = .03) and increased career confidence 'There are many paths to a good job whether or not you get good grades in school' (ß = 0.53, SE = 0.12, $\chi 2$ = 4.38, df = 20, p < .01).

Table 39. Pre-pilot to post-pilot item-level change for Increasing SBAT uptake pilot for student pilot survey respondents both interested and enrolled in SBATs (n range = 11,23)

FACTOR	ITEMS	Diff	p
Education and Career Aspirations including plans for VET	I know what job or career I want in the future	-0.13	0.25
	I know what study and/or training I need to do for my future	-0.13	0.33
	I am planning to enrol in an SBAT program while I am still at school	-0.38	0.28
Expectancy for success	I am/was motivated to get as much as possible out of the VET subject/s	-0.43	0.03*
Value/Utility of pilot-related support	The help and support I get from the SBAT mentor is useful	-0.30	0.15
Knowledge and skills: VET pathways	Students can start/do an SBAT when they are still at school	0.04	0.33
	I have a good understanding of how my Vocational Education and Training (VET) subject will fit in with my schoolwork	0.20	0.38
Career confidence	There are many paths to a good job whether or not you get good grades in school	0.53	0.00*
	I believe I have the skills and ability to get a job	-0.04	0.85

Note: * = statistically significant at p < .05

Targeted 'Wrap Around Services' for students under 17yrs studying at TAFE NSW

No post-pilot surveys were completed by the cohort of students enrolled in the "Wrap Around Services' pilot at TAFE NSW. Analysis is restricted to items included in the pre-pilot surveys. These items include student's assessment of their support requirements from the TAFE Support Officer, barriers to study and work, and education aspirations. Results are reported in Table 40.

Table 40. Student ratings of support requirements for TAFE study, education aspirations and barriers to success

FACTOR	ITEMS	M	SD	95% CI
Prospective pilot support utility	I think I will need help from the TAFE Student Support Officer - R	2.75	0.78	2.34,3.16
	I am confident I can complete my TAFE course	4.25	0.68	3.89,4.61
	I didn't feel supported while studying at school - R	3.94	0.77	3.53,4.35
Career confidence, Perceived barriers to future study & work	There are obstacles that will make going back to study or getting a job challenging for me - R	3.50	0.73	3.11,3.89
	I am nervous about returning to study or training - R	2.88	1.10	2.30,3.45
	I am interested in doing my TAFE course	4.31	0.60	3.99,4.63

Education and career aspirations	I am motivated to get as much as possible out of my TAFE course	4.44	0.51	4.16,4.71

Note: R – negatively framed items where higher scores are less desirable

Regional VET Program (North Coast): Pilot components ranked

Overall ratings for the RVP pilot were moderate (M = 3.07, SD = 2.02, 95% CI [2.31,3.82], n = 30). There was no difference in pilot rating at different levels of academic achievement. Students were asked to order the five main components of the Regional VET program support and mentoring pilot from best to worst, with the option of not providing a rank for parts of the pilot they were not familiar with or did not use. Components, overall scores and the number of responses provided for each component (reach) are displayed in Table 41.

Table 41. Different components of the Regional VET program (NC only) pilot ranked (n = 27; mean comparative rating out of a maximum score of 5)

PILOT COMPONENT	Mean Score
Personal mentoring and support from the youth mentors e.g. help using government services, supporting me through study, training, or job placements, helping with my living situation	3.89
Career resources and information e.g. career pathway advice, work and training opportunities, identifying my work skills	3.74
Job preparation, search and support activities like interview training, work experience, job matching, and helping me keep my job	3.37
Financial support and access to subsidies for essentials like work clothes, short courses, or a driving license	2.15
Helping me access other organisations, helping me get to and attending meetings and representing me with e.g. Centrelink, Connecting Home, Headspace, TAFE, a court hearing, or NDIS	1.85

Regional VET program: Pilot-related change

The Regional VET program provided a range of support for vulnerable students at high risk of NEET. Item level responses to items surveying career confidence careers confidence including perceived barriers to future study and work, plans to follow a VET pathway and overall pilot utility are represented in Table 42.

Table 42. Regional VET Program item level student ratings for careers confidence, aspirations, knowledge and pilot value (n = 30)

FACTOR	ITEMS	M	SD	95% CI
Career confidence: Perceived barriers to future study & work	There are obstacles that will make going back to study or getting a job challenging for me - R	3.30	0.99	2.93,3.67
	I am nervous about returning to study or training - R	3.33	1.16	2.90,3.76
Education and career aspirations	I am thinking about doing a Vocational Education and Training (VET) course, apprenticeship, or traineeship	3.83	0.83	3.52,4.14
Knowledge and skills: VET pathways	Can students start a School-Based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SBAT) when they are still at school?	3.73	0.69	3.48,3.99

Value/Utility of pilot-related support	Compared to other careers programs I have done, the "Work It Out" program was really worthwhile	2.30	0.65	2.06,2.54
	Doing the "Work It Out" program was useful for preparing me to get a job and career	3.13	0.78	2.84,3.42

The pilot surveys captured change in careers confidence including perceived barriers to future study and work, plans to follow a VET pathway and overall pilot utility (Table 43). Positive change was expected in all factors. There was no change in any factor other than students reported being less nervous about returning to study (ß = -0.63, SE = 0.2, $\chi 2$ = --3.15, df = 27, p < .01).

Table 43. Pre-pilot to post-pilot item-level change for RVP program participants (n = 30)

FACTOR	ITEMS	Diff	p
Education and Career Aspirations: VET pathways	I know what job or career I want in the future	0.00	1.00
	I know what study and/or training I need to do for my future	0.07	0.70
	I believe I have the skills and ability to get a job	-0.17	0.23
	I am thinking about doing a Vocational Education and Training (VET) course, apprenticeship or traineeship	0.13	0.57
Knowledge and skills: VET pathways	Students can start/do an SBAT when they are still at school	-0.17	0.26
Career confidence: Perceived barriers to future study & work	There are many paths to a good job whether or not you get good grades in school	0.03	0.86
	There are obstacles that will make going back to study or getting a job challenging for me - R	0.30	0.18
	I am nervous about returning to study or starting training - R	-0.63	0.01*

Note: * = statistically significant at p < .05; R = negatively framed items

Appendix 3: Stakeholder surveys

Materials and Methods

Stakeholder survey content

Four stakeholder surveys captured responses from parents/carers, educators, training organisation staff, and businesses/employers involved directly or indirectly in the EPPP initiatives. Stakeholder surveys were stand-alone with no control group or pre-post intervention (EPPP pilot implementation) comparison and were administered in late November, towards the end of the EPPP delivery in 2020. The key components of the stakeholder surveys are outlined in Table 44.

Table 44. Key components of the stakeholder surveys for parents, educators, training organisation staff, and businesses/employers

Stakeholder survey components	
Engagement with the EPPP initiatives General and specific feedback **Kirkpatrick Level 1**	Overall awareness of and satisfaction with the EPPP initiatives. Specific feedback on funds and non-monetary resources associated with the EPPP.
Attitude to VET and VET pathways	Relative value of educational pathways, attitudes to VET, perceived characteristics of students suitable for VET, school support for VET students and pathways, the utility of industry experience, and identification of skill shortfalls for students undertaking VET qualifications and placements.
Career education provision for students	Availability, utility of industry career events, degree of connectedness and co-operation between parents, schools, education and training providers, and businesses.
Knowledge and skills **Kirkpatrick Level 2**	Stakeholder needs and requests for more support, training, and information.
Demographics	Information about respondents, their role within the school/training organisation or business, the type of organisation they are employed by.

The topics that that were specifically requested for inclusion in the stakeholder surveys by the NSW Department of Education (DoE) project implementation team are outlined in Table 45. Components of the stakeholder surveys requested by the NSW DoE EPPP implementation team

Table 45. Components of the stakeholder surveys requested by the NSW DoE EPPP implementation team

Topics for inclusion	
General information	Perceptions of and attitudes toward careers education in school and VET pathways. Utility of and satisfaction with HTCs, SBAT mentors, SBAT online training plan, and pilot initiatives. Did they attend any of the pilot events? What would they like to know about careers and VET for their students? How do they like to receive information?
Parents	What would they like to know about careers and VET for their child? How do they prefer to receive information? Did they attend any events? Did they meet careers adviser/SBAT mentor?
Educators	Attitudes to SBATs and VET, utility of and satisfaction with SBAT Online training plan and Pilots resources, satisfaction with the AER exemption.
Training Organisations	What would they like students, parents and schools to know about their services?
Businesses/employers	Attitudes to SBATs, work placements. What would they like students, parents and school to know about their industry? Did they meet careers adviser/SBAT mentor/RIEP Officers in the last 6 months? Experience with SBAT Online training plan.

Stakeholder respondent recruitment and survey distribution

Four stakeholder surveys were administered online to parents/carers, educators, training organisations and businesses/employers. Educators involved in the EPPP initiatives were identified by the Head teacher – careers (HTC) and survey links were emailed directly to school (n = 24) email accounts. The links to the parent surveys were distributed by schools in newsletters and other correspondence and were made available on the school websites and apps such as Skoolbag. Training organisation staff and businesses/employers were identified by the Pilot Leads, SBAT mentors, HTCs, NSW DoE project management staff, and other people working to deliver the EPPP initiatives. The contact details and job titles of prospective stakeholder survey respondents were supplied to the WSU evaluation team. These contact details were cleaned and cross-referenced for duplications and checked against publicly available employment data when necessary (e.g. company websites listing employees). For contacts provided with general email addresses only (e.g. a general council enquiries email address) the relevant employer was contacted and personal contact details were used when provided. Ten prospective respondents contacted the WSU evaluation team directly to explain they had no knowledge of the EPPP initiatives and were asked to complete the survey on the basis that their business or organisation may have supplied placements for students.

Missing data

The stakeholder surveys were estimated to take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete in full. The EPPP specific feedback and demographic questions appeared towards the end of the survey and elicited particularly low response rates from parents/carers and businesses/employers, both due to the length of the surveys and the lack of name recognition and knowledge that respondents themselves described regarding the specific EPPP initiatives. This was confirmed when the WSU evaluation team directly contacted respondents who skipped the EPPP specific questions but completed the demographics section. These respondents confirmed they skipped the questions because they had no knowledge of the EPPP. It is reasonable to assume that when respondents reached the EPPP specific questions, and did not know about EPPP, they ceased with the survey and did not go on to complete the demographics section.

Missing data analysis was conducted showing the percentage of response per question and overall percentage and patter for non-responses for each of the stakeholder surveys. We retained all stakeholder survey responses due to the overall small sample numbers and confirmation through phone interviews that participants discontinued the survey because they were not knowledgeable of the EPPP initiatives that were asked at the end of the survey. Missing data was not imputed also due to low response rates.

Data cleaning and screening

Analysis began with data screening. Items that capture information about the same factor or topic or aspect of the EPPP initiatives were grouped together, summed and divided by the number of items for that group in that factor to produce an overall mean score. Item level means (M) and standard deviations (SD) are displayed in tables for each stakeholder respondent group that received those items, together with an overall mean for the group and number of responses for that total mean score. For example, the total score for 'EPPP resources' is an average of the means of each of the seven items that concerned the sufficiency of the resources associated with the EPPP evaluation. To determine different responses in the various stakeholder groups, comparative statistics were conducted for all groups with a reasonable or representative number of responses. For example, items concerning the 'EPPP Resources' were given to principals and school leadership and training organisation staff only. Between eight and ten school leaders and principals provided responses for these items, which represents staff from over a third of EPPP schools implementing the EPPP. Between 14 and 18 training organisation staff also provided responses, representing most of the 14 training organisations that were involved in the EPPP. Although this sample is fairly small, it is representative, and the overall mean scores can therefore be included in the analysis. Tests of assumptions of normality including Shapiro-Wilk tests were conducted on total scores.

Descriptive and inferential statistics

Data was analysed and coded in IBM SPSS (SPSS, 2019). Limited response rates prevented parametric testing including exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis of scales. The lack of demographic data also restricted analysis according to respondent characteristics such as English as a second language and regional cluster. Assumptions of normality were generally not met across overall total scores and nonparametric tests were conducted on overall totals by group. When two groups were compared, we used Wilcoxon test. For three or more groups, Kruskal-Wallis tests were employed for overall group comparisons with Mann-Whitney U tests for specific group contrast testing.

Stakeholder surveys demographic information

Stakeholder survey response rates, completion rates and respondent demographic and employment details or organisational role are displayed in Table 46.

Table 46: Stakeholder survey response rates and respondent demographics

	Survey Respondent Group			
	Parents	Educators	Training Orgs	Employers
Total N responses	102	185	22	39
NSW DoE target response rate	125	150	28	125
% of target response rate achieved	82%	123%	79%	31%
n = complete surveys	40	123	21	26
n = complete demographics	39	184	21	0
Female (%)	87	73	73	-
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (%)	8	4	19	-
Language other than English (%)	26	23	-	-
EPPP regional cluster (%)				
Grafton	44	4	n/a	n/a
Ballina	7	42	n/a	n/a
Campbelltown	0	16	n/a	n/a
Liverpool	11	13	n/a	n/a
Cowpasture	38	25	n/a	n/a
Highest level of education (%)				
Compulsory school education	10	0	0	-
HSC or TAFE tertiary education	18	0	33	-
Associate degree or diploma	28	0	10	-
Bachelor's degree	31	67	43	-
Master's degree or doctorate	13	33	14	-
Educator roles and responsibilities[1] (%)				

Principal	n/a	4	n/a	n/a
School leadership	n/a	20	n/a	n/a
Careers adviser and/or transition teacher	n/a	7	n/a	n/a
Classroom teacher	n/a	58	n/a	n/a
School support staff	n/a	11	n/a	n/a
Parent employment status (%)				
Full-time employment	61	n/a	n/a	n/a
Casual or part-time employment	23	n/a	n/a	n/a
Full-time home duties	13	n/a	n/a	n/a
Not currently employed	3	n/a	n/a	n/a
Training organisation (TO) roles (%)				
TO administration or management	n/a	n/a	54	n/a
TAFE educator	n/a	n/a	37	n/a
Group training field officer	n/a	n/a	5	n/a
Project officer	n/a	n/a	5	n/a
TO employee yrs experience in VET (%)				
Less than 5 yrs	n/a	n/a	33	n/a
5-10 yrs	n/a	n/a	24	n/a
16-20 yrs	n/a	n/a	24	n/a
> 20 yrs	n/a	n/a	19	n/a

[1]Educators were organised into five categories according to primary roles and responsibilities: 1. 'Principals'; 2. 'School leadership' including head teachers, assistant principals/deputy principals, relieving HT administration; 3. 'Careers adviser teachers' including careers advisers and transition advisers including SBAT mentors and year advisers; 4. 'Classroom teachers' including librarian teachers and temporary teachers; and 5. 'Support staff including SLSO, LaST, learning support, specialist teacher vision, school counsellor, administration, senior support teacher.

Employers

Information about the industry the employer survey respondents worked in is provided in Table 47. Survey respondents were asked what type of student placements - work placements, school-based traineeships and/or school-based apprenticeships – their business had offered in the previous 24 months as well as how many students their business had hosted in that role (Figure 16). Businesses had provided considerably more work placements than SBATs.

Table 47. Business industries and business size represented in the employer surveys (n = 39)

	Businesses
Business industries by type (%)	
Construction	19
Manufacturing	19
Public Administration and Safety	10
Health Care and Social Assistance	12
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	12
Accommodation and Food Services	4
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	4
Arts and Recreation Services	4
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	4
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	3
Business size (number of employees; %)	
0-4 employees	8
5-19 employees	11
20-199 employees	23

200+ employees	58

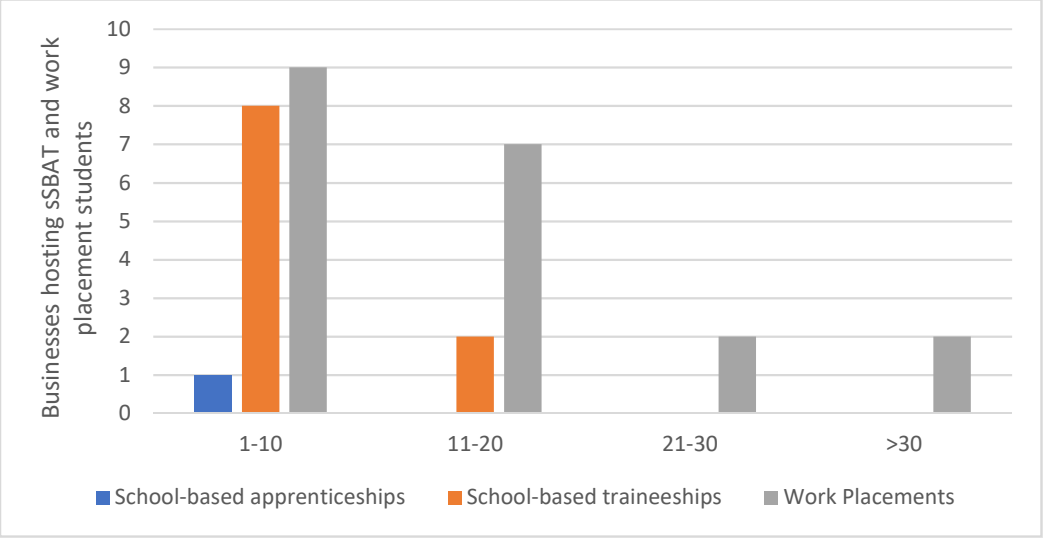

Figure 16. Number of businesses hosting SBATs and work placements in the past 24 months and how many of each placement type had been provided (in blocks of 10)

Training Organisations

Training organisation employees were asked to provide information about the type of training organisation they worked for and how many students the organisation trained or worked each year (Table 48).

Table 48. Type and size of training orgs represented in the training organisation survey

	Training Organisations (n = 21)
Training organisations by type (%)	
TAFE NSW	41
Group training organisations	27
Registered training organisations	5
Other[1]	27
TO size (number of students training; %)	
0-100 students	10
101-1,000 students	43
1,001-10,000 students	14
10,001+ students	33

[1]including not-for profit organisations, organisations which are both GTOs and RTOS, universities, and self-employment coaching services

Sample representativeness and demand characteristics

The parent and employer surveys comprised sampling and non-sampling errors. Parent surveys were not distributed by some schools who declined to participate in the EPPP pilot evaluation and when they were distributed, the parent response rates were exceptionally low. Some schools targeted parents whose children has knowingly participated in a pilot associated with the EPPP but most schools had broad distribution to parents of students in Years 9 and 10 and others sent it to all parents at the school through the newsletter. Most of the parents used the survey as an opportunity to provide feedback on careers education in their child's school rather than specifically about the EPPP. There was 54% missing data. The significant sampling and non-sampling errors render the parent survey data unreliable and has not been utilised for evaluating the EPPP in this final report.

The employer survey was distributed by the WSU evaluation team based on contact details provided by the NSW Department of Education. Sampling error was evident when employers contacted the WSU team confirming that they did not know about the EPPP or did not know any students attending their workplace. Missing data for the employer survey was high at 54%. Most of the missing data occurred toward the end of the survey where specific questions on the EPPP were positioned. Participants who did complete the demographic section at the end of the survey and expressed interest in being followed up for an interview were contacted by the WSU evaluation and reported not completing the EPPP specific questions because they did not know about the EPPP.

The educator and training organisations' survey data has been utilised to draw conclusions for the final report. This is because both samples were representative of their respective population. In both cases, the different sites across the South West and North Coast were represented. For the educators, different teaching and leadership roles were included and the schools that they were drawn from were representative of the South West and North Coast with small and larger schools included. There was moderate missing data, which was positioned in the section before the demographics for the training organisation survey and towards the front end of the educators' survey, where the specific EPPP questions were located in the respective surveys. Phone calls to the respondents revealed that these questions were not answered because the participants skipped due to having no knowledge of the EPPP initiatives. This was further validated as Principals and careers advisers' surveys has less missing data then their colleagues. Survey participants' non-responses to the survey were related to questions where they had limited knowledge to answer them.

EPPP Initiatives

Overall engagement with the EPPP initiatives

All participant groups were provided with names and descriptions of each EPPP initiative and asked to rate their satisfaction with the initiatives and provide information about how each may be improved. Number of ratings has been used as an indicator of the relative 'visibility' of the pilots overall and to each target group. Satisfaction ratings from all stakeholder groups have been averaged for an overall rating score (Table 49).

Table 49. Mean satisfaction ratings (out of 5) and number of ratings received for each EPPP initiative from each stakeholder groups, and total scores for each EPPP initiative

	Parents/carers				Educators				Training Organisations				Employers				Total			
EPPP Initiative	M	SD	95% CI	n	M	SD	95% CI	n	M	SD	95% CI	n	M	SD	95% CI	n	M	SD	95% CI	n
Digital Careers Toolbox	4.00	1.73	-0.30, 8.30	3	4.09	0.79	3.74, 4.43	23	3.70	0.95	3.02, 4.38	10	4.00	-	-	1	3.97	0.90	3.67, 4.27	37
'New Model of Careers Education' including CIT and HTC	4.67	0.52	4.12, 5.21	6	4.44	0.91	4.14, 4.75	36	4.50	0.76	3.87, 5.13	8	4.30	0.68	3.82, 4.78	10	4.45	0.81	4.24, 4.66	60
TAFE NSW YES+	3.50	1.76	1.65, 5.35	6	4.42	0.77	4.16, 4.68	36	4.38	0.77	3.92, 4.85	13	4.50	0.71	-1.85, 10.85	2	4.30	0.98	4.00, 4.59	44
NSW Training Awards Ambassadors	5.00	-	-	1	4.00	0.71	3.12, 4.88	5	4.20	0.84	3.16, 5.24	5	4.25	0.50	3.45, 5.05	4	4.20	0.68	3.83, 4.57	15
Increasing uptake of SBATs including the SBAT mentors	4.50	0.55	3.93, 5.07	6	4.54	0.67	4.32, 4.75	41	4.42	0.67	3.99, 4.84	12	4.45	0.82	3.90, 5.01	11	4.50	0.68	4.34, 4.66	70
Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway with the Master Builder Association	5.00	-	-	1	4.14	1.07	3.15, 5.13	7	3.50	0.71	2.85,9.85	2	-	-	-	0	4.10	0.99	3.39, 4.81	10
EDGE workshops	4.00	1.41	1.75, 6.25	4	4.43	0.84	4.07, 4.80	23	4.00	2.00	0.82, 7.18	4	4.33	1.16	1.46, 7.20	3	4.32	1.07	3.95, 4.70	34
Fee free "test and try" VET	4.33	1.16	1.46, 7.20	3	3.88	1.03	3.33, 4.42	16	3.91	1.22	3.09, 4.73	11	5.00	-	-	2	4.05	1.02	3.58, 4.51	21
Wrap Around u17s[1]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.87	1.01	3.43, 4.31	23	4.83	0.41	4.40, 5.26	6	-	-	-	0	3.87	1.01	3.43, 4.31	23

	Parents/carers				Educators				Training Organisations				Employers				Total			
EPPP Initiative	M	SD	95% CI	n	M	SD	95% CI	n	M	SD	95% CI	n	M	SD	95% CI	n	M	SD	95% CI	n
Regional VET Pathways (North Coast)	4.33	0.58	2.90, 5.77	3	3.83	0.94	3.24, 4.43	12	4.67	0.58	3.23, 6.10	3	5.00	-	-	4	4.16	0.90	3.72, 4.59	19
EPPP TV	3.20	1.79	0.98, 5.42	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.20	1.79	0.98, 5.42	5

[1]This initiative was available to students not still at school, and parents/carers were surveyed separately.

EPPP: General feedback

Parents/carers

There was very little evidence of parent/carer engagement with the EPPP pilots. The survey contained several questions specific to the EPPP and these elicited particularly poor response rates. When asked for open-ended feedback regarding the EPPP initiatives directly, some parents/carers explained their lack of knowledge about the pilot along with the general lack of knowledge regarding careers education as discussed previously. Of the parents/carers who provided reasons for their lack of engagement with the EPPP, four said that they did not know about the EPPP events, one said COVID prevented them from attending, and another suggested that their "child is reluctant to discuss the future" and that they have "no time and not a priority right now".

Educators

When the educators were asked whether they knew about the EPPP, only half answered "yes". A further 35% responded negatively, with the rest unsure. Educators reported a high level of confusion regarding the implementation of the EPPP and the expectations for their involvement, with 35% raising concerns about communications and resources provided to staff, stating they were unclear about how the pilots would integrate with the student's existing study load and did not know what resources were available for the students. Educators also expressed concerns regarding the extra strain placed on both careers advisers and the school more generally in delivering the EPPP, stating that the pilot is "unsustainable in the current form without additional staffing".

Employers reported that the lack of clarity regarding the EPPP initiatives may have exacerbated barriers some of the students already face. For example, educators are generally unsure about employers' willingness to engage with disadvantaged students who are struggling in the current system and are doubtful about whether the EPPP initiatives are tackling this issue. As one educator wrote:

> *My original understanding of the EPPP pilot was to provide or reserve VET apprenticeships for our students who have a financial disadvantaged background. Yes, it did galvanise some careers and pathways learning but the jobs were not there and at times it only reinforced how employers recognised skills shortages but are very particular and cautious about employing local youths.*

Educators also suggested that this disengagement may result in the pilot not reaching more vulnerable students who need more support:

> *Some students that I have taught are being missed in the system despite there being support, there appears to be a missing link with following through on their preferred pathways due their lack of initiative and not knowing what to do.*

Employers

Less than half of the employer respondents reported having engaged with the EPPP initiatives. Some employers had hands on involvement with the NSW Training Awards Ambassadors (33%) and the EDGE workshops which included with industry panels, demonstrations, and interactive talks (20%). A few respondents had accessed the Digital careers toolbox, engaged with YES+ initiative, and the Fee free "test and try" VET pilot (all 13%). Despite 20% of respondents' businesses being in the construction industry, none of the employers reported engagement with the Master Builders Association Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway promotion. Employers expressed interest in knowing more about the EPPP initiatives and how they related to their businesses.

Training organisations

Suggestions for improvement to the EPPP initiatives include greater focus on inter-organisation co-operation and networking and providing more funded places for students and more time with each student to provide focused training for specific industries.

EPPP: Funding and resources

Educators and training organisations

School leaders and training organisation staff reflected upon the resources related to the EPPP initiatives and readiness for the implementation of the EPPP at their school or training organisation (Table 50. School leaders and training organisations' perception of the funding and resources available to them to deliver the EPPP). Nonparametric comparative analysis revealed no significant differences between the ratings across the items regarding funding and resources by lead educators (M = 4.08, SD = 0.33, 95% CI [3.84, 4.32], n = 10) and training organisations (M = 3.91, SD = 1.04, 95% CI [3.40, 4.43], n = 18) (Mann-Whitney U = 84.50, mr (edu) = 13.95, mr (TO) = 14.81, p = .79)

Table 50. School leaders and training organisations' perception of the funding and resources available to them to deliver the EPPP

	Lead educators (n: 8-10)		Training Orgs (n: 14-18)	
ITEM	M	SD	M	SD
The additional funds were adequate to support the EPPP initiatives in my school/training organisation	3.78	0.83	4.00	0.66
The additional non-monetary resources were adequate to support the EPPP initiatives in my school/training organisation	3.90	0.57	3.79	1.05
The school/training organisation was able to consistently apply additional funds for the purposes they were available	4.22	0.97	3.93	1.10
The school/training organisation was able to consistently apply additional non-monetary resources for the purposes they were available	4.33	0.71	4.07	1.22
I was satisfied with the additional funds available to the school/training organisation	3.88	1.0	3.47	1.23
I was satisfied with the non-monetary resources available to the school/training organisation	n/a	n/a	4.00	0.89
The school/training organisation was ready to implement the EPPP initiatives	4.40	0.97	4.33	1.14
Total Score: EPPP resources	4.08	0.33	3.91	1.04

Feedback on Specific EPPP Initiatives

Pilot 5: SBATs and SBAT mentors

Parents/carers and educators

Parents/carers with children doing SBATs were asked to provide feedback on SBAT mentors, but no parent or carer respondents had children doing SBATs. Educators perceived the SBAT mentors as being useful in supporting students ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 0.84$).

Training organisations and businesses/employers

Training organisation and business employers were asked questions about the SBAT mentors which covered employer engagement with the SBAT mentors, SBAT mentor usefulness to student and business and the mentor's industry knowledge. Although these items received limited responses (10 from employers and 7 responses from training organisations) the SBAT mentors were only active in schools and the community from term 4 2020, so this limited sample represents a good proportion of the businesses and training organisations who did have some contact with the SBAT mentors. Across the two groups, the items included in the surveys were summed and averaged for an overall score. Nonparametric comparative analysis revealed no significant differences between the ratings across the SBAT Mentor items for employers ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.66$, 95% CI [3.77, 4.66], n = 11) and training organisations ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 0.27$, 95% CI [4.35, 4.86], n = 7) (Mann-Whitney $U = 26.00$, mr (empl) = 8.36, mr (TO) = 11.29, p = .25).

Five employers provided open-ended feedback on the SBAT mentors. Most used the opportunity to explain they had had little contact with the SBAT mentor, and others cited the challenges of COVID19 limiting their ability to engage with the pilot. Respondents suggested that the SBAT mentor needed more awareness and knowledge of the various personal services the businesses offer. With stronger industry knowledge, the employers argued that the SBAT mentors would offer a more tailored experience "to support matching and ongoing guidance".

Table 51. Employer and training organisation evaluation of the engagement with and value of the SBAT mentors

	Training Orgs (n: 6-7)		Employers (n: 9-11)	
ITEM	M	SD	M	SD
The SBAT mentor made the process of hosting/managing SBATs easier for my business/training organisation	4.57	0.79	4.11	0.93
The support provided to my business/the work placement provider by the SBAT mentor was useful	4.57	0.53	4.33	0.87
SBAT students who were supported by the SBAT mentor had good industry knowledge	4.43	0.54	3.90	0.88
The SBAT mentor helped SBAT students with organisation and self-management	4.50	0.84	4.20	0.92
The SBAT mentor helped prepare SBAT students to work in my business/for work placements	5.00	0.00	4.00	0.87
The SBAT mentor understands the training needs of businesses like mine	4.86	0.38	3.78	0.97
The SBAT mentor effectively supports students while completing SBATs	4.67	0.52	4.30	0.95
SBAT students who were supported by the SBAT mentor had good industry skills	4.29	0.76	3.50	0.85
Overall satisfaction with your engagement with the SBAT mentor	n/a	n/a	4.82	0.41
Total Score: SBAT mentor Evaluation	4.61	0.27	4.21	0.66

Pilot 2: New model of careers education

Educators and training organisation

School leaders and training organisation employees' evaluations of aspects of the CIT ('New Model of Careers Education' initiative) and their work in schools are reported in Table 52. School leadership and training organisation employees' feedback on the Careers Immersion TeamsAcross each of the three participant groups, the items included in the surveys were summed and averaged for an overall score. Kruskal-Wallis testing revealed significant differences in Careers immersion team evaluations by careers advisers (M = 4.29, SD = 0.88, 95% CI [3.56, 5.03], n = 8), lead educators (M = 4.13, SD = 0.61, 95% CI [3.69, 4.56], n = 9) and training organisations (M = 3.25, SD = 0.53, 95% CI [2.95, 3.55], n = 15) (H (2) = 12.06, mr (lead educators) = 21.78, mr (careers advisers) = 22.00, mr (training orgs) = 10.40, $p < .01$). Training organisation staff were substantially less positive about the value and benefit of CITs compared to educators.

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Table 52. School leadership and training organisation employees' feedback on the Careers Immersion Teams

	Careers advisers (n = 8)		Lead educators (n = 10)		Training Orgs (n: 7-13)	
ITEM	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
The Careers immersion team supported my work at this training organisation	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.33	0.65
The Careers immersion team was beneficial to students' careers education	4.25	0.89	4.30	0.68	3.50	0.52
The Careers immersion team effectively engaged all members of the team	4.13	0.99	4.10	0.57	3.42	0.79
I enjoyed being a member of the Careers immersion team	4.63	0.74	3.80	0.79	3.29	0.49
The Careers immersion team fostered connections between stakeholders	4.25	0.89	4.20	0.79	3.08	0.95
The Careers immersion team supported the work of the school's careers adviser	n/a	n/a	4.50	0.71	n/a	n/a
The quality of career support and activities for students improved at my school because of the Careers immersion team	4.13	1.46	4.30	0.95	n/a	n/a
The Careers immersion team supported my work as a school leader	n/a	n/a	3.70	1.06	n/a	n/a
The Careers immersion team supported my work as a careers adviser	4.38	0.74	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Score: Careers immersion team Evaluation	4.29	0.88	4.13	0.61	3.25	0.54

Educators

Principals and school careers advisers' evaluations of aspects of the HTC ('New model of careers education' initiative) and their work in schools are reported in Table 53. Overall rating for the HTC by educators was $M = 4.42$, $SD = 1.17$, 95% CI [3.68, 5.16] showing strong support for the role of HTC.

Table 53. Principals and school careers advisers' perception of the Head teacher - careers (n=12)

	Educators (Principals and careers advisers)	
ITEM	M	SD
The Head teacher - careers was approachable and relatable	4.58	1.17
I enjoyed working with the Head teacher - careers	4.58	1.17
The Head teacher - careers was a valuable resource	4.50	0.91
The Head teacher - careers supported my work as a careers adviser	4.33	1.30
The Head teacher - careers provided me with useful information about post-school pathways	4.25	1.42

The Head teacher - careers was critical to guiding and supporting the school to improve the career education and immersion activities in the school and with external partners	4.25	1.42
Total Score: Head teachers - careers Evaluation	4.42	1.17

Employers

Employers were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with their engagement (if applicable) with the HTC. Thirteen respondents provided an average rating of 4.23/5 (SD = 0.83).

Experiential pilots: Value of prior industry knowledge and experience for VET students

Employers and training organisations

To understand the potential value of experiential EPPP initiatives such as YES+ and Fee free "test and try" that provide students with industry experience at an earlier stage of their education and training pathways, the employer and training organisation surveys enquired about the ways in which industry experience may benefit SBAT students (Table 54). Although the employers value ratings trended lower overall, there were no statistically significant differences between the average ratings across the items about students with prior industry experience by employers (M = 3.62, SD = 1.01, 95% CI [3.16, 4.08], n = 21) and training organisations (M = 4.09, SD = 0.77, 95% CI [3.75, 4.43], n =22) (Mann-Whitney U = 164.50.00, mr (empl) = 18.83, mr (TO) = 25.02, p = .10).

Table 54. Employers and training organisations' perception of students with prior industry experience

	Training Orgs (n: 21-22)		Employers (n: 20-21)	
ITEM	M	SD	M	SD
It is best if students have some industry experience before they start their SBAT or VET course	3.52	1.36	3.38	1.50
Students who have had some industry experience are easier to train	3.91	1.23	3.70	1.17
Students who have had some industry experience are better prepared for work	4.59	0.50	4.05	1.00
Students who have had some industry experience are more motivated	4.32	1.04	3.60	1.31
I would/businesses prefer students to have some industry experience before they start their SBAT or VET course	3.59	1.33	3.33	1.35
Students who have some industry experience tend to choose vocational courses suitable for their skills and abilities	4.33	0.73	n/a	n/a
Students who have some industry experience tend to choose vocational courses they enjoy	4.36	0.95	n/a	n/a
Total Score: Value of industry experience	4.09	0.77	3.62	1.01

Attitudes to VET

Perceived value of education and training pathways

Parents/carers

Parents'/carers' perceived suitability of education and training pathways for respondent's child are reported in Table 55. Mean ratings for perceived suitability of education and training pathways for respondent's child

Table 55. Mean ratings for perceived suitability of education and training pathways for respondent's child

	Parents (n = 43)	
ITEM	M	SD
Completing the higher school certificate	4.35	0.87
Studying for TAFE while at school	4.27	0.87
Completing an SBAT	4.27	1.07
Completing a regular apprenticeship or traineeship	4.24	0.93
Leaving school at age 17 to study at TAFE	3.88	1.05
Leaving school at age 17 to work	3.54	1.10

All stakeholder groups

Average responses for items related to attitudes towards VET opportunities and pathways are reported in Table 56**.** These first three items were also included in the employer surveys but garnered no responses (n = 0). Across each of the four participant groups, the items included in the surveys were summed and averaged for an overall score. Overall attitudes to VET between participant groups were compared using the Kruskal Wallis test. There were significant differences among the average ratings across the items about attitudes towards VET pathways by parents/carers (M = 3.98, SD = 0.89, 95% CI [3.73, 4.23], n = 51), educators (M = 3.97, SD = 0.54, 95% CI [3.89, 4.05], n = 167), training organisations (M = 4.39, SD = 0.49, 95% CI [4.17, 4.60], n = 22) and employers (M = 3.80, SD = 0.59, 95% CI [3.54, 4.057], n = 22) (H (3) = 12.27, mr (TO) = 179.75, mr (parents) = 137.03, mr (educ) = 126.73, mr (emply) = 106.61, $p < .01$). Pairwise comparison testing revealed no differences in attitudes to VET among parents/carers, employers, and educators. Training organisation staff have substantially more positive attitudes to VET and the benefits of VET training compared to all other groups.

Table 56**.** Attitudes towards VET pathways from different stakeholder groups[1]

	Parents/carers (n: 12-44)		Educators (n: 114-166)		Training Org (n: 17-22)		Employers (n: 0-22)	
ITEM	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
For most students, completing the HSC with an ATAR is a better option for study than completing vocational education and training*[2]	3.00	1.55	3.55	0.95	3.76	1.52	-	-
Completing vocational education and training can provide students with an equally viable pathway to a career compared with students who complete the HSC with an ATAR	4.16	1.10	4.31	1.04	4.86	0.35	-	-
Vocational education and training (VET) and university pathways can lead to similar occupations and employment outcomes for some occupations	4.09	0.98	3.92	0.98	4.36	0.90	-	-
Students benefit personally or socially from their apprenticeships/ traineeships/work placements	n/a	n/a	4.11	0.66	4.41	0.73	4.10	0.76

Students benefit career-wise from their apprenticeships/ traineeships/work placements	n/a	n/a	4.09	0.73	4.59	0.59	4.15	0.69
Students benefit financially from their apprenticeships/traineeships/work placements	n/a	n/a	3.53	0.91	n/a	n/a	2.60	1.24
Overall, apprenticeships/ traineeships/work placements help young people plan for their future	n/a	n/a	4.13	0.67	4.36	0.73	4.33	0.79
Students gain employment because of their successful work placements	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.23	0.69	n/a	n/a
There are many paths to a good job whether or not students get high grades in school	4.75	0.45	4.60	0.59	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Score: Attitudes to VET pathways	3.98	0.89	3.97	0.54	4.39	0.49	3.80	0.59

[1]Items marked '–' received no responses, where items marked n/a were not included in that survey

[2]Negatively framed items (marked *) were reverse coded before being summed for a total score

Educators

To further investigate attitudes to VET pathways, educators were asked to identify the primary characteristics of students that would indicate their suitability for VET pathways (Table 57). Although having a positive attitude to learning and being disengaged from academic subjects received considerable support, disengagement with school in general was not viewed as being conducive to VET pathways. Poor academic achievement, absenteeism or alienation at school were not considered characteristics that indicated suitability for VET. 'Other' responses for student characteristics important for success in VET included the value of maturity, resilience, and readiness, students being interested and motivated, students having adequate social support, and wanting to start a career. Educators did not consider VET pathways to be suitable for students with strong academic performance.

Table 57. Ranked responses identifying student characteristics to indicate suitability for a VET pathway (n = 150)

Student characteristic	Frequency
Career aspirations aligned with VET industries	150
Interested in vocational education and training	149
Is good at and values practical subjects	121
Independent and mature	103
Positive attitude towards learning	87
Disengaged in academic subjects	87
Subject preferences or choices unavailable at school	69
Subjects studied in the years prior to senior school	40
Confident in their abilities	25
Receives low grades in most subjects	16
High levels of absenteeism	16
Other, please specify	14
Alienated at school	9
Receives high grades in most subjects	8

In written feedback, educators specifically requested more information regarding SBATs, delivered through staff workshops, so they may provide the students with better informed advice. Educators reported that students regularly approach classroom teachers for advice about education and training pathways. One educator reflected: "I really am unsure of most of the options, often students will ask and I need to refer them elsewhere". Furthermore, with increased transparency and knowledge of the requirements of an SBATs, educators have suggested tailoring their in-class teaching to further assist their students: "As a mathematics teacher, it

would be helpful to know what maths they are doing as part of their course (if any) so that we can include that application in our courses at school if possible".

Evaluation of the students working in businesses: Attitudes, skills and contributions

Educators, training organisations and businesses/employers

Business employers were also asked to evaluate the degree to which school adequately prepare and support students undertaking SBATs as well as, more generally, whether schools understand the needs and education and training requirements of the respondents' industries and businesses (Table 58). Nonparametric testing found no significant difference among the average rating across the items about student attitudes on apprenticeships/traineeships/work placements by educators (M = 3.53, SD = 0.69, 95% CI [3.40, 3.66], n = 120), employers (M = 3.20, SD = 0.81, 95% CI [2.84, 3.55], n = 22) and training organisations (M = 3.59, SD = 0.64, 95% CI [3.30, 3.88], n = 22) (H (2) = 3.09, p = .21).

Table 58. Student attitude when on apprenticeships/traineeships/work placements, skills and contributions to businesses

	Educators (n: 119-120)		**Training Orgs** (n = 22)		**Employers** (n = 22)	
ITEM	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Students demonstrate a good attitude	3.69	0.82	3.45	0.74	3.63	0.88
Students demonstrate good communication skill	3.43	0.87	3.50	0.86	3.16	1.10
Students demonstrate good self-management skills	3.33	0.96	3.50	0.74	3.11	0.99
Students demonstrate initiative in their work	3.59	0.85	3.68	0.78	3.40	1.07
Students are motivated to get as much as possible from their apprenticeships/traineeships/work placements	3.63	0.86	3.77	0.75	3.56	0.97
Students bring useful skills to my industry	3.57	0.89	n/a	n/a	2.86	0.95
Students bring useful skills to my business/businesses	3.60	0.81	3.64	0.85	2.97	0.98
Students understand training pathways to work in industry	3.41	0.90	n/a	n/a	2.89	1.08
Total Score: Student skills & attitude to VET	3.53	0.69	3.59	0.64	3.20	0.81

School support for VET students and pathways

Educators, training organisations and businesses/employers

Stakeholder groups were asked to evaluate the degree to which schools adequately prepare and support students undertaking SBATs and work placements as well as, more generally, whether schools understand the needs and training requirements of industries and businesses (Table 59. Evaluation of support provided by schools to students on SBATs and work placements and schools understanding of industry training needs and requirements more generally). Kruskal-Wallis testing again found no significant differences among the average ratings of school support for VET students and pathways (M = 3.58, SD = 0.87, 95% CI [3.42, 3.74], n = 116), training organisations (M = 3.35, SD = 0.88, 95% CI [2.96, 3.74], n = 22) and employers (M = 3.51, SD = 0.92, 95% CI [3.13, 3.89], n = 25).

Table 59. Evaluation of support provided by schools to students on SBATs and work placements and schools understanding of industry training needs and requirements more generally

	Educators (n: 109-116)		Training Orgs (n = 22)		Employers (n: 23-25)	
ITEM	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Schools effectively support students while completing SBATs and work placements	4.15	0.90	3.41	1.05	3.98	1.03
Schools adequately prepare SBAT or work placement students to work in businesses/my business	n/a	n/a	3.41	1.10	3.15	1.15
Schools understand the training needs of businesses like mine	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.14	1.18
Schools value SBATs & work placements as good pathways to jobs	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.02	0.94
Schools offer careers advice and careers education that is relevant to my industry	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.35	1.09
Schools understand the training needs of businesses who work with SBAT and work placement students	n/a	n/a	3.55	1.06	n/a	n/a
Schools adequately prepare students for employment	3.34	1.12	3.05	1.13	n/a	n/a
Schools understand the training needs of industry	3.55	1.05	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Schools understand the training needs of businesses	3.37	1.02	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Score: School support for VET students	3.58	0.87	3.35	0.88	3.51	0.92

Academic and non-academic capabilities for Year 10 and Year 12 students required for VET

Training organisations

Training organisation employees provided feedback concerning academic and non-academic capabilities that they recommended schools focus on to better prepare students to do SBATs and work placements with their training organisation. Respondents were asked for separate responses for Year 10 and 12 students respectively but provided the same recommendations for both cohorts. The following factors were identified and ranked:

1. Improved communication
2. Improved literacy and numeracy skills
3. Building capability in student's work-related social skills including professionalism, ability to engage in teamwork, and understanding how to behave appropriately at work including demonstrating respect for supervisors and instructors, not swearing and wearing appropriate work attire
4. Encouraging help seeking and an openness to learning
5. Improved industry and trade knowledge

Specific suggestions included offering 'maths in trades' classes in schools. Again, recommendations are broadly aligned with the EPPP focus areas for development, particularly the EDGE workshops. It should be noted that students from low-income households have less access to resources and support structures that enable them to access transport, appropriate work clothes and learn to drive. Training organisations may hold expectations that disadvantaged students may struggle to fulfil, without more support and mentorship. These concerns were also raised by educators, as discussed previously.

Career education provision for students

Careers events and activities available for students

Parents/carers

Parents/carers were asked about what careers education activities had been made available to their child in the previous 12 months, as well as how useful the activity was for their child. The activities surveyed and the percentage of students that parents/carers reported having had access to a particular activity is displayed in Figure 17. Careers education activities rated as being most valuable for their child were *listening to talks by someone from an employer or business* ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 0.98$, n = 24) or *a TAFE or RTO* ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.87$, n = 25). Parents/carers were aware that their child had been exposed to multiple opportunities for careers guidance and education from a broad range of sources internal and external to the school over the previous 12 months, and half of students had received individual support from a school careers adviser.

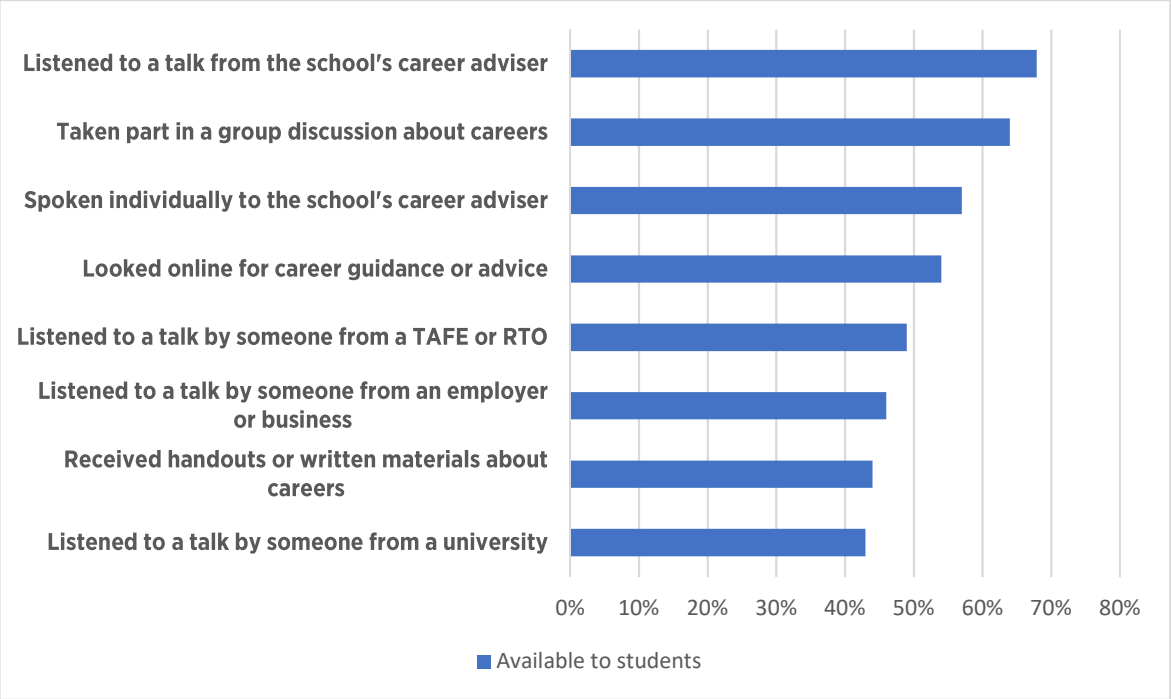

Figure 17. Percentage of students that parents/carers reported having access to a series of careers education activities over the previous 12 months (2020; n: 45-56)

Evaluating industry careers events online or at school

Employers

Some employer survey respondents had had the opportunity to represent their industry or business at an in-person or online school career event (although some may not have been associated with the EPPP initiatives). Fifty-four percent of respondents had represented their business at schools, and of these, there was strong agreement that it had added value to their business/industry (79%). The values identified by businesses concerned networking opportunities and increased brand awareness. One employer respondent wrote:

> *Each engagement opportunity provides some insight into how students perceive your business and industry. This feedback helps to develop your social brand and how to pitch the business at new talent, and how the workplace and employment model might need to change to attract and retain generation next.*

Another employer pointed out:

> *I think there is a gap in industry's understating of the work being done to support students in careers advice and programs to help them navigate the transition. Industries needs to have a good understanding of what is available so it can participate in programs that align or work from them. Once a student is engaged, information on the learning plan*

and objectives is helpful to the business in making sure they are providing support as required to meet the learning goals.

General feedback on careers education for students

Parents/carers

Parents/carers were also asked about their overall satisfaction with the careers education their child had received at school over the previous six months. Of the parents/carers who provided a rating (n = 66), 50% were extremely or moderately satisfied with the careers education and 29% were neutral. 21% of respondents were somewhat or extremely dissatisfied (M = 3.47, SD = 1.23, 95% CI [3.17, 3.77]). A total of 60 parents/carers also provided written feedback explaining their reasoning behind the rating they provided for careers education provision. Positive feedback focused on strong teacher support, responsiveness to queries, and the suitability of the advice provided given the child's ability and interests. Parents/carers wrote:

[The school careers education] has given him confidence and more understanding in the career he would like to follow and the school has helped greatly on giving him this opportunity.

I think that there is so much information for so many different resources that it can be overwhelming as a parent so it was good that the careers adviser filtered it all and catered specifically for my son.

Although parents/carers provided a fairly positive response to the school-based careers education provision overall, common concerns emerged in their feedback. These concerns focused on the specific careers advice provided to their child and the lack of communication and follow up regarding work experience and education and career pathways in general. Regarding concerns regarding the specific careers advice provided to their child, parents/carers stated the provision was unhelpful, and lacked specific guidance and regard for the student's experience or desired career. Parents/carers, or the child themselves in some cases, reporting having to take responsibility for organising their own work experience and independently researching potential career pathways with little knowledge of how to approach this task. Several parents/carers described a lack of availability of training and work placements and were frustrated by the lack of communication with and consultation with parents. One parent explained:

We weren't able to link into the RIGHT people to talk to. Very difficult to find these people even though we were asking questions and help. No real connection either for the parent and student together.

Training organisations

Respondents generally felt that both careers advisers and training organisations could improve their knowledge about VET pathways, with suggestions to share and tap into existing resources. One respondent commented:

[Knowledge] gaps can't be entirely fulfilled in resources. The gaps are making the connection and linkages between schools, local business, and industry. Every region has identified skills shortages, and these should be the focus. To be part of the local economic growth, perhaps this information could be included in career pathway resources, along with mapping demonstrating the overall journey, local employers etc.

Participants identified specific concerns regarding schools' career knowledge of industry trends and evolving work environments. Another respondent wrote "*there is still a gap between schools, TAFE and industry".* Again, these concerns are predominately addressed by the EPPP pilots, although the emphasis on networking across multiple organisations may be beyond the remit of the EPPP.

Employers

Respondents were prompted to consider what they would like students, parents/carers, and schools to know about their industry to inform careers advice and education in general. The primary issue employers wished to highlight was the necessity of improving communication regarding the variety of opportunities and employments within each industry. There was also a need for students to be better informed about the skills and training requirements for an industry and a career development timeline. One respondent wrote:

Having a more informed understanding of the extent of career pathway opportunities in hospitality and tourism along with careers advisers being stronger advocates for VET comparative to the current push for ATAR. completion. To also focus on life skills and employment readiness in the current market.

Enabling the students to have workplace or training immersion in industry was identified as the most promising strategy for improving industry knowledge as students get hands-on experience and the opportunity to ask questions as well as set their expectations. Additionally, employers recommended that schools focus on helping students reach the minimum maths and literacy requirements for trades before they start their VET training, and to supply targeted literacy and numeracy support for students who are struggling to fulfill the requirements of their training courses or workplace tasks due to lack of literacy and numeracy skills.

For themselves, employers also wanted better business integration with schools in order to learn about the careers information provided to students and highlight the opportunities available to them within their industries rather than influencing/guiding their career decisions.

Appendix 4: Case study schools

Data Collection

At each of the five case study schools, interviews were conducted with school-based and externally-based participant groups between November, 2020 and March, 2021. The participant groups and the numbers of participants are detailed in **Table 60**. All participants were interviewed individually, with semi-structured interviews ranging from 20-60 minutes in length, with the exception of the teachers, parents and students, who participated in focus groups. Individual external stakeholders are not identified in the report to ensure confidentiality.

Table 60: Case study interview participants

Participant groups		School A (n)	School B (n)	School C (n)	School D (n)	School E (n)
School-based participants	Principal	1	1	1	1	1
	Careers Adviser	1	1	1	1	1
	Transition Adviser	0	1	0	0	0
	Teachers*	4	0	5	4	5
	Stage 4* students	4	0	5	4	3
	Stage 5* students	4	6	4	4	4
	Stage 6* students	4	4	6	4	3
	Parents/carers*	1	0	2	3	4
External Stakeholders	TAFE NSW representative	1	1	1	1	1
	Group Training Organisation representative	1	1	1	1	1
	Head teacher - careers	1	1	1	1	1
	SBAT mentor	1	1	1	1	1
	TAFE NSW student support representative	0	0	1	0	1
	Business representative	2	2	2	2	2
RVP (Pilot 10) North Coast region only	RVP counsellor	1	-	-	-	-
	RVP leaders	3	-	-	-	-

Note: * indicates interviews conducted as focus groups

Key Findings

The five case study schools were situated in diverse locations and ranged from relatively small to very large in size. All were below the national average in socio-educational advantage and varied in terms of the proportion of Indigenous students and the language background of the student body. Differences and similarities were noted in how the EPPP initiatives were implemented in each school context, and in the perceived positive elements and challenges. This section examines these similarities and differences to draw out lessons for the implementation of the EPPP initiatives (evaluation aims 1-3) more broadly as the pilot is scaled up.

EPPP Implementation

In all schools the EPPP was generally considered successful due to a number of common key factors however, there were also some strategic differences in how EPPP initiatives were implemented in each school context. Appendix 1 details the activities each of the schools undertook as part of the delivery of EPPP and the number of students who participated. This appendix document will be useful to assist with interpreting key findings from each of the case study sites.

Importance of collaboration

There was strong recognition of the importance of collaboration between school-based personnel and external stakeholders. The success of many of the EPPP initiatives was only ensured by the development and maintenance of positive relationships between

schools, parents, teachers, students, TAFE NSW and industry partners. These relationships flourished when both school-based and external stakeholders were focused on facilitating the EPPP initiatives for the benefit of students, and when they had a clear understanding of their role in the process but were also willing to assist others outside of their role description when required. Effective and timely communication between all parties was also essential, as many of the stress points in the implementation arose when insufficient time was available to school-based personnel to organise students to participate in the EPPP initiatives, while also ensuring that school procedures and policies were always followed.

Clarity of roles and administrative workload

The workload of the school-based personnel was critical in ensuring the success of the EPPP initiatives. In some case study schools, the careers adviser (CA) was largely responsible for the EPPP whereas other schools also had the assistance of a second staff member eg. the transition adviser (TA) at School B. The TA, although only a fractional appointment in School B, took on the key role of facilitating the relationship between the CA, the SBAT mentor, the Head teacher – careers (HTC) and employers. This allowed the CA to focus on strengthening the relationship between the local TAFE and the school, and to have the time needed to set up and manage the school administrative procedures associated with the EPPP.

In School C, the CA was supported by a Secondary Studies Team and the HTC, allowing for some sharing of workload, however, communication channels and unclear role descriptions did present difficulties at times. The workload in larger schools was also noted as a significant issue. CAs are allocated to schools based on student enrolment numbers, but when schools are just under the threshold for gaining an extra CA as was the case with School D, the workload becomes untenable unless supported by other school colleagues, as was the case in School C.

Communication

Effective communication with teachers, parents and students was a consistent issue across all schools. While parents were communicated with via standard school channels, there was general feedback that key messages related to the EPPP initiatives were not always received or were lost amongst the increased online content required during COVID-19. Students already felt overwhelmed with increased exposure to digital content for their regular schoolwork, and so the digital EPPP resources were not as positively received as they may have been in a regular school year. There was also the issue of many events that were organised within a very short time frame, requiring quick responses from parents and students, which was not always achievable. Students were also unfamiliar with the names of many of the EPPP initiatives, even though it was often clear that they had participated in them. Within each school there is also evidence that knowledge of the EPPP initiatives was not widespread across the teaching staff. Most teachers, not directly involved in the EPPP, only had knowledge of initiatives when students were absent from their classes, placing pressure on them to teach the regular curriculum.

Student aspirations

The EPPP pilot aims to broaden and inform the development of student aspirations so that students are able to choose from a wider range of possibilities for their futures and are supported in understanding the various pathways that can enable these aspirations. While there is evidence that the EPPP initiatives did influence some students, there is also evidence that there are multiple, sometimes competing influences which help to form student aspirations.

Family influences

Across all case study schools there was strong recognition of the pivotal role that parents and family members have in shaping and supporting student aspirations. All interviewees acknowledged the influence that family members have on students, either through the familiarity that students develop with their own parents'/carers' careers or through the aspirational hopes and desires of the parents/carers for their children. Parents/carers were sometimes viewed as working against the EPPP aims, by having a pre-determined, somewhat limited range of options in mind for their children. For example, some parents/carers were determined that their children should plan to attend university, while others were equally determined that university would not be an option for their child for various reasons including uncertainty about job readiness, cost of higher education and having to relocate from regional areas. Therefore, ensuring that parents and carers are familiar with the aims and potential benefits of a range of career pathways both pre- and post- secondary school would appear to be vital in supporting the success of the EPPP. While there was a general lack of engagement of parents and carers with the EPPP across all case study schools, it should be noted that the potential issues with parental/carer attitudes and engagement levels did differ in each school setting. In School D, for example, parental/carer aspirations for their children to attend university were common, but in Schools A and B, there was greater recognition of the value of students taking up similar careers to parents/carers and a greater sensitivity to educational pathways that might result in leaving the rural location.

Location

The case study analysis revealed that school location could act as both a constraining and enabling factor in the development of student aspirations. Non-metropolitan areas can present students with constraints in relation to the number and types of jobs available, but on the other hand, being in a smaller town can make attendance at a training organisation more accessible than for students in metropolitan locations. In metropolitan areas, depending on the location, public transport options were a limiting factor in encouraging students to take up apprenticeships and to attend a training organisation, particularly when local training organisation campuses were restricted in the courses they were offering, requiring students to travel to a distant campus.

Costs and Income

In deciding on an educational and career pathway, the relative costs and potential income to be made are important considerations for some students and their families. For some students there was an imperative to start earning income as quickly as possible to help support their families. For these students a Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification can be attractive in preference to pursuing a university pathway. For others, the debt incurred with a university qualification is a significant deterrent.

School initiatives

Schools have always been active in shaping student educational and career aspirations and in broadening their future horizons, through activities such as careers expos, university and TAFE tours and by linking curricular activities to the workplace. It is in this space that the EPPP initiatives have the potential to expose students to workplace experiences and mentoring opportunities that can extend students' thinking and aspirations for previously unknown futures. There is evidence across all case study schools that the EPPP achieved this aim for many students, particularly through the experiential pilot initiatives. These aims were particularly effective when aligned with parental, carer and family support for their students and where the student aspirations were achievable within their school and local community context.

Positive aspects of EPPP

The case studies within five schools revealed numerous positive aspects of the EPPP, some of which were common across all schools and others which were unique to particular contexts. A common theme was recognition of the increased opportunities that were available to students through the various EPPP initiatives and an appreciation for the connections that were established between schools, training organisations and local employers.

YES+

The YES + pilot was perceived positively across all schools, reporting high levels of student engagement by enabling them to experience potential careers in a "hands-on" way which was tailored to their local context. These practical experiences allowed students to determine if a particular career and educational pathway was of interest to them or not. The students gained an increased sense of clarity about potential career pathways through being exposed to the "reality" of that work. In one school the YES+ initiative was a welcome complement to existing hands-on programs already in place at the school, allowing a greater variety of experiences for students that would not otherwise have been possible with existing resources.

Increasing the uptake of SBATs

The increased support for SBATs was also viewed positively across the five schools. While these opportunities were somewhat limited in terms of the numbers of students involved, they were viewed as transformational opportunities for those students. In one school the success of the SBAT pilot was viewed as significant as it could influence a greater number of local businesses to participate in future, building on the success of the EPPP pilot. The SBAT mentor was consistently viewed as a positive element of this initiative and vital to its success. An important aspect of this success was the capacity of the SBAT mentor to get to know the students individually so that their needs could be met. The mentors were also able to trouble-shoot on behalf of the business owners, so that the best possible matches between businesses and students were in place.

Not only did these SBAT opportunities have the potential to lead to employment, they also gave the students new skills, such as interpersonal skills, that could be transferable to any workplace. Many stakeholders emphasised the importance of students having a positive attitude towards the workplace, and these types of attitudes were able to be fostered during the SBAT experience.

Relationships between stakeholders

A longer-term positive benefit of the EPPP has been the establishment of improved relationships between schools and training organisations with one external stakeholder describing it as a 'real partnership'. The increased personnel and support within and across schools was seen as vital to the reinvigoration of these relationships. Exposing students to a VET learning environment was another important step in fostering the idea that VET could be a viable option for their future. The EPPP has been able to dispel some of the myths around VET, such as the view that it is a lower quality learning experience than university, or only designed for students who have difficulty with learning.

Tailored advice and opportunities

The opportunity to tailor the EPPP initiatives for local contexts was appreciated in each school. For example, having local speakers giving careers talks was seen as a positive development that made the talks more meaningful to students. There was also a sense that the EPPP had resulted in better quality careers advice in each school. The exposure of school personnel to a greater variety of career options and pathways had enhanced the advice that students were given, allowing it to be both more tailored to the local context but also more expansive in terms of the variety of opportunities on offer.

EPPP challenges

Overall, the EPPP initiatives were received positively in all case study schools, however several challenges emerged in relation to their implementation, some of which were common across all schools and some which were unique to particular school contexts.

Digital resources

The EPPP initiatives provided a comprehensive and varied approach to career development and could be broadly categorised as experiential, mentoring and resource based. Within these categories there were multiple initiatives that schools were able to implement to varying degrees alongside or instead of their regular careers education programs. Within the case study schools, it appears that students were often confused as to which of the EPPP initiatives they had participated in, indicating a general lack of familiarity with the names of the initiatives, even though they could often describe the nature of the initiatives. In the case of the online and digital resources, there appeared to be variance in how these resources were used in each school, with students sometimes left to access the resources themselves, or in other cases directed to the resources as part of regular class time.

An issue also arose in relation to the content of the digital resources, with a perception from the North Coast schools that they were possibly too 'metropolitan' in flavour and could have been better tailored for their local context. In addition to this issue, the online resources were also viewed differently due to COVID-19. Many of the students had been overwhelmed by the increased need to complete their school work in an online environment and other faced difficulties due to poor access to the internet in their homes.

Transport

Transport to a training organisation campus did present an issue in some locations, depending on the availability of suitable public transport, as many students did not have access to car travel. In some cases, students had to turn down the opportunity for work as they could not easily access the venue.

Availability of local businesses

In the non-metropolitan schools there was a significant issue with a lack of business/industry partners in close proximity to the schools. This resulted in the school looking further afield for these opportunities, resulting in additional transport problems for some students.

Fitting the EPPP into the curriculum

Implementing the full suite of the EPPP initiatives did present a problem in some schools, as they were already under time pressure to complete the regular mandated curriculum. Taking students out of class was important for the success of the EPPP but did create a negative flow-on effect for classroom teachers. While teachers saw the benefit of integrating careers education in a more meaningful way into the regular curriculum, assessment and time constraints often worked against this outcome.

Student readiness for the EPPP

The EDGE workshops were generally viewed in a positive light as they assisted students to be 'job-ready', however, in some instances they were sequenced to occur after students had begun VET study or SBATs. Holding these events earlier would ensure that they are of maximum benefit to the students, so that they are better prepared for the demands of VET and/or the workplace. Some external stakeholders pointed out that the students were not prepared for these 'adult' demands and the importance of these attributes for any future employment.

Concerns were also expressed by external stakeholders in relation to the readiness of students for VET study. Student misconceptions about VET as a place largely designed for "hands-on" study meant that they were often unprepared in terms of the academic demands and literacy and numeracy levels expected.

Professional learning for careers advisers

Given the extra demands placed on CAs due to the EPPP initiatives, both administratively and in terms of the breadth of careers knowledge needed, there was an expressed need for more professional learning for CAs.

Impact of COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 was felt across all case study schools in relation to the burden of having to communicate with students online in a space increasingly taken up by regular schoolwork. Students expressed a growing desire for face to face opportunities as the EPPP progressed. Some school-based stakeholders expressed frustration with not being able to include parents as they had planned, recognising the pivotal role that parents play in young people's career decision making.

COVID-19 also affected the number and type of opportunities available for placements in 2020, with health-related opportunities made temporarily unavailable.

Communication and clarity of roles

There was a general view that greater clarity was needed in relation to the roles of the various EPPP personnel, both school and non-school based. There was a distinct lack of clarity at the beginning of the EPPP which resulted in miscommunication about some of the EPPP events and related responsibilities, however, over time these issues were generally resolved as they occurred.

Inequitable allocation of resources

Larger case study schools raised the issue of resourcing for the EPPP in relation to the workload of the CA and the student places available in the various EPPP initiatives. Students in larger schools were less likely to be able to attend some of the events, such as the EDGE workshop, simply because there was more competition for limited places. The CAs expressed the view that the number of places should be determined in proportion to the size of each school, to address these inequities and ensure that all students have the same opportunity to participate.

Similar concerns were raised in relation to the YES+ pilot, where demand for places in certain VET courses outstripped their availability.

Lack of knowledge of school policy and operations

School-based stakeholders identified issues with regard to a lack of knowledge of school policies and procedures to be followed by external stakeholders and other EPPP personnel. Understanding of requirements such as working with children checks and the need for appropriate parent/carer consents to be obtained for student participation were lacking in some cases and unreasonable turnaround times were expected from schools. As well as this, some business owners needed a greater understanding of the myriad of expectations placed on students from both a business and a school perspective. For example, understanding that some students needed to change working hours to accommodate exams, or that students should not be expected to work after hours.

Administrative burden of the evaluation

In addition to piloting the EPPP initiatives, the schools were expected to participate in the EPPP evaluation. The additional communications related to the evaluation were difficult to manage and respond to in a timely fashion.

Broadening the scope of the EPPP

While the EPPP was potentially open to all students, there was a recognition in one school that the focus could be expanded to explicitly include more students from diverse backgrounds such as Indigenous students, CALD students, and students with disability.

Recommendations

The five case studies presented in this report provide insights that inform the following recommendations for further implementation and scaling of the EPPP. While the EPPP was received positively overall, improvements could be made in how the suite of initiatives are delivered when scaled up to a greater number of schools.

The field of *Implementation Science* can provide some clues as to how to ensure that the initiatives are delivered in order to optimise outcomes for students. Implementation science arose out of concern that interventions in the health space were often failing, not because of the efficacy of the intervention, but because of problems with the ways in which it may have been implemented in a real world setting. In scaling up any intervention, whether in health or education, it is important to understand and work within real world conditions. Implementation science uses a systematic approach to identify the factors that contribute to the success or failure of a planned intervention. These five case studies provide a close look at how the EPPP was implemented differently in each setting and how local contextual factors impacted on its effectiveness in each school. The recommendations outlined below draw on the insights gained from the case studies and suggest factors to be considered to enhance the impact of the EPPP in any school, regardless of local conditions. The recommendations do not subscribe to a ‘one size fits all’ approach, rather, they point to the need for some flexibility within the constraints of the EPPP pilot. By doing so, schools could be afforded the autonomy to make the EPPP fit with their existing programs and structures, but would also be supported by the range of adaptable resources that the pilot provides.

- Issues with workload associated with the EPPP were raised across all case study schools. While each school implemented the EPPP slightly differently and assigned responsibilities to a variety of personnel, inevitably the bulk of the work remained the responsibility of the CA. The degree to which the CA found the work more manageable depended on the size of the school and the support from school leadership and other personnel, such as transition advisers and the HTC. Workloads were also affected by the short notice given for many of the EPPP initiatives, causing the workload to spike at some times, making it difficult to manage. At times, the roles and responsibilities of the EPPP personnel were unclear leading to some duplication of effort, which also added to workloads. To alleviate workload issues the following could be considered:
    - Re-examine the allocation of CAs to schools in relation to school size. An allocation based on a sliding scale could assist large schools which fall just under the threshold for a second CA.
    - Develop an EPPP scope and sequence for each year so that EPPP events are planned well in advance to minimise the uneven administrative workloads for CAs across the school year.
    - Provide greater clarity with respect to the EPPP roles and responsibilities so that duplication of effort is avoided and workflows have greater alignment.
- The opportunity for increased SBATs was recognised as a positive feature of the EPPP across all case study schools. Likewise, the SBAT mentor was viewed as an important and valuable resource for this process. While there was an overall increase in SBATs across the 24 EPPP pilot schools, there were no gains in places in the case study schools. The

lack of availability of interested businesses to support SBATs was an issue across all case study schools. To increase the number of SBATs taken up, the following could be considered:

  - Develop a system to identify businesses across the state, in proximity to schools, who are willing to support an SBAT. This would enable schools to be provided with a pre-approved list of businesses to approach with suitable students.

- There was a need expressed in some case study schools for more professional development for CAs, particularly in relation to the additional requirements of the EPPP. In some cases, an additional burden of supporting new, inexperienced CAs fell onto the HTC, who was already stretched across multiple schools.
  - Consider developing an EPPP-focussed professional learning program for CAs, in particular, but also potentially for other EPPP personnel.
- Across all case study schools, a general lack of student readiness for the EPPP activities was noted. For some students there appeared to be a lack of familiarity with workplace expectations for behaviour, communication, clothing and punctuality, but for others issues arose due to their literacy and numeracy levels. Also, there were widespread misconceptions amongst students about VET and nature of VET courses. While the EDGE workshops were helpful and generally popular amongst students, they were not available to all students due to caps on attendance numbers.
  - Increase availability of EDGE workshop places, particularly in large schools, so that more students can attend. Ensure that workshops such as EDGE are held well before students attend external workplaces or VET visits.
  - Consider providing extra support for literacy and numeracy for identified students, prior to EPPP participation, and particularly in schools with high proportions of students with language backgrounds other than English.
- In all case study schools, parents and carers were identified as the major influence on the development of student educational and career aspirations. However, all case study schools also reported difficulty in engaging parents/carers with careers education in general, and with the EPPP initiatives in particular. Given the pivotal role that parents/carers are playing in shaping their students' futures, it would seem apt to consider how they could be better engaged in careers initiatives. Many interviewees suggested that parental/carer views were often supportive of the EPPP initiatives, but it was also commonly stated that parental/carer views could be fixed on particular outcomes for their children, cutting off potential pathways without due consideration.
  - Consider the development of tailored resources to encourage parent and carer participation in the EPPP and to educate parents and carers about potential benefits of the various pathways towards employment.
  - Assist schools with communication with parents and carers through the provision of centrally-developed social media content that would engage and educate parents and carers about the range of possibilities for student futures.
- Transport to the EPPP events and activities external to schools was a consistent issue across case study schools. In metropolitan areas, the availability of public transport was a key factor in determining levels of student uptake. In regional areas, where public transport was less prevalent, similar issues existed with the burden of arranging transport often falling on parents, carers and families.
  - As a matter of course all EPPP partners (training organisations, workplaces) should be assessed from the point of view of transport so that students and their families are aware of additional costs and travel times from their school.
- There was a common tension expressed by teachers that student participation in the EPPP took away from regular class time and made it difficult for the mandated curriculum to be taught. There was also a concern from the EPPP personnel that classroom teachers were not taking up opportunities to integrate careers education into their classes. The advantage of doing so are that students can see the relevance of what they are learning in school in relation to potential careers, and this can then lead to more motivated students in the classroom.
  - Develop a set of classroom resources for teachers linking KLAs with the EPPP initiatives and with careers education more broadly. These resources would be available for Stage 4 and 5 teachers across a range of KLAs.
- Digital resources, such as the Digital careers toolbox were found to be a useful resource for students across all case study schools, with some caveats. Participants in the non-metropolitan schools felt that the resources had a 'metropolitan' feel in terms of the careers included, causing students to question the relevance of some of the content. Also, for schools with a high proportion of students from language backgrounds other than English, the resources did require significant levels of teacher support, in order for the students to engage with the resources meaningfully. Students with low literacy levels were unable to use the resources independently. Also, in 2020, with COVID-19 impacting on how regular schooling was delivered, and with more classes being delivered on-line, the digital resources were less popular with students than they might have been in a regular school year.
  - Adapt the suite of digital resources to include resources in different languages and/or to assess the reading level required to engage with the resources independently.
  - Extend the resources to include more content that is applicable to non-metropolitan locations.
- In the more demographically diverse case study schools there was a sentiment expressed that the EPPP was not enabling the participation of a diverse cohort of students. There was a perception that the EPPP was targeted towards students exhibiting a lack of engagement with school and difficult behaviours. In these schools there was recognition that more needed to be done to promote the EPPP initiatives for cohorts such as Indigenous students, students from culturally diverse backgrounds and students with disability.

    - Examine the EPPP initiatives for opportunities to engage more diverse cohorts of students. This could involve targeting particular groups of students for participation in some of the EPPP initiatives with appropriate additional supports in place.
- YES+ was viewed as a positive experience for students across all case study schools, however, in larger schools the relative proportion of students who were able to participate in this pilot was lower than in smaller schools. There was also a lack of alignment between YES+ courses with strong demand and the number of places available, meaning that many students missed out on these opportunities. This was also the case with EDGE workshops.
    - Consider allocating more resources for EDGE workshop places in larger schools
    - Conduct a mapping exercise to determine potential student demand for particular YES+ workshops so that more places are available in high demand areas.

North Coast NSW Schools

Two case study schools, School A and School B, were examined from two different school clusters in the North Coast of NSW. One school cluster comprised 4 schools and the other comprised 5 schools.

School A

School A is a comprehensive high school located near the NSW/QLD border. The school is recognised locally as providing a safe and supportive learning environment, offering a 'broad curriculum supported by technology, a strong uniform code and an effective welfare system underpinned by the values of respect, responsibility, relationships and resilience' (*MySchool website*). There are a number of students each year who complete VET courses as part of their studies: in 2019 there were as many as 56 students enrolled in a variety of courses, and 12 students completed courses in Building, Veterinary Studies, Tourism, Office Studies, and Hospitality. With regard to NAPLAN, students in Years 7 and 9 perform on par with students from similar backgrounds. Students are significantly below the national average on writing, spelling, grammar and numeracy in Year 7, but only below the national average in spelling in Year 9, indicating positive growth in achievement across the early years of secondary school.

There is a big sport and physical education presence at the school which influences student aspirations and interests. As the CA explained,

> *A lot of [our students] are generally thinking about PE teaching and that sort of side… because they all just want to work in the sporting industry. I think maybe they'll try to do that sporting thing but if it does not happen, I've got to pick to be a PE teacher.*

Within School A, there is also a distinct connection and "pull" towards the local area. As the principal said, "The community always seems to bring them back". While there are people who may go outside the area to get degrees or training, they mostly return to the local area in the future. The CA said, "They don't want to leave the town. They'll go to the Gold Coast to go to uni, they might go to Brisbane to go to uni but ultimately they love coming back as well". And one of the teachers summarised it with, "If you can't do it within [the local area] then it's kind of off the table".

Executive leadership and resourcing

School A is led by a Principal and Leadership Team that includes one Deputy Principal and six Head Teachers as well as one CA. This school has a Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) which focuses on Strategic Direction 1 – Student growth and attainment, Strategic Direction 2 – Technology, and Strategic Direction 3 – Wellbeing.

The SIP has specific initiatives to increase career education opportunities and participation and Vocational Education and Training (VET) uptake. The inclusion of careers education is addressed in the first strategic direction, with initiatives such as the Aboriginal Education team focusing on achievement and retention of Aboriginal students through to the HSC, including students participating in School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships and opportunities through the Education Pathways Pilot Program.

Careers education, including the EPPP, is a prime focus of the school ensuring the continued to creation of innovative pathways for all students.

How was EPPP implemented at School A?

At School A, the EPPP was implemented and managed by the school's CA. She received some assistance from the HTC, and they reported a good working relationship. The principal would also meet regularly with the HTC and found some of the sessions with industry professionals that she organised to be 'invaluable'. However, the majority of the implementation work fell to the school's CA. This was due in part to the organisation required, particularly for programs that were TAFE-related or external to the school. The CA would be alerted about a particular program and would then need to select and contact students, organise and collect permission notes, create risk assessments, organise transport, and notify teachers all within a short period of time.

Running certain online aspects of the pilot, such as the Digital careers toolbox (Pilot 1) and any webinars that came up, also proved difficult due to the added stress of COVID-19 and learning in lockdown. The CA said, "[Looking at the websites] on their own, they had so much to do at home, that it was just really difficult for them to do it on their own". This was partly due to the patchy internet access in the area. One of the teachers explained:

> *There are students in places where they can't get wired internet, they can't get Wi-fi internet, they can't get satellite internet. So, literally, there's no access for them because of the location they live in. We have students who live in caravans and have no electricity. We have students who live in tents and have no electricity.*

What was evident in the external stakeholder interviews was that collaboration was a key factor in the success of the implementation of the EPPP. For some stakeholders, that meant doing what they could to "make it easier" and offer "more support on the ground":

> *My role has become clearer as the year has gone on, I think. It's really about bringing those other stakeholders together and helping that partnership develop between the school and other stakeholders so that kids can have those good first-hand experiences. We certainly want to collaborate with the careers adviser to bring programs into the school, not just that administrative connection. You've got to make the connection and then continue on with that - a little bit of support on the ground to be sure of a likely success.*

There were many stories of successful collaboration, particularly between schools and other stakeholders. The HTC said,

> *The pilot schools were really great to work with. They were all super keen to do what they had to do. They were busy and they were flat out trying to deliver online learning and get their heads around that. But even with all that, I still attended every meeting with the career immersion team that was still really responsive to me as a head teacher, trying to pull this program together across the three TAFE campuses.*

In general, the implementation at School A was deemed successful, in large part due to the extraordinary effort of the CA and the willingness of the external stakeholders to support those efforts in a collaborative manner.

How was EPPP perceived by school based participants?

In general, there was positive feedback about the EPPP from school based participants. In particular, the impact of the experiential nature of the various EPPP aspects were mentioned positively, in contrast to some of the online features. However, the negative perceptions of some online components, including the Digital careers toolbox and the webinar presentation of the EDGE workshop, could be due to the over reliance on online learning in general throughout 2020 as a result of COVID-19. Also, internet access for some students in School A was problematic leading to further disengagement with some online EPPP aspects.

Principal

The principal at School A thought the EPPP pilots were great and was happy to have anything at the school that would benefit the students. He described an instance where an Indigenous student who was on the brink of leaving school had been given the opportunity to undertake an SBAT at a local primary school. "She's now come back, and she's a different person. It's given her focus. It's given her, you know what, I really like what I'm doing". The principal reported that she had also undertaken the YES+ pilot with the airlines and was excited thinking about all the different lines of work related to aircraft. The impact of programs like the EPPP for kids at risk like this student were, according to the principal, "things you can't measure". "She's interacting, and she's seeing the fun in learning, and she's seeing the fun in life. She's come back a different person, and she'll go on to get her HSC really well".

Careers adviser

The CA spoke very positively about all of the different EPPP initiatives that she was able to implement at the school. At School A, the pilots discussed in the interviews were the Digital Careers Toolbox (Pilot 1), the EDGE workshops (Pilot 7), Increasing the Uptake of School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATS) (Pilot 5), the TAFE Youth Engagement Strategy Plus (YES+) (Pilot 3), and the introduction of the HTC. She thought they were useful and relevant for the students at the school. The experiential nature of the YES+ courses and the SBATs also fit well with the hands-on culture of work experience at School A. Some pilots, such as the EDGE webinar, also worked well with existing initiatives already in place at the school. However, that particular pilot also ended up being an immense burden on her workload, to the point where she reported that it impacted on her mental health.

Teachers

The teachers interviewed for the focus group at School A did not have a broad knowledge of all the initiatives in the pilot. They were largely only familiar with the aspects that would impact student attendance, such as the SBAT and YES+ courses. The CA said that while the teachers appreciated that YES+ gave a large number of students the opportunity to have a range of career experiences, the reality was that 20 out of 60 Year 10 students were out of school on a Friday for a number of weeks, and that this impacted on the teachers' programming:

> *It was a bit hard going on the teachers, they might have only had three or five kids in their class depending on what class they had. They liked it because the kids got to see it but planning wise it wasn't great for them.*

While the teachers did not have any first-hand perceptions of the pilots, they had heard positive feedback from students about various pilots, including YES+ and various SBATs. They had also seen some positive impacts on students who were becoming disenfranchised with school. One teacher said:

> *They seemed to enjoy [the YES+ initiatives] a lot. They would come in and talk about it the Monday after because they were doing it on Fridays. It has already helped them to start to think about what they're planning to do now and in the future. They didn't really know what they wanted to do, but now they have that direction because of that program.*

Parents/carers

Only one parent was able to be interviewed at School A. He had three children go through the school, two of whom had undertaken SBATs. His youngest, in Year 10, was involved in the EPPP SBAT, working as a teacher's aide at a local primary school. "It was available, it was an opportunity, just a bit of alternate learning as well, getting away from the classroom. She's been doing that all this term. She loves it, they love her, everyone's happy". With regard to other EPPP initiatives, he mentioned YES+ (although he referred to it as a TAFE tester), but did not mention any other initiatives such as the Digital careers toolbox, although his daughter would have utilised those websites during a Year 10 careers lesson. He was very positive about the careers program provision at the school, with his three summarising words being "satisfied, thankful, impressed".

Students

There were different aspects to note about student perceptions of the pilots. One aspect was a distinct lack of knowledge regarding the actual names of the different pilots that had been implemented at the school. There were some instances in the interviews where the students could not recall a specific pilot when it was mentioned by name but would later describe that same pilot as something that they had experienced. Some students, particularly in Stage 6, were frustrated with the online aspects of the pilots, either because they were disinterested in the online learning space, or because they lived in an area with bad access to the internet. However, all students generally saw their experiences with the EPPP as relevant and useful, either for where they were going in their careers or for providing information about possible pathways.

Influences on student aspirations in School A

The participants spoke about two main influences on the career aspirations of students in School A: firstly, family and secondly, school initiatives.

Family

The most distinct influence on student career aspirations in School A were their parents, carers and families, as detailed in both student and teacher focus groups. The influence of parent/carer occupations was noted by several participants. The CA and the principal made comments about students naturally falling into the family business or trade. The CA said that their parents/carers were the biggest influence on aspirations "because they're with their parents and their parents have done this or they've done that, or it's a family business". The principal said, "Look, here there's kids whose parents are farmers, they want to be a farmer, they become a farmer". But he also noted that now there are other aspects that make farming more viable and desirable as a career pathway: "These days, there's a lifestyle in that as well".

The students spoke about different work experiences they had had with parents/carers or family members, and the effects they had had. One Stage 4 student said he had been out to work with his father a few times. His father was a project manager working at different sites. "Like the Joker face at Movie World. He made that. Also [local location], all the lighting. He's lights and sounds". He enjoyed the travelling and all the interesting projects. Another Stage 4 student was interested in becoming a vet one day and had worked with both dairy cattle and horses due to her father's job and her neighbour's farm. She was a bit scared of the dairy cows—"I was scared they were going to stand on my hand"—but she had loved horses since she was little and was enjoying working with her neighbour's thoroughbred. "It split its knee open in a race, but she saved it. He's still very sore, and I've been working with him, and just doing stuff with him".

A Stage 5 student ran the family business with his mum: a makers and finders market in a nearby park. A student in Stage 6 had been doing all sorts of trade work—"buiilding, concreting, panel beating and mechanics"—with his dad and a friend's dad for some time. And another student in Stage 6 had tagged along with her mum to a number of lectures when she was younger while her mother completed a degree in digital media. She herself was planning on doing psychology at university and had engaged with a number of online open days at various universities during 2020.

School initiatives

School A had a major influence on the types of career pathways students would consider or follow. The school itself had a strong focus on broadening horizons and creating opportunities for students. This involved hosting career expos, creating co-curricular activities, and making connections with local industries. The CA had created a Future Teachers Club for students in Years 7–11 who aspired to become teachers. One student in Stage 4 was part of it and described learning about preparing a lesson for a primary school class. "We just write a lesson plan [and] go to a primary school, and we do activities that we've planned out. You pick the years you want to teach, and you would get to teach that little lesson". The school also had a podcast, which another Stage 4 student was involved in: "I record it and edit it, and then post it". Then there is "Café [School A]", which the CA described:

> *It's café skills and they're serving the teachers. The teachers are donating money and it's going back into another project like that for next year. They get to actually run a business so they're learning not only their hospitality skills but business skills.*

Aside from this, School A would either advertise or run career expos, university tours, assistance with resumes, and even create units of work specifically designed to connect subject learning with job skills and knowledge. One of the teachers said, "Next year I'm implementing a maths and trade approach to Year 9. It's increased access and interest in that area". And both CA and the principal described a "School to Work" week, where students in Year 9 could get a taste of career-related experiences. This could involve "making resumes, tax file numbers, USI numbers" (CA), or even learning how to prepare for a job interview. "They've got to come to school, and there'll be a teacher, and there'll be a couple of community members sitting on a panel, and they will present their work under an interview situation". As the principal explained:

> *The feedback that I get really clearly from here is that when they go for a job into the future, they've already had four or five of these interviews. They're just really at ease compared with all the other kids.*

Which aspects of EPPP were perceived most positively at School A?

With regard to the positive impact of the pilots, students who had experienced one or more aspects of the EPPP generally gave positive feedback. YES+ was mentioned most frequently in a very positive light.

YES+

The YES+ courses that were mentioned by students included ones related to aviation, café skills, and hospitality. One student in Stage 5 enjoyed the aviation course, particularly because of how hands-on it was and how it showed the students all of the different kinds of jobs that are available. "It was interesting because of most things I didn't know about planes [sic], and most of it wasn't theory, it was more prac. It was pretty cool just seeing how different things worked and stuff". Another student in Stage 5 agreed: "There's more jobs in actually running an aircraft than just flying a plane. There's actually a whole bunch of different jobs in it". Another student in Stage 5 was surprised at how much work was involved in the hospitality industry. "It was different to what I thought – [I thought it was going to be] a lot easier than what it is. And how much stuff you can do with hospo. The guy that we had teach us travelled around the world and cooked in France".

The principal also liked the hands-on aspects of the YES+ courses and thought the pilot had been "a real success" and really engaged some of the kids. "The transport and logistics one, they got on a boat and went up the Tweed River. That was pretty special for some of the kids. Those sorts of things were a good part of that". And the CA liked that she could send a lot more students—20 as opposed to four—to participate in YES+, and that she was getting a lot of really good feedback from the students.

Which aspects of EPPP were challenging at School A?

There were a range of challenges identified by the various participants and stakeholders who were interviewed. Some of the issues were minor and would be relatively straightforward to address. For example, ensuring that all aspects of the EPPP were clearly identifiable to assist students to understand their purpose or reconsidering the order in which the EPPP initiatives are delivered to students. Other issues related to resourcing and workloads may be more difficult to address, particularly as they are dependent on individual school contexts, suggesting that a tailored, rather than state-wide approach may be necessary.

Visibility of all aspects of EPPP

With regard to other aspects of the EPPP, the feedback from students was either that they did not know what the other pilots were, or there was some confusion as to what was specifically part of the EPPP and what was part of normal TAFE or VET offerings. This was partly due to the fact that much of the EPPP was implemented earlier in the year, during COVID-19 and lockdown, and many students either did not have internet access or were already overwhelmed by all the change and disruption.

Many students did not know what the Digital careers toolbox was or couldn't quite recall if they used it or found it useful. None of the students in Stage 4 had had access to this resource, although when asked what they would look for in a careers website, one student described what some of the Digital careers toolbox sites were already doing. "It could give you pathways. You type in what you want to be in the future, and it gives you pathways". Another student added, "You'd probably want advice. If there was something you were really good at, you could find advice on that to help you start a pathway and eventually continue on that and grow". The students in Stage 5 seemed to have used the Digital careers toolbox websites, but couldn't remember them by name, only vaguely by description. It appeared that they had been directed to look at them during time at school. The Stage 6 students couldn't recall using any of the mentioned websites but thought the descriptions of them sounded really interesting and useful.

Contrastingly, the CA did remember introducing the websites to Year 10 students, and said that they had found them really useful, particularly Myfuture and LifeLauncher. She liked that they provided different options and were easy for students to use:

> *It's only a couple of clicks and they found it really good to just get that initial start. I think they [the website designers] did that really well because kids, they want things done now so I think that's really helped.*

She also thought that the websites would make it easier for students to choose their elective subjects as they progress through high school.

Additional workloads for EPPP administrators

While the pilots themselves were seen as a positive addition to the school, there were a number of barriers that made implementation difficult. For the CA, the biggest challenge was the significant increase in workload. "The EPPP added an extra layer of work, a huge extra – it's basically another position, I think". The HTC did provide some support, but most of the time it was easier for the CA to do the work, especially if it was time critical. "I tried to be very organised but things go down the email chain, and you miss things because you're constantly doing one thing. Then you've got this other thing now on top of you so there's things that you miss". She was getting information about programs and excursions with only a week or two to make preparations such as risk assessments, notifying students, creating and collecting permission notes, and so forth. This pressured environment led to some great experiences, but it burnt her out. "My focus is yes, to give everything to these students but at what cost?"

Issues with transport to venues and time to travel to venues

Another barrier mentioned by the teachers was transport and proximity of training organisations. There is minimal public transport in and around the town, and that made it difficult for students to get to places outside of school. A teacher commented that, "We used to have a bus service but that was fraught with problems and it's just defunct now, so they've got to get their own way there and back and it can be an issue". She also mentioned that one student had to carpool with another to get to TAFE "because he had no way to get there himself". It could also be difficult for families in the area to provide transport. The CA said, "We're in a low socio-economic area so maybe the family might only have one car. They might have two cars but [the parents both need them], and what's the priority?"

Availability of local businesses

The availability and access to businesses for students, particularly for traineeships or apprenticeships, was also mentioned as a barrier. The teachers said that there were only a few businesses willing to accept students in town, which meant that they would need to travel further for placements, making transport an issue again. But as one teacher said, by branching out further in the area, "You're competing against other schools [nearby], and they're big schools as well". The CA also commented on the difficulty of having access to a range of industry types, but she was trying to work through it:

> *Even the health industry. It's hard to get kids into a nursing home. I don't think they realise what the value is that the kids can bring and the addition to their staff. I think that's what we're trying to break down, and we're slowly but surely getting there.*

The perceptions of external stakeholders: School A

This section outlines the perceptions of the external stakeholders. Consistent with our approved ethics, individual stakeholders are not identified to maintain confidentiality.

Impact of COVID-19

The external stakeholder interviews were able to highlight some of the key barriers and enablers in the implementation of the EPPP. There was an acknowledgment from all School A external stakeholders that the EPPP was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the first half of the year when several pilots had not yet been rolled out:

> *We were trying to roll it out and meet COVID-19 and distance learning, and I just don't think there was enough time to manage the expectations of the kids and explain to them what the big end goal of the program was. So yeah, hoping this year [2021] will be different.*

Given the EPPP was still in a pilot phase in 2020, it is difficult to fully appreciate the impact of COVID-19 on its implementation, as well as all other aspects such as engagement and resourcing. For stakeholders working closely with schools, one significant impact of COVID-19 was the physical distance it created during implementation, and the overall "reach" of the pilot in terms of exposure within schools. As the following stakeholder explained:

> *I've always been able and lucky enough to go and sit in one school. Another school, due to COVID-19 we weren't allowed on site during that time. We had to rent out a facility next door to the school. It was when EPPP first started, so we actually rented out a room next door to the school for a couple of weeks.*

Finding time in a full curriculum

Importantly, stakeholders who were involved in the EPPP from a position within the school (i.e., the HTC and the SBAT mentor) spoke about the hesitancy of some schools in their cluster to support the broad range of the EPPP options. As outlined in the excerpt below, pilots offered in the EPPP were perceived by some school staff to be 'above mandatory curriculum requirements', in a heavily loaded curriculum:

It is a dual-edged sword because a lot of the opportunities and experiences that you want to share with the kids, to give them a very broad and well-informed understanding of a range of options, involves an excursion. So it takes kids away from their mainstream timetabled classes. It can be challenging to get school support across the board. I mean, it's okay for the occasional interruption but often careers advice is an additional, above the mandatory curriculum requirements. So, it's often not through a teacher's lack of interest in building that into their curriculum, but they're so pressured to meet the curriculum and assessment requirements.

Strains of increasing administration of the EPPP

Several stakeholders spoke about being aware of the extra work that the EPPP brought to their current role, as well as the roles of the existing school staff. As one stakeholder revealed, while schools were energetic about their participation in the EPPP, particularly given the opportunities it offered students, there was little understanding about the level of extra work required:

Like it or not, the EPPP has brought extra work into each school. And yes, they said yes, we'd like to be involved but I'm not sure how deep everybody's understanding was of what they were going to be involved in back at the beginning and I include myself in that.

Another stakeholder noted that her role was already "100 percent" and could not be "stretched any more":

Yeah. I am, 100 per cent... I can give it my all and get results and support as many people as I can, but if I'm stretched any more than I am - because it's not just getting the jobs and the support, there's reporting that we've still got to do on a daily basis, weekly basis, monthly basis and then to throw in the surveys. I'm sure you've heard it a thousand times but, yeah… no one really expected there was going to be so much paperwork.

Ultimately, the extra work generated by the EPPP meant that many stakeholders involved needed to continually rely on the "goodwill" of others, including school staff who were already working to capacity. This process was described by one stakeholder:

We are always asking, always relying on goodwill, for people to be receptive and work around and do some more following up of paperwork. Do some more liaising with students. Do some more liaising with their school exec. I mean, we share some of that liaison but it's all extra work so… people get to that point of how much more they're able to and prepared to do? So that relationship, juggling that fine line to maintain a positive communication relationship in that context.

Staff, job roles and responsibilities

The EPPP effectively introduced a number of support and mentoring staff into existing school environments. While extra support staff for students was largely viewed positively, there was some hesitation and uncertainty about how newly assigned EPPP roles within the school would impact the school community. Ultimately, a number of stakeholders felt that were put in a position where they needed to "win over" the schools, with one stakeholder saying,

I feel like our roles are probably undervalued sometimes. Because the careers advisers just don't have the time to do what we do. They don't have the opportunity to go out and talk to employers like we do and sell this model. But it's taken, up until now, to win them over. I truly think that they need to learn that we're not in competition with them, that we're trying to achieve the same goals as they are.

There was also some concern that other roles, which required work across five or six schools in some clusters, meant some staff were often stretched too thin. The HTC said:

I've got five principals, five sets of school executives and five careers advisers. When you're a head teacher typically in a school, you're there caring and supporting and leading a group of people that you sit in a workspace with and see often, every day. But that's challenging too.

Importance of strong collaboration

What was evident in the stakeholder interviews was that collaboration was a key factor in the success of the EPPP. For some stakeholders, that meant doing what they could to "make it easier" and offer "more support on the ground":

It's about realising that it's not all about us. It's not just our pilot. [It can be easy to think] that there's no one - no others out there and I'm just one, and one of many, and for the careers advisers that must have been pretty overwhelming too… I have had careers advisers say, I didn't sign up for this; this isn't what I expected. I've had to turn around and go, well, what can I do to make it easier for you? Let me help. What can I do?

There were many stories of successful collaboration, particularly between schools and other stakeholders:

The pilot schools were really great to work with. They were all super keen to do what they had to do. They were busy and they were flat out trying to deliver online learning and get their heads around that. But even with all that, I still attended every meeting with the career immersion team that was still really responsive to me as a head teacher, trying to pull this program together across the three TAFE campuses.

There were also some unexpected positive outcomes that emerged from COVID-19. In particular, one stakeholder noted that EPPP was able to foster a "real partnership" between schools and training organisation that had not been there so strongly in previous years:

> *I think this year – and whether it's because of what happened earlier in the year with COVID-19 – but certainly the participation rates have been really strong from the schools. I think because the EPPP is a real partnership between schools and TAFE, I think it allowed the YES+ to be promoted in a way that hadn't been before and we've had better uptake than previously.*

The role of the SBAT mentor

The feedback from stakeholders suggested that the newly created SBAT mentor role had a significant impact on student engagement with training and work placement:

> *It's the one to one - the case management, the supporting the student from the beginning, which the SBAT mentor is able to do with the school identifying the students and the school as a support place to meet the student. But then [the SBAT mentor] can help that student move through the process, the application process. The interview - prepare them for the interview process and then beyond there, from commencement as they engage in their qualification training. So it's that tailored support that really invests in success.*

Most important, the SBAT mentor was able to get to know individual students, and this provided a much needed scaffold to engage them in meaningful connections with industry:

> *I think definitely for students, they've got someone else in their world who they can talk to, about anything, and I let them know that. They know the role that I have, and they certainly know that they can talk to me about issues for work. But I guess for the young people, it's that I'm the eyes on the ground, I've got the connections with industry, so I can talk to them about opportunities, I can talk to them about different career paths that they take.*

In addition, the SBAT mentor was a "value add" to schools who were time-limited and working at capacity:

> *I sat with one student, for more than half a day; I was on the phone for an hour and a half to Service New South Wales. Anyway, long story short, the whole day was just taken up with her so that I could get a birth certificate for her because mum wasn't there and there's not a lot of support from home. So when I left that day the careers adviser said she wouldn't have got through without you today because she wouldn't have had time to do it and... I'm glad I was able to do that for her.*

Positioning EPPP staff external to the school

A number of stakeholders spoke about the importance of being positioned "outside" of the school, and the advantages that presented in building rapport with students:

> *I think in this role I'm really getting to see how relevant a program like EPPP is for young people. Because I'm not in the school, they tend to really engage…they see it as, they're going to help me get to whatever it is that I want to get to.*

Taking up a different position to school staff also meant that the external EPPP stakeholders could effectively "get more out of students", particularly in situations where students needed to take responsibility for their actions. "As long as you approach it with no judgement and I don't make them feel like whatever they share is going to shock me, and they're not going to get in trouble for it".

The EPPP has allowed for new relationships to form between students and mentors, which supported students who were struggling to decide on their prospective careers:

> *I think the relationship is very important. They can access that one-to-one counselling. We can roll out programs for masses, for big groups, but for the individual student to have that opportunity to open up about what their beliefs and their values and what their concerns are about their future - to have that one-to-one tailored support is extremely valuable.*

Greater exposure to first-hand vocational experiences

The most valuable aspect of the EPPP reported by external stakeholders was that it allowed students greater exposure to first-hand experiences:

> *More students are involved in work experience. [Having] more opportunities and flexibility to take students to see industry in operation is very valuable and makes a strong impact. I guess bringing industry people into schools to talk to students, too. Yes, the first-hand experiences have a lot of impact on young people.*

Tailoring student experiences

The EPPP also allowed for more localised experiences for students to observe and explore vocations and training. This was particularly pertinent to School A, as many young people were interested in finding a local vocation and "staying within their community".

In addition, because the vocational initiatives organised by EPPP stakeholders involved real people in local jobs, students were more likely to relate to the speakers, and see themselves engaging in these opportunities in the future:

Another guy talked about picking up a job because he surfed for too long after finishing his Year 12 and really needed to get a job and look at where he is now. Through his network of friends, [he'd] picked himself up a job that had actually opened up a world of opportunities to him. The kids were very inspired by that day. They were very positive in their comments and feedback. It's also - it's comfortable. It's familiar to a certain extent and then you open the door on the whole scenario, workplace, and that's, wow, that's happening here in my backyard. So how accessible is that for me?

Issues with transport

Stakeholders also raised concern regarding equity of access to travel to the EPPP pilot venues. Given the rural locale, schools within this cluster were divided by considerable distance. Ultimately, those schools placed further away from VET campus sites and other training venues were disproportionately impacted:

Transport would definitely be one of the big issues. So there's certain schools that are close to TAFEs and there's certain schools that aren't so close to TAFE so that's a barrier.

An interrelated issue with transport for students was overall travel time to and from EPPP venues. Students from more remote schools were disadvantaged in this regard, as travel time meant they often received a 'diminished program':

We did try and use some EPPP money to alleviate transport problems. [But] it's not just money for transport though, it's time. You know, if you want to do a full day program but you've got to do an hour and a half travel to get there, the kids can't get to school early or leave late. A lot of those kids are on buses. In rural areas, they don't have a public transport system, they have one bus that leaves after school.

Student readiness

The EPPP is a coordination of pilots aimed at targeting diverse cohorts of students, ranging from highly engaged students to those with minimal exposure to, and knowledge of, future career options and aspirations. There was key feedback from several stakeholders from the School A cluster regarding the readiness of students to engage in some of the EPPP activities that were operating away from the school premises. The readiness of student cohorts attending YES+ was often "extremely variable":

Sometimes you get a great cohort that's amazing and mature and ready. And then there's other cohorts that seem really immature and completely not ready. That's definitely an issue for some cohorts. For example, we were doing an auto stream and to be in the auto workshop, you have to wear the appropriate, safe clothing. And this particular cohort just absolutely refused and took it as a personal insult that we were asking them not to wear flip flops and short shorts and midriff tops in the workshop.

The behaviour of students in some EPPP pilots that were conducted outside the school, were often judged with reference to student maturity to take on "adult activities". At the same time, stakeholders also acknowledged that students transitioning into adult employment and training contexts were often under great pressure "to make those doors open". As one stakeholder noted, starting at a younger age is necessary for those students who do not choose a tertiary pathway, because they need to "drive that themselves" to get an apprenticeship:

I think it's more difficult for the kids wanting to go directly into work to make those doors open. You know, they've got to be out there talking to employers and writing job applications. I think there's a much more significant lack of awareness and also confidence in that range of students.

One key aim of the pilot is to strengthen job-ready skills for young people, through specific workshops such as EDGE workshops, as well as assisting students in SBATs and VET opportunities outside of the school environment. While there was an acknowledgement that pilots like EDGE are designed to get students "job ready", these workshops may need to be run earlier to give students adequate preparation for VET and SBATs:

Unfortunately, because of the chaos of last year the EDGE workshop was rolled out after our kids had started TAFE. However, I think it would be better delivered at the school before they get to TAFE. They've already walked in the door with a certain approach, you know, the horse has already bolted.

In addition to basic job ready training, there was a suggestion from stakeholders within the School A cluster that it may be better if students start exposure to the EPPP, and with career aspirations, at a much younger age than the traditional target age group of 15-17. A business owner operating in the School A cluster suggested that young people "don't really know what they want to do" when they engage with him in Years 11 and 12. "I've got kids that have finished university and they still don't know what to do with their life". The view that students needed to engage in career planning activities and basic job training earlier was reiterated by other stakeholders who were working outside the school. For example, one stakeholder argued that some students in the EPPP were not ready to engage in independent activities:

Look, the kids are coming to do an apprenticeship. but they've got no employability skills, and no work ethic. They've got no idea about turning up on time, about dressing appropriately. And you know, the world can just get nicked, 'cause I'm going to wear what I want. And that's the attitude that's coming through rather than, oh, in a workplace, it's actually the employer that gets to dictate what you wear. Otherwise you won't have a job.

Marketing and uptake of online resources

The online resources within the EPPP were generated for student use across all of NSW. Stakeholders in the School A cluster noted that the marketing of the online resources was perhaps "too metropolitan" and overly generic. Importantly for School A, the

online resources did not attend to the unique circumstances of students living in diverse communities outside of metropolitan NSW. One stakeholder commented, "The online resources that have been put up for this project don't tap into that local knowledge of, [say] surfing, [or] something that is familiar to a certain extent to open the door on the whole scenario".

The uptake of the EPPP online resources was also impacted by the unique circumstances of 2020, which meant that most of the school year was delivered online:

> *Anything online, they just don't do it… all the kids were so over online last year. You know, "do not tell me to sit in front in another zoom session, do not ask me". In theory, you actually need to touch base, talk about it. Maybe after COVID-19 they would, when they're back to normal face-to-face teaching they can do online, because it would be unusual rather than the norm that's been beaten to death.*

Student expectations about VET

There was some concern that students were not given adequate information about what to expect from VET and other training offered as part of the EPPP. For example, one stakeholder spoke at length about the generalisation that VET and training is "all hands on" with no theory or written work. As a result, external stakeholders found they were continually managing expectations of students:

> *There's this impression that when you go to TAFE, you don't have to touch a pen and paper, there's no theory. And I think working with the career immersion head teacher team in the schools, we need to dispel that myth. Because we offer diplomas for goodness' sake at TAFE. You need to use a pen and paper, and even in an apprenticeship, there is theory you need to test. So I think that's a big misconception that needs to be overcome with kids is that, you know, TAFE is a "bludge".*

Relatedly, students were also not given adequate information about why particular courses and training had been removed or changed. As one stakeholder noted, any changes to core training and courses now come from the Minister's office and are based on identified growth areas for different regions. However, some students were disappointed that they did not get to choose industry areas themselves, as one stakeholder explained:

> *New South Wales State Training consulted on where the growth areas were in our region, and which programs are a focus in YES+. And some of the kids loved it. But we've also had some feedback, where the kids didn't necessarily like being told what they were going to do. They would have preferred to have been able to pick their own industry areas. So, I guess the challenge for me in my role was having that come back from the kids, having that come back from the schools who were saying, why did you choose that? You know, the kids aren't really happy and having to say, well, look, this is what the Minister wanted. This is the purpose of the program is to actually get them moving towards industries where there's jobs.*

Other issues were exacerbated by COVID-19, including staffing issues:

> *Yeah, unfortunately we don't always get everything they want and that's because some vocational sections, for a variety of reasons, particularly this year, didn't have the capacity to run certain programs. Could be staff, it could be facilities, to run a YES program at a particular time.*

School B

School B is a partially selective high school located on the north coast of New South Wales. It has a strong VET program: In 2019, up to 141 students were enrolled in a number of different courses, with 44 students enrolled in Hospitality courses alone. 27 students completed VET qualifications in 2019, with almost half completing a Hospitality course. This may be due to the café program that is run at the school, specifically for students with intellectual disabilities. The principal mentioned this as having a particularly positive impact on many of their support unit students:

> *We run a coffee shop for children with disability, they actually run it as a business within the school. It actually turns a profit and we've had a number of those children end up with employment in the hospitality industry. Here they are, succeeding in something as part of their schooling, that then leads to work and all of the good feelings you get when you actually get a job.*

With regard to NAPLAN results and performance, Year 7 and Year 9 students generally perform above average compared to students with a similar background, but below average in reading, writing and grammar when compared to all Australian students. They perform on a par with Australian students in numeracy in both Years 7 and 9, and in spelling in Year 7.

When asked about how they perceive the school's culture and community, the common theme from the respondents was "broad", particularly with regard to the student population. The TA said, "We've got students from all walks of life, socio-economic status, and completely different aspirations as a result of their personal context". The principal said:

> *We have such a broad demographic in [School B]. We have some extremely disadvantaged kids, we have kid in out-of-home care, so they're in the care of the Minister. We have a big support unit. We have kids from very affluent backgrounds where their parents are working professionals, university trained… we do have a complete mixed bag.*

Executive leadership and resourcing

School B is led by a Principal and Leadership Team that includes two Deputy Principals. It has a CA and fractional appointments for a TA as VET coordinator. This school has a Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) which focuses on Strategic Direction 1 – Student growth and attainment, Strategic Direction 2 – Culture of high expectations, Strategic Direction 3 – Positive and productive learning environments.

The SIP has specific initiatives to increase career education opportunities and participation and Vocational Education and Training (VET) uptake. The inclusion of careers education is addressed in the second strategic direction, with clear initiatives around the transition of students to work, apprenticeships and traineeships, including the SBAT pilot. This includes the TA FTE allowance as the resource.

How was EPPP implemented at School B?

At School B, the EPPP was mostly implemented by the CA and the TA at the school. The TA was a 0.4FTE role created by the school a few years ago, specifically to help support students transitioning from school to work. At the time of the interviews, it was allocated to a teacher who was also head of PDHPE and the SBAT coordinator.

Based on the interviews, it was the TA who seemed to coordinate the EPPP along with the CA, the external SBAT mentor and the HTC. He saw himself as "the link between the students, the school and the employers". His main role was organising the SBATs and student work experience. "We've got employers who support us, and it's important that we're preparing these students to go into workplaces and do a good job to help support those employers, and hope that those employers continue to support our students". He found his role challenging, particularly when working with disengaged students, but really appreciated the support from the SBAT mentor and HTC. "I feel that they actually ease challenges for me because there's greater direction in where I can best place my resources, in terms of time and programs that are available".

The CA was the primary contact for training organisations and was also responsible for many of the administrative aspects of the EPPP and VET programs: chasing permission forms, creating Google classrooms to post job ads in, and giving careers advice about VET courses for students in the senior years. She found her relationship with the VET teachers to be very beneficial and would make an effort to support students in their vocational learning:

> *I'm on pretty friendly terms with most of [the TAFE teachers]. They know that if a student is falling behind, they call me right away and I chase down that student and I say, okay, how are we going to get this assessment task done or these competencies done. I liaise with their teacher because obviously, I don't know some of the content that they are doing but I [work with them] just to ensure that they are going on the right pathway and getting everything done.*

The importance of communication came through in some of the interviews. The EPPP came with a lot of different opportunities, which teachers saw as positive, but having so many things going on made it a bit overwhelming at times. The TA said, "Every day you could potentially have an email about a particular program. You've got to sort through and you can't be involved in everything that's happening in that careers space". The CA agreed with this, saying, "There's so many things going on and giving teachers information about projects that are happening and things to get involved in… there is quite a lot to get through sometimes". This was made somewhat more confusing by all the different people in different roles, even though they all worked really well together: "It's kind of hard to figure out who is going to organise these things".

How was EPPP perceived by school-based participants?

Principal

The principal's interview at School B was truncated due to other commitments, but he did say that the EPPP was generally of benefit to the school. School B already had a number of similar initiatives in place, such as engaging in the YES program (as opposed to YES+) and other school-based initiatives such as the Skills for Work class. Having some of these structures already in place helped to support the implementation of the pilot. Also, having the SBAT mentor "enhanced the sort of work we're doing because of the connections he's got", and participating in the YES+ pilot "stepped that up another level, made it more of a focus".

Transition adviser

The TA emphasised that he enjoyed his role in working with SBATs as the SBAT coordinator, as well as collaborating with the SBAT mentor and the HTC. Overall, he said that he can "speak very highly for the [EPPP] program" but felt that its potential was severely restricted due to COVID-19. "I would have loved this to have occurred midway through or towards the end of next year when we can really look at what it has to offer". The pilot's biggest benefit was all of the "opportunities and having those opportunities sit there for students to take up".

Careers adviser

Due to being on maternity leave, the CA was not present at the school for much of the EPPP implementation. However, based on her limited experience and what she had heard from students and staff, there were a lot of positive responses to the pilots. She found having an EPPP-focused team—the TA, the SBAT mentor and the HTC—was very supportive and that the structure of the EPPP was effective:

> *I think that the EPPP as a whole has the potential to be really, really good for our students. Although there have been challenges, it's nothing that's made me think that we need to change the EPPP or anything. I'm happy to overcome them because I can see the benefits to our students. I think it has the potential to be really good once it's in place a little bit longer. I've really enjoyed working with everyone on the EPPP and I think it's been great to create more of a team when it comes to careers.*

Influences on student aspirations in School B

Family

One noticeable influence on student career aspirations at School B were parents, carers and families, particularly in relation to pursuing work and a career in a trade. The TA noted this was especially the case for male students, saying, "I know a few of our SBATs that we've signed up have occurred due to family members providing that opportunity for them". The CA said that "advice from family members… sometimes can alter their decisions", and students tended to see what their family members were doing and then "follow in their family's footsteps, whether that's immediate family or cousins, aunts, uncles". She mentioned an interesting example of a student who had graduated from the selective stream and had been adamant all through school about becoming a physiotherapist. He got into a physiotherapy course at Charles Sturt University, but when COVID-19 hit:

> *That had an impact on his mental health. I think possibly being isolated, being away from home… [now] he's come back and he's working with a family member in construction and he's actually absolutely loving that.*

The influence of the family on career pathways for students seemed somewhat logical for the principal. It appeared to make sense particularly in relation to access to jobs:

> *It seems to be – I won't say it's predetermined, but we've had aspiration studies and things like that. A lot of it you could track to where their parents work and their parents' background, educational and working background, because there are a lot of family jobs, but there's also a lot of jobs I think that kids get through family connections, so it's quite interesting.*

School initiatives

School B ran a number of school initiatives, external to TAFE and the EPPP pilots. While it was difficult to ascertain how much of an impact these had on students, due to the lack of student interview data from School B, the purpose of many of the initiatives was to prepare students for work and to help guide their interests and career choices. One initiative mentioned was the school's Skills for Work class. This was a class run for Year 10, specifically targeted at disengaged students at the school, in an effort to support their transition into the workforce. The principal said,

> *We put them in a special curriculum because they are the sorts of kids that are so disengaged from mainstream curriculum, so disinterested in school, that if we didn't have something targeted that was transitioning to work, they're typically kids that become non-attenders and drop out of school.*

The class was set up for students looking to move into trades and non-university pathways, and it has been an enormous success, with 30–40% of students in the last three years of the class gaining apprenticeships, which the principal believed would not have happened without the class. "We've actually improved their behaviour, their attitude, their attendance, all of those measures and we're also finding a lot of them work. So that's a huge thing, and something our school is proud of".

The principal and teachers also mentioned a range of other initiatives the school had in place that were focused on different student groups and interests. As mentioned previously, the school had a coffee shop that was run by the support unit students with intellectual disabilities. The principal said this pilot had tangible benefits for student career pathways, but also on the students themselves, and the school's culture. "It has a positive impact at all levels on the confidence of our kids and their self-esteem and self-worth, and then that flows back into behaviour, engagement, things like that". The school also had a connection with a community organisation in the local area that supports people with disabilities in the community. "We work with people like [this community organisation] where we do special supported work placement for children with disability. We often transition those children through their NDIS packages to [this community organisation] where they're actually employed after school".

School B has a selective stream, and students within that stream "aspire to jobs and careers that require secondary education at uni and even further postgraduate". School B participates in a program with a nearby university called Head-Start, which provides opportunities for Year 11 students to complete a unit of study, HECS-free, for 13 weeks. A program like this holds a wealth of benefits, as articulated by the principal:

> *When they finish that unit, if they successfully complete it, first of all they get automatic entry into a whole suite of degrees, but they also get the RPL for that course. By completing a university unit early, that has an enormous boost to those kids. They actually understand that uni's not a scary thing and they know they can actually pass a uni course. Just talking to them they say, I know I can do it now, I've done this course, I know I can actually succeed at uni.*

Aside from these specific examples, the teachers and principal mentioned other classes, programs and initiatives to help students with their career choices and pathways. These included careers lessons and other courses that provide support and alternate pathways for students wanting to pursue a trade. "We have other units that we can include in their studies to release them from face-to-face school to help support them in completing that traineeship and completing their HSC" (TA). The principal mentioned the school's continued participation in the Australian Indigenous Mentoring program, which encouraged Aboriginal students to pursue higher education. And the CA found that different technology had allowed her to provide a better range of options and opportunities for her students:

> *Just the creation of ways to give students information; whether it's university deadlines or TAFE programs or excursions and things like that, I want to always give it out to students. I created a few digital things, like a Google classroom for every single year group, a careers Facebook group where I can post job ads and stuff that I want parents to see as well. With subject selection, I just created a Google form and I'd ask students some questions before I interviewed them. What are you thinking about choosing? What are your aspirations? [Then], if someone called me with an apprenticeship I could go back to this list and say okay, all the students who clicked they were interested in an apprenticeship, here they are.*

Location

While it wasn't spoken about extensively, the town where School B is located and its community did have some influence on students' aspirations and career choices. As mentioned previously by the CA, there was a student who left the town to attend university, but ended up returning and working in his family's construction business. The principal noted that, particularly for students wanting to pursue trades, having a local TAFE that was easily accessible for students and being a close-knit community supported students wanting to move into work:

> *We have quite a lot end up in jobs in town. The way things seem to work, it's sort of who you know, being a rural area, as far as getting into trades. We often have kids that leave Year 10, Year 11, straight into a job or apprenticeship. We help that along, obviously, because we've had a focus on it in the last few years, but even aside from that, people know people and it tends to lead to work.*

Student interests

The broad variety of initiatives and opportunities available at School B was due to the perceived variety of interests of the students. Although there was a definite emphasis on trades and apprenticeships, the principal and teachers found it hard to otherwise define the interests of the student community. The TA attributed this to "being such a large school, and we've got students from all walks of life, socio-economic status, and completely different aspirations as a result of their personal context".

The principal said that in previous years there was "a big focus on the military, where a lot of kids were wanting to leave and join the military and had a tradition of that", but that focus had waned in recent years. The CA said that most students wanted "jobs that they can enjoy". Career paths mentioned throughout the interviews included physiotherapy, nursing, education, medicine, construction, and various other trades. This diversity of student interests made the participant answers in the interviews somewhat vague, but as the TA said, "We really do just have a variety of different students going in a variety of different directions, and we've got to try and cater for all of those ambitions".

Which aspects of EPPP were perceived most positively at School B?

Increased opportunity

The word that came up the most in all three interviews with the school-based participants was "opportunities". They all mentioned how the EPPP had resulted in a distinct increase in students engaging in the SBAT pilot. Both the principal and the CA attributed some of this success to the HTC and the SBAT mentor. The CA said the HTC "has been really, really good and helpful in the pilots that he's organised within our school". The principal said that with the SBAT mentor working with the school, "It's just

enhanced what sort of work we're doing because of the connections he's got". This included establishing a relationship with an Australian home building company with a franchise in the local area. The CA said that "[the home building company had taken on] a few of our students and they're hoping that's going to be a yearly thing. Things like that are just so good for our students". The TA also articulated the knock-on effect of the increase in SBAT engagement:

> *[Students] will come and see me about opportunities. Then what it has done, is particular students have gained apprenticeships or school-based traineeships, which has increased the interest of other students. For the Skills to Work class, because they know the success and the opportunities they've had this year, I've had the largest number of applications [to join the class]. It's all been about having those opportunities sit there for students to take up, really. That's what's been the biggest benefit.*

YES+ program

The CA also talked about the positive response from students who participated in the YES+:

> *They said it was really cool and since I've been uploading our e-VET forms for students taking a VET subject at TAFE next year, I've had a lot of them tell me that they took the course at TAFE and they wanted to learn more.*

Along with this, she mentioned a student who had engaged with an automotive course through YES+ but decided it was not the pathway for him. She saw a response like this as another kind of positive result:

> *I thought, that's still a win because I'd rather him focus on something that he was interested in than do a subject that's maybe not his first choice in his senior year. Even though it didn't really work out for him at TAFE, he still was able to make a career decision.*

This was the crux of the benefit of the YES+ pilot for the CA. "It gave students the opportunity to see what further education was like in a range of different areas and they were able to see if that's something that they wanted to pursue or not… I think that's really important".

Which aspects of EPPP were challenging at School B?

Resources for students

As part of her role, the CA liked to provide a range of ways that students could explore and research different careers, beyond just a website where they could get "lost". This could include job guides or subject selection guides that could be kept in the library and be physically accessible. "I have some of the old job guides and stuff that I've given to students… [I] say here is a book, take it home, put actual little sticky notes on, come back to me and we can discuss".

Professional learning for careers advisers

More professional development for CA-type roles would also be beneficial. "[The CA] is one of those roles that you think you know what it is and then you're in there and there's deadlines and all these forms and paperwork". Having a refresher course to "look at best practice and the ethics involved" in counselling students would also be helpful.

Administrative support

The principal recommended that schools would need to have the staff in place to effectively administer the EPPP:

> *Having multiple staff in the school to make all this happen is really important, because no matter what help or assistance you get from outside, you've still got to organise it within your school. So I don't think without staffing your school ready and able to actually work with the program, it would succeed.*

He also said that schools that already have good VET access like School B will find it easier to implement the EPPP, as it builds on some of the programs that are already in place:

> *I think you've got to already know your clientele and know the sorts of kids to target to the right sort of program. I think that's a critical thing in success as well, that we actually strategically target kids, we don't throw the wrong kids into the wrong program.*

The perceptions of external stakeholders: School B

Impact of COVID-19

A key challenge presented by COVID-19 for School B external stakeholders was communicating with parents and carers. Direct contact was impossible in 2020, so much of the correspondence about the EPPP, including getting the parents/carers "on board" could only be shared through the school newsletter and social media. This had a significant impact on the number of students coming forward for training and placement:

> *We've found that this year with COVID-19 we've really struggled to get into that parent mindset because we haven't had access to them apart from newsletters and Facebook and all that sort of method of communication. I think we've missed the mark there. So, until we get their parents on board and they understand the importance of VET training and that VET pathway then we're going to miss out.*

While many of the missed opportunities in 2020 were out of their control, School B stakeholders spoke about some key aspects of the EPPP which they hoped to readdress in 2021:

> *What I would have done is actually had face to face meetings with parents, have information nights, parent/teacher nights where you can raise points and bring guest speakers in and so on. Look, that was our plan this year. Unfortunately, that's going to have to roll on to next year.*

Communication difficulties and delays

Aside from the disruptions of COVID-19, there were some key distinctions in School B that substantially impacted the rollout of the EPPP. Most significant of these was that, of all the schools participating in the EPPP, School B commenced the latest. Beginning in June 2020, the pilot had only 'just gotten underway' around the time the interviews were taken in November 2020. As a result, much of the first term at the school (Term 3) was focussed on learning the existing systems and processes of each of the schools. As one external stakeholder communicated, much of the early implementation work was about navigating through the existing systems and structures, which "doesn't happen organically":

> *We commenced late June, so we really only hit schools in Term 3. So, to be honest, it feels like we've only really just gotten underway. I guess, in school terminology it's been two school terms. Term 3 has been very much about, well we're really only connecting with our schools at that point. So, it's like, hey this is us, this is who we are, this is what we're meant to do. It's still a work in progress because there's a lot of existing structures and processes and the way that things are done, and we've come in as an overlay.*

Given the constraints of time, the external stakeholders in School B concentrated on SBATs in 2020, and expected to continue this focus in 2021: "Some of the pilots are quite broad brushed in terms of their focus; we're very specific. We've honed in on school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, that's our bottom line".

There was also concern that key information about the EPPP was not being distributed and promoted in the pilot schools. As a result, there was a pressure on key external stakeholders to "push the EPPP" because some principals were "already on the back foot":

> *At the start, I think not many people knew exactly what this program was all about. It sort of evolved as it went. I just think the information wasn't there. It wasn't promoted well enough. Even the principals have said to me at times, we weren't given any information. We just signed up for it.*

At the same time, there was an expectation that, like any new system the EPPP was going to take time:

> *As I said, I just see it as like a system. If you want to create a new system or you impose something over the top of an existing system, it takes time for that to find its sweet spot, if that makes sense.*

There was concern from stakeholders that there was not enough information about the EPPP "filtering out" of the school, particularly to those businesses that had potential to make a real difference to student employment pathways. One school-based stakeholder said, "People do read what they're interested in. We've had a bit of a campaign where we make sure every newsletter, every communication, has got something to do with the EPPP in it". However, there was acknowledgement that communication pathways to students, and parents/carers in particular, was more problematic due to COVID-19. This meant that parents/carers were not getting accurate and up-to-date information about the EPPP, traineeships and TAFE:

> *The only avenue really we've got for parents is through our social media, or through P&Cs, or through the career counsellor. We're kind of discouraged from going directly to parents, so it has to go - all communication has to go through the careers counsellor, so we can't go directly to parents.*

In addition, given the roll-out of "online versions" of some pilots due to COVID-19, there was also much less momentum and buzz about the EPPP. One stakeholder commented about how the timing and implementation of the online pilot affected the subsequent face-to-face component:

> *To be honest [the online aspects] were really poorly accepted by the students. That really affected the next step which was their face-to-face program because they had already been exposed to this online version that didn't really work. Once that happened then the word got around in the school, not only the students but the staff, that this is a time-waster. That was very difficult to come back from. It took a lot of persuading; we were putting out some fires around the place.*

High youth unemployment

Similar to the other schools included in the EPPP, School B was selected on the basis of current socio-economic status, employment rates and other disadvantages. However, there were several intersecting factors that impacted School B and, equally, the difficulties associated with the implementation of the EPPP. For example, parts of the region have been identified as having one of the highest rates of youth unemployment nationally (24.3 per cent in 2019, which is 13 percentage points higher than the NSW average[1]). In addition, the relative distance between key townships and employment hubs has made it difficult for young people to commune without a car and/or licence.

There were also significant issues in terms of finding employment in a trade in the School B region. For these reasons, the EPPP was placed to have a significant impact on the students in the participating schools. At the same time, there was some acknowledgement from external stakeholders that there were 'big hurdles' in terms of youth finding employment in this cluster:

> *The students that want to go in the university pathway, I think they're more likely to be successful in getting into that pathway. I think the ones that would like a trade or go down that sort of line find it a little bit more difficult to find that employer that is willing to give them a go. I mean, probably in the last two or three months it's been quite impressive with the government incentives because we've lost quite a few students to full time apprenticeships. So maybe the statistics are starting to change a bit. But I think if a student wants to get in the trade their biggest hurdle is actually finding employment.*

Given the current issues impacting youth unemployment, EPPP external stakeholders in School B really wanted to focus on securing SBAT positions for students. Equally, raising awareness about EPPP and SBATs and engaging parents/carers and employers was a key "bottom line" in terms of progress in 2020:

> *The bottom line really has been around engaging with students, raise awareness of what school-based apprenticeships and traineeships are. Given this time of year, [there's] been a particular focus on actually recruiting and employing, so engaging more broadly with employers and parents and getting students into school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, because we've got a few bottom lines, but the main one is to increase numbers.*

Working across multiple schools

Stakeholders spoke about some unique characteristics of the schools in School B which made implementation more difficult. For example, there was a great deal of variability in terms of school ideology and culture across the school sites, particularly concerning the time and enthusiasm afforded to the EPPP. As outlined in the excerpt below, schools differed in terms of the motivation to pursue SBATs for their students, and it was difficult to change this existing culture:

> *Now School X haven't had a lot of SBATs in the past. They've traditionally pushed kids towards university pathways. I think that's probably the mindset and that's the culture of that area. If we can get into the parents and change their thoughts, I suppose that's going to filter through to the students for sure. You know, at one stage we had more employers offering SBATs than we could fill with students.*

Consequently, the stakeholders needed to consider the needs of each school independently.

Importantly, while there was agreement that parents/carers and local employment opportunities impacted student career aspirations, it was also acknowledged by external stakeholders that senior school leaders and CAs had a large role in "pushing university pathways or pushing trade pathways":

> *From an outsider looking into each of those schools, I think the personal direction that their CA has, has a lot of sway. So you know, if that CA is pushing university pathways or pushing trade pathways, that tends to be the majority of students' interests and direction.*

At the same time, there were notable differences between schools, school systems, and school priorities in the curriculum which impacted EPPP implementation, as expressed by this external stakeholder:

> *I think the school system is a major barrier whether it's the senior executives not wanting students to be out as much as they are on work experience or on other training events. So, until we can see the importance around those experiences for those students and then weigh it up between the importance of the normal curriculum and realise that every student is different, I suppose.*

Creating connections between schools, VET and industry

There was overwhelming agreement from the School B stakeholders that the EPPP had assisted in creating stronger connections between schools, VET and industry. The employment of new positions and the appointment of the Careers Immersion Team (CIT)

1 Report released by Brotherhood of St Laurence in 2019, titled 'Smashing the Avocado Debate'

also meant that existing shortfalls were addressed, and more consistent supports were put in place. One school-based stakeholder said,

> *We're connected more with industry, I believe, and other services or other stakeholders. I can see a much better connection with TAFE for example. Before it was a bit of schools and TAFE, different entities. Now they're working much better together. In saying that too I think TAFE's also stepped up and made someone responsible for schools. So, there is that one person they are contacting now, where before each school had a different contact person. There was no consistency. So that's been a good movement forward for them. I think introducing careers into the whole curriculum, across faculties, that's one of the target areas I've been working on. So in the maths faculty, bringing in a guest speaker to talk about the importance of maths in their line of work.*

In addition, the CIT were able to provide some vital scaffolding between businesses and school communities that was previously not available. This included additional support for businesses who were taking on students for apprenticeships. As one stakeholder noted, more support for students in the workplace is also important in terms of the shared goals for both students and businesses in the cluster:

> *The longer-term goal is really students that become employed, so school-based apprentices and trainees. The completion rates haven't been as strong, so we're there, I guess, to support them throughout. I know that with my schools, that will possibly include a bit more of a focus on supporting them in the workplace. That's just due to the views of the schools that I'm working with and to be honest, I think that will work well because they will mutually help in terms of the employer engagement and I think definitely in terms of completions, that will be a helpful thing.*

By opening channels of communication between schools and businesses, the EPPP was better able to understand the perceived risks and hesitations of businesses to engage students in their workplaces. As one stakeholder suggested, it was imperative that businesses taking "a leap of faith" and employing students as apprentices or trainees were given adequate assistance where and when they needed it most:

> *I've been having feedback from employers that will be of benefit to them as well. I mean, it's quite high risk for [businesses] to put on apprentices early on. It is a bit of a leap of faith going with, well are they going to be good at painting, are they going to be good at concreting etc.? So they're quite happy to feel that there's regular support for them as well, so it's a bit of troubleshooting and support combined.*

The importance of support for young people was reiterated by businesses in the area who were taking on students for apprenticeships and traineeships. As outlined by a business owner below, students essentially need "support behind them" in order for the experience to work from them:

> *Not all of them have got licenses or very few have. There are a few logistical things that needed to have support behind. We can help where we can, but they have to have that support behind them for this to work for them.*

Executive support

Several stakeholders described the clear relationship between support of the EPPP from the school executive, and the overall success of the EPPP. As one stakeholder said, principals were a "key factor", particularly in terms of allowing time in staff workloads, and motivating members to get the most out of the EPPP for their students. "If they support their staff and they give them time to work on things, that's gold".

This viewpoint was echoed by another stakeholder when asked what factors were considered necessary to ensure the success of EPPP in schools. They offered an anecdote about school leadership to illustrate the key components needed to achieve success in the EPPP:

> *The principal there was right on board from day dot. They were all over it. They assigned staff jobs to do and had a really good, cohesive group of careers educators there as well. So it wasn't just all lumped onto the careers adviser. They had a transition adviser which was tremendous. They had a great connection with kids. They were a good organiser. They could pull together kids within a day and have them ready to go. So that makes a difference.*

Another stakeholder identified that careful management by the principal to ensure staff members were 'sharing the load' meant that Cas in existing roles were not unfairly "lumped" with the added responsibilities generated by the EPPP:

> *I've got careers advisers that aren't just careers advisers. They've got other roles in the school. They have to share that responsibility or that time. That's a big issue. It is a full time job, careers adviser. There's no doubt about that. Until it's recognised as that it's a definite hurdle.*

Given the added issues presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, it was also important that school leaders were actively involved in discussions about the pilot, and clearly understood the potential of the EPPP to improve student career pathways. One school-based stakeholder talked about why they thought the principal was motivated to push the EPPP at their school:

> *There's probably a couple of issues. One is they're a local. So, they could see the need for it. Probably even more to the point, they were actually involved in the initial discussions around what this pilot was. So they did know the background information. They were part of the panel that interviewed me for the job.*

Planning implementation with schools

There was great variability in terms of the schools involved in School B. Consequently, the stakeholders needed to consider the requests of each school independently. As one stakeholder suggested, because "each school has its own culture", the EPPP roll-out had to approach each of the schools differently:

> *They're all quite autonomous and whilst there's a system and you can point to the curriculum and all the things that are in common, the reality is there's a lot that's very different. Each school community is different, they're distinct, they do things their way.*

In order to cater for the needs of each of the schools, the CIT developed what was loosely referred to as a "co-design" to roll out the EPPP. This allowed schools to tailor the pilot to their individual needs:

> *For example, one school who have actually got quite large number of SBATs, they'd already done a lot of work in identifying students. They weren't particularly keen to grow that number because to be honest, they're stretched as it is to manage the numbers that they've got. It just meant in terms of expression of interest, we were working with a bit of a finite group. They weren't that interested in promoting more broadly or to reaching out. Whereas [a different school], just by way of numbers, had one SBAT and that student exited to a full-time role. So, the effort's very different there.*

There were also considerations in terms of geographical placement of the schools that meant the process of "co-design" was more appropriate for this cluster:

> *So [one school] actually accesses a whole different range of businesses and a lot of the businesses are small business. [This is] compared to [another school] which taps into a city and the businesses within that city, so it's a regional city. This makes them quite different in terms of their reach.*

Importantly, stakeholders were very aware of the benefits of having a "single focus", and felt supported by other members of the EPPP when problem solving any issues that arise:

> *We've got these amazing resources in our territories. I can reach out to [the SBAT officer] directly. I guess collaborating with the other SBAT mentors, we can draw upon each other as a brains trust because they've been former SBAT officers, so their knowledge of the SBAT system and processes is really thorough.*

Staff roles and responsibilities

A number of stakeholders suggested that, because schools were largely driven by the relationships between teachers and students, it was difficult to communicate outside of these channels:

> *I think the most challenging one was communication through all facets of the school, like from the careers adviser up to the principal and further I suppose. At times that was the frustrating part where you're trying to communicate with people or make phone calls and weren't getting anywhere. I understood why that was the case too. They were all busy and this wasn't high on their priority list sometimes.*

In a different way, stakeholders coming into the school for the first time had a great deal of ground to cover in terms of navigating each school system and working with students they did not know. As a result, external stakeholders found that they were heavily dependent on the existing staff at the schools:

> *A challenging aspect was probably working with the students that I didn't know. So I didn't have a good background knowledge of who they were and what their families were like and so on. That just has got to come back to the person that does know them best, which is the careers adviser. So that's again working in partnership with the local school careers adviser, which is important. I can't step on their toes.*

Evidently, the merger of existing and EPPP staff, who are both working to achieve similar goals, can also be inefficient. As one stakeholder suggested, the EPPP has also clearly shown that CAs at the school have been independently responsible for "massive portfolios". While the CA roles and expertise are admirable, their position as a solo staff member in this area also means they are more hesitant to hand over this responsibility to others. One external stakeholder commented:

> *I just think from an efficiency point of view, there can perhaps be some better use of human resources. I think what's happened over time is we've got people in schools who have just taken on massive responsibilities and portfolios You talk about a careers role, for example, you've got one person responsible for a whole school and they're very proud and they've got significant expertise. A lot of them, their response to that is they want to own it, they want to own that space, it's their responsibility and it's their work.*

Resistance to SBATs

There was feedback from stakeholders that some schools in School B were resistant to SBATs, and instead encouraged students toward a university pathway. As mentioned previously, this pathway for students was not only a driven by the school, but also by parental expectations and "the culture of that area". However, expectations about career pathways undoubtedly had an impact on the success of the EPPP, particularly in terms of SBAT numbers. For example, one stakeholder noted that schools that had an existing culture of SBATs also had high numbers of engaged SBAT students, high visibility and "modelling" for success. Because of this, "it's quite easy to build on those numbers and even to convince students of [how beneficial] they are. Other schools without the high SBAT numbers "[didn't] have that culture or modelling". There was also a view amongst some stakeholders that particular

schools in the cluster were resistant to SBATs because "it drops their teacher numbers". "If the students come to TAFE their student numbers drop which potentially impacts on their teacher numbers. That has always been a problem and the schools are quite open with that".

Supporting businesses in a struggling youth job market

There was some concern from stakeholders that businesses in the School B area were particularly reluctant to take on high school students as apprentices. This was perceived as a result of regional businesses being "a bit set in their ways" but was also related to their motivations to take on this extra commitment. Many businesses were already getting the "supply they needed" with full-time apprentices who had left school. In this way, the "supply and demands" were being met, and as such some businesses could be "really reluctant to try anything different".

As another stakeholder noted that there was also an expectation from trades that young people have their licence and Higher School Certificate:

> *I think back to when I was just leaving high school and the availability of jobs at the end of Year 10 was much higher because I think trades were willing to give young people without a licence and without HSC a bit of a go. But now we've found a lot of trades are expecting students to have their HSC before they start their apprenticeship which is problematic when it comes to age and maturity and things like that.*

In addition, most trades and employers in the area remained quite traditional in terms of their mindset around apprentices and apprenticeship culture:

> *I think those employers that have got previous experience in employing young people or are part of an apprenticeship culture and so on, are pretty au fait with that. But just generally speaking, I think I guess quality of supervision and support for those young people, I think there's still mindsets that employers have… it's like they're providing the opportunity, so young people need to basically fit in with us.*

Given the "leap of faith" that businesses make when employing young people, coupled with the high unemployment rates, there was a tendency for businesses to be certain about the type of employee they are looking for:

> *In essence what we're doing is we're giving you a chance to get a traineeship that will lead into an apprenticeship that will make you a qualified "whatever" that's going to help the community, it's going to enable you to find work in your hometown. So I made it very clear that if you've got a bad attitude, I won't employ you. My little saying that I use on these kids is that we can train for skill but we can't train you for attitude. So if you've got a poor attitude, I can't help you. But if you're willing, you don't need to be the smartest, the brightest, the best but if you're willing then we can work with you.*

There was a movement to change this mentality, led by the SBAT mentor in the area. As outlined above, this included the provision of more support to ensure students and businesses get the most out of initiatives such as the EPPP:

> *There's definitely effort needed and I guess specifically for workplace supervisors, I think training and support for them so they've got the skills to deal with when there are challenges with young people, so they know how to handle it appropriately. We're obviously there in support roles for those employers, so I just think that's an important part of our role as well. I think in some ways the SBAT mentor name is a bit of a misnomer, a little bit limiting. I think those relationships that we have with employers to help them navigate employing young people successfully are really critical as well.*

Equally, there were some tensions evident in conversation concerning the needs of employers versus student/trainees. Given the current lack of SBATs available, along with the low youth employment rates in this area, initiatives like the EPPP "have to meet the needs for employers":

> *If SBATs are going to gain traction in regional areas, it's got to meet the need of employers. In terms of the completion rates for the other employers, looking how those students might transition from the completion of their school-based traineeship to other roles beyond that, these are frontiers that are really untapped.*

Given the pressures posed by the current youth unemployment in the region, there was feedback from stakeholders that more work needed to be done regarding the current "mismatch between student aspiration and actual labour market opportunities". One school-based stakeholder although there are potential SBAT employers out there, "in regional areas there are actual real limits or there are real tangible labour markets and existing job opportunities" that need to be taken into consideration in order to SBAT pilots to be effective.

Support for vulnerable students

There was feedback from stakeholders working with vulnerable young people that the EPPP was placing too much pressure on them. In particular, the enrolment in school-based trainee studies, work experience and school meant students were dealing with a very hectic study load. As one stakeholder noted, while there was very little connection between the school and the school-based traineeships, failure to meet school requirements often unduly impacted their completion of the training, or resulted in N awards for their school subjects. "I understand that they have to be connected [to school], but I think that puts a little bit of pressure on some of the trainees as well".

There was also very little consideration in this model of extraneous factors that might unevenly impact vulnerable young people. As noted by one external stakeholder, some students are often "really great with employers and have everything up to date" with "modules and a set training plan". But if "something happens in their life" and they get behind, they are penalised at the school level, which puts them at a disadvantage. There were added issues in terms of identification, preparation and presentation for traineeships that failed to consider the realities and the extra barriers this presented for vulnerable young people in the community:

> *There's a lot of, you know, even ID and things like that, there's just stuff that a lot of our kids don't have. They need birth certification. They need the 100 points like you would going to a bank, and a lot of these kids haven't even got licenses or anything yet. It ends up being an issue, because when they get it and then they've got to get all their security checks for the host employer, they're scrambling round trying to get documents. We don't get any supplementary funding to provide them with clothes for interviews or anything like that.*

Vulnerable students were also disproportionately disadvantaged in the EPPP due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, COVID-19 had more substantial impacts on those students that are most reliant on support and assistance. As one stakeholder explained, the limited access to schools meant that usual support networks available to vulnerable young people were no longer in operation within the schools. "COVID-19's knocked what I think AES has been doing well for a long time, because we can't even get into the schools".

South West Sydney Schools

Three case study schools, School C, School D, School E, were based in the South West Sydney. There were 5 schools in each of the South West clusters and each case study school represented a different school cluster.

School C

School C is a comprehensive co-educational specialist secondary school (Years 7–12). It has a particular focus on performing arts and is located in a South West Sydney suburb. The school is open to all prospective students in their local drawing area, which attracts approximately 60% of their student intake. Students outside of this area are required to successfully audition to enrol via one of their performing arts disciplines. In relation to NAPLAN, the students perform at a similar level to students from similar backgrounds, except in numeracy, where achievement is below that of similar students. Compared to all Australian students, the school's average is below the national average for reading, writing, spelling and grammar, and well below for numeracy.

This school schedules regular in-house events throughout the year to provide opportunities for students to publicly perform. They also participate in external performance events, including regional and state programs, festivals, and the Schools Spectacular, an annual Australian variety show showcasing the talents of thousands of public school students from across NSW. In addition to the school's specialisation in the performing arts, they have a clear investment in preparing students for a post-school life outside of performing arts, with a focus on SBATs, traineeships, and leveraging community industry connections through their careers program and Secondary Studies Team, which were in place prior to their participation in EPPP. There is a deliberate effort to encourage students to strategically pursue credentials outside, but not necessarily in lieu, of the performing arts, including a program for students to obtain their white card, responsible service of alcohol (RSA), and responsible service of gambling (RSG). These various foci are reflected in students' diverse post-school destinations, according to some school-based interviews, where approximately 30% of students pursue university pathways, 40% pursue vocational education with the view of entering a trade, and others go into retail and hospitality, with a smaller proportion of students who do not pursue any clear pathway.

Executive Leadership and Resourcing

School C is led by a Principal and Leadership Team that includes three Deputy Principals and has one careers adviser. This school has a Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) which focuses on Strategic Direction 1 – Student growth and attainment, Strategic Direction 2 – Lifelong learning, Strategic Direction 3 – High quality teaching.

The SIP has specific initiatives to increase career education opportunities and participation and Vocational Education and Training (VET) uptake. The inclusion of careers education is addressed in the second strategic direction, with clear initiatives around learning and transition plans, future focused learning and workplace partnerships.

How was EPPP implemented at School C?

Overview

According to the principal, this school was "uniquely positioned" for their participation in the EPPP for several reasons. Firstly, the school had a fairly robust careers program in place prior to their involvement in the EPPP, including a "highly efficient Senior [Secondary] Studies Team", and a strong focus on SBATs and industry involvement. Secondly, the school's CA moved into the role of the relieving Head Teacher Secondary Studies, before moving again into the role of HTC for the EPPP. It was at this stage that she began working across multiple school sites. The replacement CA indicated that she entered the CA role "on the very last day of the year" with "no training, no sitting in the position first", and having only completed a portion of the careers course. And thirdly, the deputy principal moved into the role of relieving principal of the school.

The principal initially put her hand up to participate in the EPPP recruitment process, despite their involvement being "almost a surprise". When she was in the deputy principal role, she described herself as "really hands-on" and knowing the students "really well", having "worked with the secondary studies team to move [students] into other pathways". Since becoming the relieving principal, however, she felt "one step removed" and delegated responsibility for liaising with the CIT to the deputy principal. She articulated her new role in the EPPP as "building capacity in our senior studies team and secondary studies team" so they were able to provide targeted support to students transitioning into pathways of their choice. She indicated that she worked "really collaboratively" with the HTC to "make sure things happen for the students". There were several tensions between participants' accounts of the implementation of EPPP, the barriers, and the enablers, chiefly pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of the HTC and the CA, as well as perceptions of the school's preparedness to implement the EPPP.

HTC as enabler: Teacher workload and parental/carer inclusion

The teachers and principal articulated a strong relationship with the HTC, often stating that the school's successful participation in the EPPP was largely due to her competence and proactivity. The principal, for instance, noted that:

> *[the HTC] has worked really hard to make [the unclear components of EPPP] transparent across the school. She's worked with senior execs, she's worked with Head Teachers, she's worked with the Senior Studies Team, and then she also pushed information out to parents.*

The principal similarly recognised the work of the Secondary Studies Team and CA. The teachers articulated a strong relationship with the HTC, stating that they "have been fortunate and blessed that we've got [the HTC], who is just amazing", and that they had been "insulated" from the potential increased workload that the EPPP may have introduced, "because we have [the HTC]".

There was a broad perception that the HTC was critical to the implementation of the EPPP, having a high degree of correspondence with parents/carers across multiple digital platforms, including Facebook and Microsoft Teams. As a result, the CA noted that this has meant "there is probably a little bit more getting through to parents than there has is the past", and "there has been a lot more promotion through to our parents". Indeed, parent/carer participants indicated that "a lot came through on the Facebook page" on careers, with one mother commenting that the careers advice her daughter recently received was more appropriate compared to her older daughter's experience years prior: "this time with my [younger daughter], [the school] listened to what I've said as a parent, listened to what my child's also said, where she wants to go".

Organisational communication as barrier: "The missing link"

Despite the increased correspondence and inclusion of parents and carers in the provision of careers advice, several challenges also emerged in relation to the HTC role, specifically around organisational communication. The CA, for instance, felt that she and other CAs were not notified of the information posted by the HTC to online platforms, "and sometimes we're bypassed". In this account, the CA became embroiled in situations she was not aware of because she was never contacted, indicating that there was a "missing link" in correspondence:

> *We've got parents not ringing the school to speak to the CA, they're speaking to the EPPP person instead of the CA, and sometimes you get the office ring and say such and such is on work experience, or such and such's parent has rung about this, and I have no idea what they're talking about. Because they've bypassed me and they've gone to the head teacher.*

The HTC worked across multiple school sites, which seemed to exacerbate these challenges, as the CA often also found it difficult to get in touch and work with them. "I don't know ... which days of the week I will be able to see her or access her. I don't know which days she will be at my school or the other schools".

The CA also described how requests to organise events were "coming up at the last minute": "like, I've even had emails in the last two days saying, 'this project is online, get kids together in a room so they can watch this'". She noted that organising the students for events often involved a combination of Facebook posts, emails, and moving between classes to talk to them face-to-face. She explained that this was not only time consuming, but often needed to happen in an ostensibly unreasonable timeframe: "It's a lot of legwork, but the timeframe between a project getting off the ground and me having to hand out notes and return them is really, really tight".

For example, when YES+ was introduced, she "was given three days to get 300 notes out to kids and back again". As a result, students in the school missed out on these opportunities because she "couldn't get it all done in three days". In another example, the CA was informed of a workshop happening the next day at her school, and that she needed to put forward four students' names to attend. Later, she discovered there were 20 spaces, so she "ran around" to find more students, conscious that her school would look less committed to the event compared to other schools.

The principal also touched on issues with communication, noting, "some things tended to get maybe a little bit lost or miscommunicated or over-communicated – like you would get information from three or four people about the same thing".

Careers adviser as enabler

The CA was a highly engaged and proactive presence in the school. She was deeply involved with students across all stages and worked closely with the Learning Advisory Team. This proactivity included initiatives pre-existing the EPPP that she ran or helped to run, as well as helping to implement the EPPP itself. She provided staged, targeted support for all students, depending on their

year level. This support was reiterated by Stage 5 and 6 students in particular, who noted how often they receive information about casual work opportunities and are able to ask her questions, no matter how trivial. As one Stage 5 student said, "she seems eager to help people in what they want to do, in their job careers". Some Stage 6 students did note the absence of career advice when they sought it; however, it is unclear if this relates specifically to the CA's absence.

In the CA's account, her labour to implement aspects of the EPPP was often additional and possibly invisible. She was particularly involved in establishing SBATs independently from the EPPP. "I have created a diverse range of SBATs, but that's been me ... I've found them for kids and applied for them for kids and worked with the students and their families to get them". She noted that her relationship with the SBAT mentor was limited, possibly due to the scale of the role: "She's [SBAT mentor] supposed to be here every Friday. I think she's got a whole lot of schools that she deals with". As the SBAT mentor was required to interview each student applying for an SBAT, and SBATs were popular in her school, the CA recognised the need for a mechanism to mediate this process:

> *I limit the number of students that I make available to her because I vet them first. I put them through a process first and then I try to only give the best candidates, or the candidates that I feel are going to move on to the next process.*

COVID-19 as barrier

Almost every interview contained some reference to COVID-19, more often than not as a barrier to the implementation of the EPPP. A number of students noted the ways in which "there hasn't been much to do [with careers events] due to COVID-19" (Stage 4), while other students noted the cancellation of professional placements in 2020 (Stage 6).

Annual careers events were either cancelled or innovated upon so they could go ahead in line with new COVID-19 guidelines, though there were mixed feelings about the efficacy of these new events. One teacher noted, for instance, that while COVID-19 certainly introduced challenges, "necessity is the mother of invention". They continued, "Like, subject selection night wasn't actually a big event in the hall. It was a series of online activities, which I actually think was much better". Conversely, the principal noted that their careers expo, normally "in a central place and we have ...a buzz ... a totally different ballgame", was online in 2020, but she was "not sure about the benefit of that". The CA also noted how she was "severely limited" due to COVID-19, as industry could not visit the school and students could not be taken to mock interviews. Some participants noted an air of despondence amongst students, with one teacher noting: "I think this year [2020] is a particularly tough year for the kids in terms of, 'what's my future going to look like'".

How was EPPP perceived by school-based participants?

Principal

The principal was optimistic about the school's participation in the EPPP, emphasising that they are already highly engaged with careers events, activities, and opportunities, but there is always room to improve. The EPPP symbolised an opportunity to expand the school's focus on careers, and the principal commented that it was largely successful. Of note was that the EPPP lacked clarity in some areas, particularly as the school was initially becoming involved: "I think initially it was a little bit unclear what the components of the particular program were… the lines of communication and the delegation of particular roles and responsibilities wasn't necessarily as clear at the beginning". However, the school "made it work" and many of these challenges "get resolved as you implement things, I guess". She noted that, as a result, their students have doubtlessly benefitted from the increased opportunities, citing an increase in the number of students undertaking SBATs, as well as "80-odd kids in Year 10 [who] went out to YES+. That hasn't happened before". Though the principal articulated herself as one-step removed from the students, she reiterated the positive feedback she had heard from her students directly, particularly around their relationship with the HTC.

Careers adviser

The CA indicated several tensions around the implementation of the EPPP, characterising it as "unique, valuable". and "underutilised". She said it was invaluable in terms of students' access to careers advice and increased careers opportunities. She also noted how the additional funding through the pilot enabled the provision of careers events and support that they otherwise simply could not afford. However, many of her students missed out on opportunities due to the inequitable distribution of resources between schools. Indeed, equity was a key theme here. For example, she cited how her school is more than double the size of other schools in her EPPP cluster, but each school was allocated the same number of places in the EDGE workshops, 40 students, "so I have to say no to a humongous amount of kids, just because my school's bigger, and I have to decide who gets to do things and who doesn't get to do them".

She emphasised the value of the EDGE workshops and YES+, as well as their popularity amongst students. She also noted some challenges with the implementation of YES+: "the mix of occupations was not correct", and resulted in students missing out on the opportunity. This was due to the most popular career choices for boys at their school—carpenter and electrician—being placed in one group. As a result, student demand exceeded the number of available places: they "had 300 applicants and 75 kids got chosen, but only four out of all my applicants got into that course". Additionally, she noted that the RIEP Officer had not organised for trades to visit the school as they had at other schools in the cluster.

There appeared to also be concerns where the opportunities that the school had created, or industry contacts they had made, were "scooped up" by the EPPP and made available to other schools. This participant noted that, while the EPPP could possibly transform these opportunities to make them bigger and better in the future, "this year my school didn't get any benefit from those contacts".

Teachers

Teachers were very supportive of and optimistic about the EPPP in their school, articulating it as "supportive", "helpful", "personalised", "beneficial", and full of "opportunities". In particular, they noted that the popularity of YES+ "was ridiculous", with "four to five" more students applying than places that were available. They noted that students' feedback was "overwhelmingly positive", with many parents getting "quite upset" when their child could not participate. Similarly, one teacher emphasised how students "loved" the EDGE workshops, while another noted the impact of the SBAT mentor increasing the number of students interested in completing an SBAT.

The teachers described themselves as highly collaborative and that this was key to the implementation of the EPPP, as they would work together between faculties to strengthen career opportunities for students and modify their classwork to be more in-line with a careers agenda. In their accounts, they felt particularly supported to implement the EPPP, as the HTC and SBAT mentor were not only valuable resources, but protected teachers from unreasonable workloads.

Parents/carers

Parent/carer participants were largely positive about the EPPP, though they did not have a lot of first-hand knowledge about it. Instead, they learned about it through conversations with their children or information posted to social media platforms without necessarily understanding that it was related to the EPPP. One parent's son participated in YES+, while another was considering an SBAT. Both parents had participated in a Zoom chat with their children involving industry, which may have related to either online subject selection or a careers expo, but the parents could not clarify. The parents noted that the range of opportunities and options provided by the school broadly, including the EPPP, were of particular use to their children, who had a diverse range of interests. One parent noted that the online events and TAFE testers "helped really narrow down where [her daughter] wanted to put her focuses for Year 11 and 12", while another noted that the online event was informative for her as a parent, as she would learn about the logistics of certain educational trajectories and be able to support her child more effectively as a result.

In addition to providing their children with more clarity around their career interests and prospects, one parent noted how the school provided more appropriate and targeted support for her younger daughter compared to her older daughter's previous experience:

> *I found with [her eldest daughter] they were trying to push her on a career path I didn't feel suited her, where this time around with [her younger daughter], they've listened to what I've said as a parent, listened to what my child's also said, where she wants to go.*

Students

Across Stages 4, 5 and 6, students articulated mixed feelings about the EPPP and the provision of careers advice more broadly. Understanding of the EPPP pilots seemed to increase with Year level, where Stage 4 were unsure about the specific pilots and whether they had participated. Students in Stage 5 and 6 were more involved in the EPPP, but opinions of the pilots ranged from positive to neutral to negative. Students were mostly familiar with YES+, the EDGE workshops, SBATs, and the Digital careers toolbox. However, students sometimes could not recall the names of the pilots, could not recall much about their participation, and could not disaggregate or differentiate between the EPPP initiatives and the school's pre-existing initiatives.

A number of Stage 5 students had used elements of the Digital careers toolbox in class through guided instruction from their teacher. Some students, particularly in Stage 5, had not returned to use it again, while one Stage 6 student did not understand the purpose of Skillsroad in particular: "they kind of explained what they were doing, but it wasn't really clear", continuing that "we were just watching them clean instruments that came out of theatres, and I was like ... 'okay'". One student, however, found Skillsroad useful to explore careers in greater depth, because it was more useful to him than only reading about careers. Though, he articulated limitations to the platform:

> *It is a website, it's not like human-to-human interaction. Obviously it would be a lot better to speak one-on-one with someone, like, you don't get that same experience. But yeah, other than that, yes, it was as detailed and thorough as it can be through a device.*

A number of Stage 6 students also indicated that they found LifeLauncher from the Digital careers toolbox useful, because it "accurately told you your strengths", and usefully linked it to relevant occupations and salaries. However, they were unsure if they had used the other elements of the Digital careers toolbox.

There were mixed opinions about YES+, with students from Stages 5 and 6 participating. One Stage 5 student cited YES+ as "hands down" the best resource for him: "It showed me three courses and what they all do in a hands-on way. I don't think any other program that I've had has been as useful as that one, because it's just given me real life examples". The Stage 6 students who participated in YES+ had a mix of opinions. One student enjoyed it, explaining in detail his experience of learning how to tile. Other students questioned the suitability of it, stating there was not enough information in each session, or "it was a bit all over the place". One Stage 6 student eagerly participated, thinking "that they were going to cover a larger range of medicine and psychology" but "ended up getting none of that".

The EDGE workshops were attended by many of the students; however, they did not appear to be popular in students' accounts, contrary to other participants' impressions. The Stage 5 students described it as "a bit boring because it was just a slideshow most of the time ... I found it a bit repetitive", with another student describing the haircuts and makeup as "almost like bribes". Similarly,

several Stage 6 students described it as "so boring", with another elaborating, "I have a job, but ... even if I didn't have a job, I'd look at the way they're presenting. It just doesn't even motivate [me] to do it".

Influences on student aspirations in School C

Family

For most students, parents/carers represented a significant source of career advice and support, which was expressed by the principal, CA, teachers, parents/carers, and students. As one teacher noted, "I just think family is one of their first… the kids will ask their parents, what should I do? The family is going to be the ones there supporting them and their choices". Indeed, a number of students reported seeking parental advice of their own volition, as their parents/carers had knowledge or experience in a field relevant to the student's interests. At times, students' independent research and familial support replaced formal school support. One Stage 6 student aspiring to enrol in university noted that he does not take advantage of school resources at all, as "I do a lot on my own. My own research. Like, on what I want to do". This research involved looking at university websites and the programs they offer, and he emphasised that "I haven't really used any school resources to get there". His independent research was supplemented by advice he sought from his mother, which he articulated was reliable because, "she went to uni and she used to be a lecturer and stuff, so she knows the ins and outs. So, I'll always talk to her about uni because she'll explain it to me and break it down". Tailored advice made available by a family member was of more use to this student than school resources, such that he ignored those school resources.

Similarly, other Stage 6 students regularly sought the advice of their parents/carers, drawing on their industry experience and connections. One student, who wanted to "get an apprenticeship for being an electrician or plumber" noted that he would seek career advice from his father "because he's been working for a while in the industry and I'd just get information and ask him what sort of pathway is suitable for me and what direction to go to". Another student commented that his stepdad's father "was one of the bosses for one of the biggest manufacturers in construction in New Zealand". His stepdad became a key resource for career and educational advice, adding that "he just told me what perfect pathways I should go to and he just named electrician, plumber or concreter. So, I was like yeah, all right, I may as well look into it".

In addition to functioning as sites of advice, some parents/carers developed targeted strategies intended to support their children explore their career interests. One mother reflected on her daughter's (Stage 5) interest in cooking and the practical strategies employed at home to help her daughter explore this interest:

> *I allowed her free rein in the kitchen whenever she wanted. ... I went out and bought chef-quality pans for her, just two. I said, "If you can prove to me that you can look after and maintain them and that kind of stuff and that's the path you want to go on, I'll go and buy you, for Christmas, the rest of the stuff" ... But hey, it worked. It gave her a goal to work towards and she worked towards it.*

Similarly, one Stage 6 student interested in psychology commented on his mother's plans to bring him to her workplace, a hospital: "My mum. She's a clinical nurse. She was planning on taking me around this hospital and stuff and trying to get me to talk to psychology people around".

Families not only supported students to explore their existing personal and professional interests, but also co-constituted students' desires to pursue a specific vocation and educational trajectory. The influence families had on co-constituting students' educational and career aspirations took a number of forms. These included: families' experiences of and attitudes towards education, which formed a set of normative expectations around the relationship between education and career success; and students' familiarity with, and historical proximity to, their relatives' careers.

The principal noted how many of their students' parents "didn't necessarily have good experiences of schooling", such that the "parental expectations sometimes affect their [students'] choice of career paths". Indeed, she indicated that many of their students were the first in their family to complete Year 12. The CA also recounted how she "had a couple of kids who said, 'my parents won't let me not go to uni'" because "going to university is the only way you're going to end up with a good job that's going to be sustainable". She continued,

> *[parents don't understand] that [students] can end up owning their own business and they can build from there, and they will be earning good money sooner [than if they attended university], by the same time if we're looking at two kids aged 22.*

One student in Stage 5 demonstrated some cognizance of this broad expectation to pursue higher education, stating,

> *most students feel so pressured to go to uni because it's such a thing. It's like, go to uni. They don't have to go to uni to be successful, but a lot of people are under that impression that you do have to.*

Multiple students across Stages 4, 5, and 6 expressed an interest in going to university, some of whom had a broad or specific interest in a topic, field, or career. For instance, one student (Stage 6) wanted to pursue something in social science, rather than the "sciency science", while another Stage 6 student wanted to specifically pursue psychology. Others, however, did not articulate their desire to attend higher education through a career aspiration or interest. One Stage 5 student said, "I do know that I want to go to uni and study something, but I'm just not really sure what yet ... I guess nothing else really appeals to me ... I don't know, I guess".

Some students expressed an interest in a career similar or identical to that of a family member. In one instance, a Stage 6 student described how she had "always" wanted to work in childcare and received a lot of career advice from her mother, who also worked in childcare. She described her desire to work in childcare as "just following in their [mother's] footsteps". Similarly, one Stage 4 student aspired to become a doctor, noting that her "family has a generation of doctors and I just want to help people". One Stage 5 student interested in carpentry articulated a pragmatic approach to planning his career trajectory, thinking "about the long-term-gevity" of his career. His plan was contingent on his oldest brother, whom he wanted to eventually start a business with:

> *My oldest brother is in an apprenticeship. He's a landscaper and if I did a carpentry trade, those two things would go well together and I'd like to go into business with him and stuff like that. And I feel like it wouldn't be that hard or farfetched to create a sustainable business with my older brother.*

Many of the students' career and educational aspirations were articulated through their families' understanding and expectations around the value of education, as well as students' proximity to the professions held by family. As the CA noted, "a lot of them, I think they get jobs based on who they know". The centrality of these familial practices suggests that the socio-economic location of the family co-constitute the conditions under which students' aspirations are formed and supported. Some participants problematised the centrality of family in students' decision-making practices around their careers. The CA expressed a concern that students end up desiring a career that their parents are in, only because "this is some of the things that their parents do". For example, "there's so many kids who think they want to be a social worker. I don't think they know what a social worker does".

Cost of education and income

There was concern amongst a few participants on the financial implications for pursuing specific educational pathways. One teacher indicated that recent changes in Higher Education policy resulting in increased debt, particularly for humanities-based subjects, presented barriers for students: "For a lot of our students, even the idea of paying your course fees and stuff like that can be very daunting for them". She also commented that her students were very aware of these fee changes, and that to pursue a degree in the humanities as many might like to would not be feasible. Indeed, one Stage 5 student drew attention to this very point: "with uni comes a hefty HECS debt that as soon as you start, kick start life, decide what you want to do, boom, $50,000 or plus debt".

Another teacher noted that the cost of education may affect students who were not as "financially well off" and, as a result, pursue career pathways on the basis of earning an income sooner. She noted,

> *[a lot of my current students] are already working to support their families and providing that income. So, for them, their main goal is "let's get an income" instead of "let's go get a further education". So further education isn't necessarily the first thought for my kids.*

The CA also noted that "how much they think they can earn" is a key factor that shapes students' career aspirations. Indeed, several students across Stages 4 and 5 indicated that income was in some way factored into their career aspirations, citing "good pay", "good benefits", and "not earning much".

School

While the school specialises in the performing arts, they also have a clear commitment to encouraging students to explore careers and educational pathways outside of the arts. The school made a deliberate effort to introduce practical initiatives that would expand students' career prospects, including encouraging students to obtain their White Card, making a Responsible Service of Alcohol and Responsible Service of Gambling course available, and a specific focus on SBATs prior to their involvement in the EPPP. These were successful initiatives, according to teachers.

Which aspects of EPPP were perceived most positively at School C?

Most notably, this school experienced a big increase in the number of students participating in SBATs and TAFE courses, as observed by the principal: "it was 80-odd kids in Year 10 went out to YES+. That hasn't happened before". This was reiterated by the teachers, one who noted that the number of her students engaging in work experience and apprenticeships had increased from approximately four to 12 in the last year.

Despite students' mix of views pertaining to each pilot, one notable theme was students' increased sense of clarity around their career and educational trajectories. Having access to a number of resources exposed students to careers they had not thought about before and careers they had a budding interest in. As the CA put it,

> *Based on doing TAFE YES+, it was a deciding factor that yes, I like this, no I hated this, yes I like this, now I've got two choices, or I hated all three, I'm going to scrub them off my list.*

Indeed, she provided one example of a girl who recently experienced this:

> *One girl, she went and did hair and beauty and she said I thought that I wanted to be a hairdresser, but now that I've done the beauty side, I know I want to be a beautician. So then it's being able to explore and change their mind.*

One parent also noted that the new careers activities in the school more broadly had encouraged her daughter to be more decisive. This decisiveness was reflected in some students' reflections on their experiences. One Stage 6 student noted that she actually was

not interested in the topic she thought she was interested in after attending YES+, and another stated, "I did the YES+ thing to see what area I'd like more because I'm kind of just interested in everything".

Which aspects of EPPP were challenging at School C?

Communication and clarity

Organisational communication and clarity around what the EPPP involved were challenges for the school, both in the initial stages of the EPPP and throughout the year. The principal noted on several occasions how the pilot lacked clarity in the early stages. She stated, "I think it could have been clearer and packaged up a little better". Communication was a key problem here, and she noted that messages were lost, miscommunicated, or over-communicated, possibly because "the delegation of particular roles and responsibilities wasn't necessarily clear at the beginning". One particular problem was that the school did not know what YES+ really was and what the mentor would be doing. Issues with communication were no more prevalent than in the CA's account of the pilot, who would often be charged with organising an event or managing a situation that she was made aware of at the last minute. This also resulted an increased workload for the CA, who was often engaging in additional labour so students could participate in events.

Inequitable resourcing

The inequitable distribution of resources between schools was another challenge for this school. This school had more than double the number of student enrolments compared to other schools in the cluster, but it was not clear whether these numbers had been factored into the distribution of resources. The CA noted, "My big issue is I was limited by how many kids I could put in [the EDGE workshops]. My school is 1100, the other three schools in my EPPP patch, they're all under 500. Now we are all being given the same resource". For example, many students interested in EDGE workshops were told they could not attend, as there were far fewer places available for this school as a proportion of their student cohort. Additionally, the RIEP Officer (in particular) and SBAT mentor (to an extent) seemed to have less involvement in this school compared to the other schools they were allocated.

Suitability of resources

Another challenge related to the suitability of resources and calibrating these resources to meet, or generate, student interest. In at least one instance, the CA noted that many students missed out on YES+ because the two most popular professions for boys at her school—carpenter and electrician—were put in the same session with limited student places. Approximately 300 students between schools applied for 75 available places, but only four students from School C got in. Other students noted how the resources made available to them were extraneous to their interests. A number of students also found the resources too "boring", with one Stage 5 student stating that the EDGE workshops were "a bit repetitive" and "lacking that bit of oomph", and a number of Stage 6 students reiterating these sentiments. Additionally, one Stage 6 student did not find it useful when people come into the school to discuss careers: "All of us hate that. It's not that good. I don't listen half the time". In another exchange between Stage 6 students, they reflected on feeling overwhelmed by being constantly asked about their career ambitions, where the provision of so much career advice with little targeted support exacerbated this stress:

> *I feel like just the concept of a teacher asking you what you want to do next in life and stuff and asking you how you want to get there is kind of daunting, you know? It's a scary feeling when someone's asking you how you're doing it, how you want to do it. What do you want to do and stuff like that. It's intimidating. ... what's your future? That's such a big question and me figuring it out is an even bigger question.*

The perceptions of external stakeholders: School C

Impact of COVID-19

Stakeholders in School C spoke about the impacts of COVID-19 on the implementation of the EPPP pilot. In many ways, the roll-out of the pilot suffered more in this area than in other clusters. This was partly due to active cases in the area, along with the added difficulties of finding suitable placements in health fields for the large population of students. As one stakeholder communicated, COVID-19 took away opportunities for so many students who wanted to pursue placements in healthcare, and health support:

> *The most difficult part of my job at the moment is reaching employers for students that are interested. Knowing you've got a fabulous student and very limited in the way that you can broker an employment opportunity for them and the student…Any one of the number of students I'm working with that are interested in aged care. I ring them on a monthly basis but they are unable due to COVID-19 to have work experience happening so they can't even consider a school-based traineeship in that area under the current circumstances. It's similar with sport, students who want to work in the sporting field, again, you've got to explain to them that it's traditionally hard but this year there's an extra level of complexity because of COVID-19.*

Other stakeholders spoke about the complexities in terms of making connections in a purely online environment in 2020. Ultimately, this made it more difficult to network and make the contacts needed to generate student placements. One stakeholder said, "You can't underestimate the value of taking the time to meet with someone in person. Not everyone is comfortable with the online meeting. I feel you can break down so many more barriers if you can meet in person".

As another stakeholder explained, COVID-19 restrictions also made it virtually impossible to connect with parents and carers, which was identified as a key area of focus for School C:

> *We wanted parents to have more of an awareness of what the students were doing at TAFE and what the opportunities were. We're very aware that in terms of decision-making, career decision-making, that the parents play a pivotal role in that with their children.*

Feedback from many schools in this cluster regarding access to the internet during COVID-19 suggested that much of the information about the EPPP was not reaching families in their homes:

> *If we look at the breakdown of who was accessing internet during the COVID-19 learning, the COVID-19 education at home, there were countless kids who were not connected, who were not learning. We were saying - feeding that back up the line, we were saying our kids don't necessarily have internet at home.*

School policy and operations

For several stakeholders, implementation of the EPPP was impacted by the lack of consideration by EPPP personnel regarding basic school policy, along with operational factors, that need to be adhered to in school contexts. This included Working with Children Checks:

> *Even something as simple as saying to people whatever you think the policy says, school principals will not allow anyone onsite unless they have a working with children check. We have been saying that until we're blue in the face, and we still get questions.*

The feedback from stakeholders regarding the lack of school systems knowledge indicates that preliminary consultation may be needed in the first instance. This would eliminate the need for further demands of school personal and administration:

> *There are things that we shouldn't be spending our time on, but we do. Whether it's talking about working with children checks or whether it's explaining to people that any access to our students you need to check with the boss [school principal]. Also, the expectations around turnarounds for schools is difficult. The number of times that we've been asked can you respond to this in a 24-hour turnaround, and they tell us that today, they ask that question today.*

In many ways, the access issues with the EPPP personnel were more noticeable as a result of COVID-19. However, as one stakeholder explained, there needed to be more understanding of what was happening on the ground terms of managing COVID-19, as it meant many aspects of the EPPP initiatives could not go ahead:

> *The leads of the pilots are thinking that they can do particular things within schools, [but they're] not considering that the schools are already under considerable pressure, and on top of that you've got COVID-19. But bottom line is [what have people being doing] in those schools? With parents, for example. We're like have you not listened to us? Do you not understand that parents can't come onsite? Do you not understand that our community has had massive issues with internet connections?*

Another stakeholder suggested that this broad understanding of school policy and procedure extended to businesses and training organisations working with schools to deliver the EPPP. For example, students transitioning to VET study one day a week, or working on traineeships outside the school, were still students, and there needed to be greater understanding of the levels of care expected for a school student:

> *That there will be times when they may have an exam or an excursion that falls on either their work or TAFE day that can't be rescheduled because it forms part of their assessment process. They are young people so if – an example, even if they have placement in a retail fast food industry that's open 24/7, our students can't be there till late on a school night… and just to be aware that they are under 18. That if they don't show up for work that they contact the school because something could have happened between their front door and the employer's front door.*

Too much administration and too little support

As noted above, there were unrealistic expectations regarding workload for the EPPP, particularly in schools that were already strained in terms of time and resources. One internal stakeholder talked about how this additional administration work was not documented, which added another invisible layer and burden to workloads:

> *There are too many things that are inefficient - that are blocks within themselves because you have to go through several layers - that only add to administrative stress, that adds to the potential damage in relationship with our schools. Bottom line, I want my students to have access to those opportunities, but everything that adds to stress for schools in how that operates is a problem.*

While there was an understanding that information regarding student attendance to the EPPP needed to be recorded, this created a great deal of administration. Given the number of students in the School C cluster, the administration work was treble that of other smaller clusters:

> *The administration of the program was very time-consuming. It was just the logistics of developing the program, communicating with the schools, making sure the kids had, and the teachers had, rooms to go do. That they had all the equipment that they needed. That they turned up – because of COVID-19 the schools needed their attendance back every day. There was quite a bit of, from a logistics and administrative point of view, a lot of reporting.*

There was a suggestion that the EPPP personnel did not allow participating schools an opportunity to 'figure out' the pilot, particularly given the added pressures caused by COVID-19. Importantly, rather than inundate schools with increasing bureaucracy and reporting, there needed to be more space given to cluster schools to work out what was working, and what was not:

> *The system needs to give us the freedom to just get on with things, to get things rolling without the constraints of bureaucracy and reporting and tell us how many people took part in a program and how many minutes you spent on it, which was my joke right at the beginning of the year with how many minutes did you spend on this. It's extraordinary.*

There were undoubtedly increasing demands placed on staff as a result of the EPPP evaluation. However, there was some feedback to suggest how the evaluators may decrease the workload for school staff. For example, one stakeholder suggested that emails be delivered in formats that are more functional and practical for staff: "I can't tell you how many zip files for different things we have received". Stakeholders working within schools suggested that the solution to extra administration is often very simple. Again, it requires the EPPP personnel to have an understanding of the systems in place to ensure less administration is absorbed by school staff:

> *If you want us to promote this to our schools, this is what we need. We need you to put this in simple English in a short two-to-three sentences maximum with a nice little tile that we can use for Facebook, like give us a PNG file, so that will come up as a nice little square in their Facebook post with a two-sentence lead in - hey, training award, come and watch, or whatever.*

Ultimately, while the work fell on schools, the constant requests for information regarding the pilot left many school staff concerned that they had "pushed the relationship with school staff and parents":

> *We don't have time in our professional learning, in our staff meetings and so on to publicise and promote every single thing that comes into a school. So, what happens is… one of my schools said the teachers won't know about this, they're not going to do this survey, we'll tell you that right now. It's not because they're not good teachers, it's just their priorities day to day are very different to the priorities of the pilots.*

Overall, there was concern that schools had not been adequately briefed or involved in some key areas of planning and implementation of the EPPP. This included the basic feedback about the language and terms used in the survey material:

> *Look, we were called to a meeting once and I was under the impression that they wanted us to give feedback on the survey that the kids were going to do. So, I prepared my notes, because I had lots of things to say about the survey. Then I was told that's already gone through several stakeholders and through steering committees. They did not involve us at all, because there were issues around what was being asked. I had a look at the questions that went through TAFE, and even that - there were some questions that I went no, that's wrong. Or the language was wrong. The words, just the vocab in some cases...have thrown kids.*

The SBAT mentor

The SBAT mentor role was viewed as a great success in terms of engaging students in School C. Despite the disruption caused by COVID-19, there were still opportunities to connect with young people seeking a SBAT and connect them to businesses in the area. A key to success in this role was "getting the opportunity to know students" and matching them with the right business, "So, when I'm talking to an employer, I can talk to them about – I know what you're after. Okay. I've got the student".

Still, perhaps the greatest impact offered by the emerging role of the SBAT mentor was their ability to identify any issues on the ground that may have been missed before. As outlined below, the provision of one-on-one guidance also meant any issues between students and employers were identified early, and students could "get back on track":

> *If an employer is struggling with a student we can have a discussion about how we work around it. If it's in the workplace we need to refer that back to training services. But it may be something if – yeah, just having a conversation with them at school which is what has happened previously.*

Individual student needs

Other stakeholders emphasised the importance of understanding the needs of individual students, rather than just recording data on "how many students took part in particular programs":

> *For me, the program isn't about how many students took part in particular programs. For me, that's only one aspect…. It's a numbers game, but for me it's not about the numbers, it's about the child, or the children, and how we can help them on their journey so that they make a successful transition from school to work or to training or to further education.*

Importantly, while extra funding from the EPPP has meant there are more opportunities to focus on individual students and success, there was a view from stakeholders that this needed to be brought back into focus. As one stakeholder argued, "The major point

of everything that we're doing is about that child who has reengaged with their schooling, with their education, who sees a pathway in front of them, whose sister says I don't recognise my brother, this is amazing".

Creating connections between schools, VET and industry

A further positive outcome of the EPPP for the School C related to the strengthening of working relationships between the schools and training organisations. One stakeholder said that "the relationships that I have with TAFE, they're growing" and the collaboration and planning the EPPP offered between training organisations and schools had really lifted the opportunities for students. There was a great deal more discussion about what students want out of VET, and how the EPPP can better cater for the needs of students transitioning to VET, which made for exciting future possibilities. "[TAFE are] happy to do so many things with us and all of that will play into next year now that COVID-19 restrictions are lifting".

The additional support from the EPPP also meant many students could access specialised care and support:

> *I can give an example with a student that we're currently working with. Feedback from the employer is that they can see he's struggling in his maths and we've reached out to see what support that the school can provide whether that be through their homework centre, or a little bit of support from the maths faculty to support them in that area.*

Teachers in School C also reported positive stories from students regarding their TAFE experiences. As outlined in the excerpt below, students are "talk(ing) about what they did at TAFE, including 'kids who weren't previously interested in stuff'":

> *Some of the CIT teachers said, oh, they've come back to school and all they can talk about is what they did at TAFE. They come back and they're full of information and excitement about what they did at TAFE. I can't honestly say that I heard anything really negative.*

There were many stories of successful collaboration for members of the CIT in School C. As one stakeholder noted, there was a culture among the CIT and other drivers of the EPPP pilots to "share the wins" and recognise the efforts of the whole team in student success stories, as well reach out for support for any challenging situations. There was also openness among team members and staff working on different pilots to assist and offer their expert advice:

> *One [SBAT mentor has] taken the approach of working with bigger companies and sourcing multiple vacancies through that company. Whereas I've taken the angle of working more on the individual students. Because my experience is what happens in [the] South West [is] you can promote a vacancy, [but] the students won't always take it. It's got to be something they want to do. So, I didn't want to burn bridges as far as selling something to an employer not knowing whether I had the quality of student to offer them.*

Ultimately, the success of collaborative efforts in School C could be seen clearly "on the ground". As one stakeholder explained, it was this collaboration, teamwork and enthusiasm that essentially drove the pilot forward. This was clear when staff were assessing numbers of students involved, as those schools that were the most collaborative, enthusiastic, and had engaged executive staff members, "that in itself actually dictated to some degree the numbers that we got from the schools".

Supporting disadvantaged young people

There were several conflicting discussions from stakeholders regarding the wider ideology of the EPPP, particularly in terms of the ultimate aims and desired outcomes pilots like the EPPP should bring to school communities. However, there was recognition from all stakeholders that a very large group of young people "don't know what they want to do", and this cohort needed to be targeted in the EPPP.

> *The focus was on trying to get young people into SBAT apprenticeships and forward thinking in terms of what they might do with their training, and that really covers huge cohorts in schools. There's obviously a number of young people who have already decided they want to go to university and their parents want them to go to uni and that's where they're going. But there's also a very large group we recognised of young people who don't know what they want to do, don't really want to go to university. Or their parents want them to go to university, but they don't want to go to university.*

In broadening the scope and reach of student participation, stakeholders were hopeful that more students would be given more opportunities to consider their future careers.

> *The main difference from a funding point of view between standard YES and YES+ is that standard YES we just get money for the skills team delivery, so the vocational delivery. So [what] that local customisation looked like in our program was that we were able to have an L&N teacher as a mentor on the program who, because the students were moving from vocation to vocation to vocation, [they could stick] with them the whole way.*

At the same time, it was also recognised that the EPPP needed to work harder to be more inclusive, and allow opportunities for disadvantaged groups at school:

> *There are those students who do come from disadvantaged backgrounds, either low socio-economic, or Aboriginal, or from a CALD background. What we tried to do when we were developing the guidelines was to broaden the scope so we could be more inclusive of the young people who were in our local schools.*

While there were steps to make the EPPP more inclusive, the response from stakeholders was that more needed to be done in this area, beyond localised support systems, and towards more inclusive practice:

> *In terms of support services, I'd have to say that I would like to improve that component of the program. I think sometimes students with disability, students from behaviour schools, from Aboriginal backgrounds, from CALD background, sometimes they're not offered the opportunity. So we've gone from having cohorts of kids who have behaviour problems, to maybe those kids not being offered the opportunity.*

Travel options as a barrier

Ultimately, the inaccessibility of transport impacted student engagement with the EPPP and was "a huge, huge issue". In some cases, students had no access to a car, or the financial means to get their own licence and car. Many were dependant on public transport, which was often unreliable:

> *If you look at the bus timetables for some of our local areas, or talk to anyone in the community, there are issues with how those buses arrive or not arrive. For many parents as well. I've spoken to students who don't have a significant other in their immediate circle who are able to legally take their students [to apply for a] driver's licence: parents who don't have their licence, or parents who have lost their licence, or parents who are so busy with their work life to try to make ends meet that they're not around during the hours that their child would need to be learning to drive. Or they don't have the financial means to arrange for a driving instructor to meet their hours.*

The difficulties surrounding travel to venues for training and placement often meant that students could not, or would not, attend:

> *Transport impacts on people's ability to get to work, which means if something is too far away in the minds of a child or a parent—and this goes to work experience as well—if something is too far away, then it's too much of an effort.*

In addition, students often had to turn down opportunities of employment because they had no foreseeable way of getting to the venue:

> *Here in South West Sydney, transport is an issue. Any student that talks about a trade, one of the first discussions that we have with them is well, have you got your licence, have you made that step to get your learner licence. Because you can't rely on an employer being able to make an arrangement for a pickup.*

Access to transport also influenced the TAFE courses on offer for many students. As one stakeholder noted, the difficulty of travel meant that taster courses were limited by location:

> *It would be lovely if we could offer every taster at every college, but obviously that can't be the case because we have centres where skilled teams deliver, and that's not at every location. So you're between a rock and a hard place. You can either give them all the choices, and they have to travel everywhere, all over the place. Or you narrow the field and you give them limited choices but they only go to one or two locations at the most.*

Literacy and numeracy as a barrier

While literacy and numeracy are obviously a barrier in any further education, they also have a significant impact on student access to VET and apprenticeships. However, as one stakeholder explained, there is very little knowledge about the importance of numeracy and literacy entrance assessments (Year 10 equivalent) and level of ability needed to succeed in VET:

> *If you want to become a childcare teacher, or you want to do plumbing or electrical, or if you want to be a nurse, you need to be able to function at a certain level because you're not going to be able to get through the TAFE course.*

Students in the School C cluster area with learning difficulties and low literacy and numeracy abilities have also been identified as a concern for businesses:

> *We like to have kids who can read, write and add up. We like to have kids that could be shown once or twice or three times and then they're okay. If you look at the cultural breakdowns of schools, we have a wide range of CALD backgrounds, but I'm talking about students who are experiencing learning difficulties. They might be okay with their reading, but their writing is not on par with what businesses would expect.*

There are currently systems in place to ensure that recommended applications to TAFE from school are individually reviewed and assessed by senior TAFE managers. Often a student's circumstances meant they were considered eligible for extra support. However, as one stakeholder explained, some students were just not mature enough to take on the "adult environment" of TAFE:

> *That recommended assessment must be looked at by our senior managers because we know that if we can enrol the student it can help them a lot to change. But what if we say that his English is not very good, he needs to be with the kids who are at the same age, same environment. This is an adult environment and may not be suitable for them. Or we can say, okay, if we take this student, we need this support—tutorial supports—to do that.*

Overall, feedback from stakeholders suggested that the entrance assessments were necessary to ascertain whether a student was mature and capable enough to take on the demands of TAFE. However, there needed to be more information given to students early, about the requirements needed to enrol in TAFE. "Some of them are just new immigrants with very little English. So we need an interview to test if they are mature enough, if they can experience, if they're calm enough in different situations. It's an adult environment".

More considered approaches for determining "success"

A number of stakeholders spoke about the unique characteristics of the School C cluster in terms of socio-economic disadvantage. As one stakeholder suggested, while disadvantage was key to identifying the need and suitability of the EPPP in this region, this understanding also needed to be carried forward when interpreting the short-term and long-term outcomes of the pilot. In particular, there needed to be more consideration as to how these "disadvantages play into what happens within schools, how those kids access resources, and then how they use those resources".

As suggested in the excerpt below, "success" in the EPPP needs to acknowledge the real differences in terms of disadvantage for cluster schools. Importantly, there may be a myriad of issues and barriers that prevent students from taking up opportunities.

> *People might be looking at a program or a pilot and they have an image in their head of what success looks like, but on the ground that's not what success looks like. There's a real lack of understanding, because they just don't get the fact that these are children. You might provide them with an opportunity and you might expect them to take up every single opportunity related to that seed that you're trying to plant, but they're children, which means they don't always do the right thing.*

Stakeholders working with students in this area had a real understanding of the issues associated with disadvantage. However, feedback regarding the EPPP suggest there was very little consideration of additional support needed for students in their region, and instead the determinants of "success" were dependent on communicating simple data such as "student uptake":

> *How you allow for that variance? Well, schools do it all the time. Schools give kids chance after chance after chance. We give them counselling when they make a mistake, and they end up being suspended. They receive incredible support for their learning needs. Teachers do an incredible amount of work to support their students who keep making mistakes.*

Communication about VET programs

There was some concern from stakeholders in the School C cluster that students were not getting the right message about VET, particularly as it concerned to the YES+ pilot. For example, one of the key aims of the YES+ initiatives is offering students taster courses in several different industries. However, stakeholders were unsure if students fully understood that the courses offered were essentially "tasters", rather than about learning a new skillset:

> *You will have some experiences and hopefully you'll get a feel for the flavour of that particular industry and that area. But you're not going to come away with skills, that's not really the idea. The idea is to help you work out what you might be interested in, to get a feel for the environment, for that particular skill area. That hopefully then would inform a decision as to what you might do in Year 10, Year 11, Year 12, when you leave school. Yeah, so maybe that wasn't communicated.*

Working with GTOs

There was some criticism of the role of training organisations in the EPPP initiative. Because each training organisation operates independently of the pilot, there was little information offered to schools about what was expected of students (in terms of ID cards, equipment needed etc.) for different pre-apprenticeship programs:

> *One of the pilots is with the GTOs, they put together pre-apprenticeship programs that involve students studying at TAFE. So, the GTO said here's a course, but we had no input into what that might look like, no insight into what each one had tendered for. Each of them could have tendered differently for the contract, and so what ended up happening with that…all of us have been buying different pieces of gear for the kids that I would expect would be part of the contract for the tender.*

There was also a lack of understanding from training organisations about the paperwork and processes that needed to be completed prior to student involvement. As a result, school staff needed to step in, which "put pressure" on them to complete the work:

> *We had head teachers running around trying to get the work experience paperwork sorted out for the 15 kids, and I said, because it's [the GTO's] pilot, they need to run it. But in many cases they don't understand what's required, so we step in to try to get that done. Too many cooks in the kitchen. It's much easier for us to go to TAFE and say we want a pre-apprenticeship program, give us the costing of how much that will be, let us do that. Putting the GTO into it has not been easier for us. It's been more of a headache.*

Student expectations

There was some concern about the difficulty to meet expectations of students. While students were often unsure about what they wanted to do, there was an expectation that VET would always be available to them, and they could enrol in their desired vocation area. However, there seemed to be a lack of knowledge as to how they could make that vocation happen for themselves:

> *The students that I spoke to, these students are thinking, well, I could just go off and become an apprentice. When I spoke to them, I said, well, what sort of apprentice do you want to be? I don't care, any. I said, oh, so you know people who are going to give you a trade? They went, well, no. I said, well, who are you going to ring?*

In addition, students often change their minds about apprenticeships, are tardy, or have unrealistic expectations about the access to potential employers: "At times I think there was an expectation that we would come into the school with a magic bag of employers that we could just pull out for each student that came and asked for it". Stakeholders also had to deal with complaints regarding the particular VET courses on offer, which were not meeting student expectations: "We've got commercial cookery, barbering, hairdressing, carpentry, air conditioning refrigeration, light vehicle automotive. So if a student was interested in heavy vehicle, auto electrician, body repair, they can't do it".

Other feedback from stakeholders was that expectations about VET and career pathways needed to be started earlier, ideally around subject selection time. This included building capacity within schools in order to deliver this information in a timely manner so that "if a child is coming to you talking about particular subjects [you are able to] look more deeply into what they're interested in".

School D

School D is a comprehensive co-educational high school located in South West Sydney. The school has a large student body of 1400 and according to interviews, exceeding 1600 student enrolments would permit the school to employ a second CA. As they currently sit slightly below this threshold, there is a high workload for the existing CA. In 2020, the Head Teacher Welfare recognised a need for increased capacity in the careers unit, which resulted in the formation of a Careers Team led by the CA. The new careers team comprises 2x Senior Studies Coordinators (responsible for Year 11 and Year 12 respectively) and a Junior Coordinator (responsible for Stage 5 students), all of whom are trained TAs. In relation to NAPLAN the school's results are above those of students with a similar background in all aspects in Year 7 and in Spelling in Year 9. The school's results are comparable to all Australian students except for spelling in Year 7 which is above the national average and reading in Year 9 which is below.

The school had an extensive focus on careers prior to their involvement with the EPPP, where the careers team focus on ready for work initiatives, career planning, entrepreneurship, enterprising skills. These initiatives included participation in the FastForward program in partnership with Western Sydney University; compulsory work experience for Stage 5 students; SBATs; an initiative for students to receive their White Card; and a YES program, which was adapted for the EPPP's Yes+ pilot.

Executive Leadership and Resourcing

School D is led by a Principal and Leadership Team that includes four Deputy Principals and 18 Head Teachers as well as a CA and TA. This school has a Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) which focuses on Strategic Direction 1 – Learning and Strategic Direction 2 – Teaching and Leading.

The SIP does not have specific initiatives to increase career education opportunities and participation and VET uptake.

How was EPPP implemented in School D?

At this school, the principal articulated himself as "quite removed" from the EPPP, whose "job really is to just be supportive and not get in the way of it". Instead, the EPPP was primarily managed by the CA, who also received support from her careers team. The principal noted that the "allocation for one CA is inadequate", and he thinks they are technically "entitled to 1.2 CAs", increasing to 2.0 at 1600 students. The careers team, comprising two Senior Studies Coordinators and one Junior Studies Coordinator, was a new team established in 2020, as the Head Teacher Welfare identified a need for increased capacity in the careers unit due to the level of work involved and size of the student population. As the CA explained:

> *My head teacher here could see how this place was just pumping all the time. She went and asked the boss if these guys could actually come in and help me out. There were days, in the last few weeks, 30 kids out on work experience. I couldn't make all those phone calls, because I'm running this and I'm running that. So, I had them helping me doing a lot of career stuff.*

The CA, supported by her team, appeared to be a significant enabler for the implementation of the EPPP. Importantly, however, the careers team was funded by the school budget, rather than the EPPP, and the continuity of this team into 2021 was not guaranteed, despite the anticipation of a higher workload. The CA lamented that, "My load will probably be big [in 2021], because

of extra EPPP things. But I'm hoping, I'm not relying on EPPP to save me; I'm hoping that my head teacher [Welfare] here can give me those extra people again".

The principal reiterated these points, noting that the EPPP results in additional work for the CA specifically. Additionally, without drawing upon their own resources, the EPPP would not be feasible:

> *If we just had … one CA as were entitled to, it [EPPP] wouldn't work. We're lucky we've got those other people that we employ, as in take them off class to do all this extra stuff. … There's a few other things they do, but if it was just on [the CA's] shoulders, there's no way she would have been able to do her day job plus keep up with this other stuff as well.*

According to teacher, parent, student, and CA participants, COVID-19 was a significant barrier to the implementation of EPPP at this school, such that it delayed the rollout of the pilots: "The EPPP, really did not come in 'till last term [3]. We didn't really go there" (CA). This delay was due to the sudden requirement for schools to shift all of their content online and students having to suddenly adjust to online learning, some of whom were nether confident nor comfortable using technology. The shift to online learning in addition to online EPPP events and activities would have been too much for students, according to the CA:

> *The EPPP were trying to do webinars on people, on SBATs and all that thing, and I just couldn't do that, because the school was also trying to get kids who were never used to online learning, to now catch up with all the work. I found that more a priority. I said, you know what, we can't use that stuff right now. I can't get them out of class to listen to some guy – it's not suitable for all our kids. In fourth term, we went live with things.*

Indeed, as one parent noted, some parents commented that online learning did not suit their children, saying that online education was "really hard", and one mother's son "just couldn't cope with the online thing". Despite the support of the careers team, the need to implement the EPPP in a short space of time, exacerbated by COVID-19, was taxing on the CA, creating a huge administrative burden: "Doing everything in one term nearly killed me".

The CA appeared to correspond the most with the HTC though she noted that the HTC was "not really here" until the final term of 2020, particularly for the evaluation. When the HTC was involved in the school, her contributions were appreciated, and participants noted that she had been "tirelessly thinking up ideas" resulting in some "really good" and "very important" initiatives: demonstrating the significance of trades to students; a program to encourage students to get their driver license; and introducing careers to Year 6 students about to transition. But there were some reservations about the HTC's role in other areas. As a result, there appeared to be simultaneous appreciation and apprehension around the HTC's role in the school, as well as the potentiality for the role in the future.

Some participants noted that space within the school was a barrier to the EPPP implementation, saying that they have too few rooms available to host events. One teacher explained that certain elements of the EPPP were only possible later in 2020 due to the absence of Year 12: "because Year 12 weren't here, that was easier to do. If they were here, I can't see this happening. ... It's a school problem that we have". This teacher elaborated that it was easier to participate in events held outside of the school due to these spacing issues: "I've found [whenever] EPPP created an opportunity where the kids could go to a place ... that was the easier one for us to do rather than do something internally".

One additional barrier was the school's lack of proximity to training organisation campuses offering courses relevant to the school's students. However, location emerged as a concern in teacher, parent, and student interviews, where participants expressed the importance of students obtaining their driver license for two key reasons: the lack of public transport in the area; and the perception that trades tended not to hire people who did not possess a driver license.

How was EPPP perceived by school-based participants at School D?

Principal

The principal had a high degree of trust in the school's careers team, led by the CA. He articulated himself as being "quite removed from it [EPPP], so I hear bits and pieces", but he is optimistic about the school's involvement from the occasional anecdotal evidence he receives from the deputy principals. Subsequently, his role "is to say yes ... to just be supportive and not get in the way of it", noting:

> *My job is to trust [the careers team] and then if they say it's a good idea… I do apply some thought process to that of course, I don't just agree to anything and everything that happens in the school, but yeah, if it sounds reasonable and they've got a rationale, we go with it.*

Though he could not name or speak to specific EPPP pilots, he had commented that "there seem to be more opportunities, there's been more happening" with the introduction of the EPPP. He described the EPPP as "energetic, individualised" and "warm". In particular, he praised the EPPP's ability to supplement and enhance existing initiatives in the school: "Whereas in the past, we would have our own [school's] version of those things but on a more limited scale, it seems to be more co-ordinated this year".

While the principal indicated that the school was prepared to implement the EPPP, there were some aspects of the pilot that lacked clarity for him early on, such as the HTC role:

> *I knew that we were being involved in EPPP and there was going to be a head teacher – careers, but I probably didn't realise, what does that mean? It sounds great, we'll go along for the ride, but I don't think I had a clear understanding of what it was going to involve.*

Subsequently, he commented that a breakdown of what a school's involvement would look like in advance of their participation would be helpful, such as a "scope and sequence". Another area that lacked clarity for him was the EPPP budget and, specifically, the purpose and conditions of the budget. "Sometimes these wonderful initiatives come along and the department says, oh we'll give you this money – well, for what? We're still employing the CA, we're still employing these other people, is it for stationery, is it for teacher release?"

The exemption from reporting anticipated and actual enrolment returns was not expected to really impact the school due to the large size of their student cohort. The principal noted that the exemption was a good policy, but "a drop in the ocean" for his school: "Look, it's really good because it means it's just that little extra that's not being taken off ... but being a large school, it's a drop in the ocean anyway, so it's never really impacted on me". However, he also emphasised that it might be a critical policy for smaller schools in particular, who may avoid SBATs on the basis that they fear losing staff members.

Careers adviser

The CA was heavily involved in the implementation of the EPPP and noted some beneficial and challenging aspects of the project and their participation. She noted how her workload since the EPPP was introduced "just skyrocketed", and that she would be unable to implement the pilot without the help of her careers team, which is funded through the school budget.

Primarily, she viewed the EPPP as most efficacious when it supported and supplemented the school's existing practices and programs. This was evident in some of the programs introduced by the HTC, elements of the Digital careers toolbox, and the EDGE workshops. She particularly valued the contributions of the RIEP Officer, as "the link with industry are very important" but can be difficult to achieve. These industry connections led to at least four students beginning work experience in different fields like graphic design and electrotechnology.

However, there were elements of the EPPP that she found problematic. For example, there were concerns that the EPPP was reproducing the school's existing practices in some areas: "I did my own mapping, trying to explain what the EPPP does. It's no different. I've been doing what the EPPP does for a while". There were also concerns that the EPPP would take over programs or events independently introduced by the school, such that the school would lose its identity:

> *The programs, like Productivity Bootcamp, I was the one that introduced that to the EPPP. Because what they made us do, they made us write everything we do, and then got ideas from us. I thought, "What is this?" You're taking our identity, our innovativeness away. We were doing all these things before you guys came in. What you are doing now is assisting us, which is great, that's what we want.*

In another example of this, the school had an existing TAFE YES program, which was adapted for the EPPP's TAFE NSW YES+ pilot. She also felt that the Digital careers toolbox was being "forced" on them. While Skillsroad was usefully integrated with other school resources, Myfuture and LifeLauncher were not appropriate for their student cohort.

Teachers

Teachers described an existing set of "strong programs" implemented independently from the EPPP by their junior and senior Careers Team, headed by the CA. However, they viewed the EPPP favourably and having "come on top to add extra opportunities for us". Indeed, prior to agreeing to participate in the EPPP, one teacher explained that they were reluctant to participate in the EPPP, lest it require additional labour: "if you're asking us to do more, we're not interested, we're not going down that path. If you're here to work with us and provide us more opportunities and streamline, right, we're in".

However, teachers saw the EPPP as increasing the efficiency and convenience of programs the schools were already involved in, including around administrative support:

> *Risk managements and all those things [were] taken care of, the connection [with industry] made, so it made it easy to slot kids into things. That was where the real benefit was. Sometimes trying to get those connections takes time. [Developing industry connections] would have taken a heap of time if we did it on a school level to try and get that going, but these guys working externally, making those opportunities ... I've seen more opportunities come and they've streamlined procedures and it's made it easier for us at our end.*

Teachers also struggled to differentiate between their existing initiatives and those from the EPPP: "I'm just trying to remember which ones were ours and which ones were theirs. It becomes a bit of a mix".

Despite the interruptions that COVID-19 introduced, some teachers commented that their first year of participating in the EPPP established a lot of infrastructure, connections, and rapport between key stakeholders that could be more robustly taken advantage of should the EPPP continue for a second year.

Parents/carers

Parent/carer participants commented that they were largely unaware of the sorts of career initiatives held by the school, more often than not finding about what happens through others:

> *I've had to ask [my son] many times, what's happening with this, what's happening with that, because I have friends that have kids in the same year as [my son] and they seem to tell me at work. I'll say, oh I've got to go to the school, I've got to ask [my son] what's happening with that. So yeah, I feel like I don't really know that much either.*

One father noted that he similarly did not know much about "what's on offer", but would occasionally see something posted to the school's Facebook page, prompting him to ring the school. As a result, parents could not speak specifically to the EPPP or its pilots.

Parents did comment more broadly and favourably of the school's engagement with careers, citing some school programs as helpful for their children, such as "Skills and Thrills", a professional "bootcamp", which focused on practical skills in carpentry, and an initiative that gives students an opportunity to receive a White Card. However, it was unclear whether these programs were attached to/introduced through the EPPP.

Students

Participation in the EPPP seemed to increase with year level. Stage 4 students were not familiar with any of the pilots and did not appear to have participated in them either. Despite their lack of awareness of the EPPP, many Stage 4 students expressed a desire to participate in careers events: "so people could know more about like what they want their jobs to be like" (Stage 4 student). Another Stage 4 student explained how careers lessons are introduced too late for students, using her brother as an example:

> *It would be a lot easier because I know I would start to stress if I didn't know how to become what I wanted to be. Because they only start really teaching you about all that stuff at the end of Year 10 when you're about to go into Year 11 and with my brother, he only started knowing what he wanted to do this year and it was really late and I would not be able to do that.*

Indeed, upon learning a little bit about SBATs during the interview, one Stage 4 student commented, "that would be good ... I'm so interested" and used the focus group as an opportunity to ask the facilitator further questions about SBATs. Conversely, another Stage 4 student thought it would be too early for him to start learning about careers because it would disrupt his study: "Right now, you're focussed more on studies. Maybe Year 9, we can start".

Stage 5 and 6 students were more directly involved with the EPPP initiatives. The most popular pilot appeared to be the EDGE workshops, which several Stage 5 and 6 students attended and spoke favourably about, saying, "It was really good" (Stage 5 student), "I liked it" (Stage 5 student), and "The EDGE one was really helpful" (Stage 6 student). Multiple students described the EDGE workshops in detail and demonstrated an understanding of the purposes of the workshop, with one Stage 6 student saying,

> *It was pretty much all the information that we needed. We got a booklet as well so that we could take it home and we didn't have to write notes on it and have to remember everything they spoke about. All the girls got a makeup kit for preparing for interviews and even school. I don't really know what the guys got, but they got a little pack as well. It was very helpful.*

The Digital careers toolbox was less popular with students, with most not being sure that they had accessed it before. As one Stage 5 student noted to the agreement of other students, "I think we do [have access to videos and websites on careers advice], but we just don't look for it". One Stage 6 student explained how online resources did not suit him, so he did not attempt to access them: "I'm not very good with technology. I don't really go on any computer[s] and stuff. ... I can barely type. ... It's not my thing".

It was unclear how popular SBATs, YES+, and the Training Awards Ambassadors pilots were with students, as they often conflated them with other non-EPPP experiences, including VET, T-VET, E-VET, and could not speak directly to them.

Influences on student aspirations in School D

Family

The centrality of family in students' career and educational aspirations was a key theme across all interviews, though with different emphases. Many students noted their parents/carers were a key resource for career advice and guidance. One Stage 4 student said, "I want to be an architect ... my dad owns a tile shop and my mum wants me to design houses, I'm interested in those things". Another Stage 4 student said, "I've talked to my parents about that [apprenticeships]. My parents want me to do carpentry or something".

Other students noted how their families' connections helped them further explore their interests. A student in Stage 5 said they "might get into civil [engineering], like earthworks, excavation" because his dad knew a lot of people "in the game". "I've already done it for work experience and stuff. But I didn't do work experience through the school, I got a job with a guy my dad knows". Another student in Stage 6 would talk to his dad about becoming a plant mechanic because he knew he would "have mates that do all these mechanical courses. He's like, if you want a job, I can get you in with them".

Parent/carer participants also spoke at length about the support they provided their children. In particular, each parent/carer articulated a position where their children can pursue whatever they want, and their role is to provide support. "[My child] will talk about what he wants to do and we'll have a chat and we'll discuss the best way to go about finding that sort of work. It's more like a supportive guiding thing".

These parents' approaches to supporting their children on a career trajectory were well-intentioned and suggested their children possessed a level of freedom to pursue any career or educational ambition they wished. Parents'/carers' support was often articulated through a reluctance to reproduce experiences they had with their own parents as teenagers:

> *I want to help [my son]. If you want to do that, we'll support you, because that's what I wish my dad did for me back then. ... I'll help you, where do we go, what do we do, who do we talk to? Let's find something. I want to help him like that, I want him to feel loved.*

One parent noted that she "was virtually disowned" for not wanting to continue her senior years of secondary school, while another emphasised that he "didn't want to put my kids through" the same confronting experiences other participants in the focus group had recounted. These participants emphasised prioritising the wellbeing and interests of their children, though this support was not articulated through a specific, strategic, or practical approach to navigating the educational markets required to enter into a profession.

Other students noted the ways in which their parents' expectations did not align with their own aspirations, which suggested a difficult point of tension. One Stage 6 student said, "There's not really much to talk about. My mum, she always tells me what she wants me to do and stuff which is [different to what I want to do], ... so I don't really say much". These points of tension between students and their parents/carers were especially poignant around questions regarding the completion of Year 12 and further education. A number of students spoke about their experiences negotiating and navigating their parents' contradictory expectations around further education and career pathways:

> *My dad always tells me I should go to uni. I don't want to. I used to want to do marine biology ... and then I changed to the police force. He's not happy with that, but I don't really care. I'm going to do it anyway. My mum, she helped me research what I need to do, qualifications I need and stuff, so generally I talk to her about it. (Student, Stage 6)*

> *I was thinking about going to university, but then again what would I do there? I might go into TAFE for probably automotives because my dad owns a car yard. ... Honestly, [the reason I'm considering university is] just like my mum pushing me to go there. (Student, Stage 6)*

A number of students articulated a desire to attend university. Teachers and the CA noted parental/carer expectations around pursuing higher education co-constituted this trend with students. Teachers unanimously agreed that parents and carers "still see university as, you have to go", with one teacher elaborating,

> *[Parents are] trying to push their kids to stay at school… they still think university is the best thing and that you have to get a degree, and unfortunately sometimes I think parents' reality doesn't quite fit with the kids, at that moment in their life, of what they can achieve.*

Parental expectations around higher education were also noted by the CA, who commented on the ways in which they shape students career ambitions, but perhaps not always in the interest of the student:

> *Some of them don't really want to go to uni, and are forced to by parents, because parents didn't go. I couldn't get over how many kids used to come in here, and go, I want to be a lawyer or a doctor. I used to just think, oh my God. Why? Why do you want to do that?*

Income

Many participants cited high income as a significant factor in students' career aspirations, though this theme was more prevalent in the teacher and CA interviews. Teacher participants unanimously foregrounded the significance of income for their students, noting "a lot of them just want to make money". As another teacher commented, some students aspire to a high salary, rather than a specific career:

> *From talking to the students, it's money driven, money focused. Then their families are, say, in white collar, they aspire and see what they're earning and what they're doing there. That then relates to them saying, oh, I can do that job, I can then go forward and produce that kind of money.*

The CA noted that money was a key priority for many of her students, sometimes taking precedence over their interests:

> *Money, for the boys especially, in the trades, those types of areas, big factor. I had one yesterday, I had to take out two in automotive, even though they loved it. They're saying to me, well, that could be more of a hobby, Miss, because it doesn't pay much. So, money is a big factor.*

While money was a key factor for the CA's students, they were sometimes misinformed about which jobs attracted higher salaries. "Everyone thought plumbers got the most money. So, I put up this big poster, and showed them that air conditioning specialists actually earn more". One Stage 5 student articulated this attachment to money quite strongly, even mapping a career trajectory that he saw would put him financially ahead of other students who opted to stay in school or pursue university:

> *I'm still tossing up whether I still want to go onto Year 12. I want to not go, but my mum, she's trying to persuade me to stay. But what I think is, if you're not going to go to uni, you should just leave in Year 10. If you're earning 40 grand, 30 grand, however much it is, you're [earning] more than what the kids in school are ... yeah, you have TAFE, you can do that two times over. Say you get 80 grand from two years, that's 80 grand more than what every one of your friends have in school. ... So you get a step ahead of everyone else.*

Location

A number of participants noted the ways in which the school's location and lack of proximity constituted a challenge for students wanting to pursue apprenticeships, SBATs, work experience, and other VET pathways. One reason for this, as the CA noted, was that "a big factor in our area is public transport". A number of students similarly reflected on these issues of transport and proximity to opportunities, with one Stage 5 student noting how it can function as an impediment: "Say you've got to go to TAFE or something. To get to [suburb] you would catch a train, or you've got to get your mum to drive you. Just a bit of a challenge to try and get there". These concerns were similarly articulated by one parent, who commented on her son's interest in TAFE: "It felt a little bit far for us, only because there's no train lines around here, so that was a thing".

Proximity to TAFE was a concern for some teachers, too, with one teacher noting that "the courses need to be closer". Specifically, he noted that there was a local TAFE, but only "a handful of courses our kids could go to", otherwise they would need to travel much farther. "If they want to do plumbing, electrical, they've got to go to [a different suburb] ... it's an hour and a half trip [one way], we've worked it out". He noted the ways in which this commute for students impacted their engagement at school: "The kids are having to leave a little earlier ... may need to come out of a class to get to [suburb] and therefore have to make up that time during their study lesson or whatever they've missed".

In addition to missing out on schoolwork to manage their commute and the limited opportunities for many students within their vicinity, another teacher indicated that students also "get deterred" from considering VET pathways as a result of the commute. Indeed, one student in Stage 6 cited his commute as the reason he would consider discontinuing TAFE:

> *Most people are [travelling to nearby suburb 1] or [nearby suburb 2], which is close. [My TAFE] is all the way in [suburb]. It takes me an hour and a half to get there and then an hour and a half to get back. That's the only reason I'd want to not do TAFE anymore, because it's just so annoying. But once I get my Ps [driver license], so much easier. I just drive there – take half an hour.*

School

A number of participants noted the ways in which specific school initiatives had influenced students' career aspirations. For instance, one parent reflected on her son's experiences participating in a school "bootcamp" on construction and how it was unusually motivating for him:

> *They'd done the landscape, they done all the formwork, the concreting, they loved it. They did it for eight weeks and [my son] was getting up at 4:30 in the morning just to go to [suburb] and that's not like him.*

As a result of his participation, he decided that he wanted to enter construction, where he initially was considering becoming an electrician. Similarly, one Stage 5 student reflected on the impact an elective had on her two years ago, where she learned her hobby could constitute a feasible and legitimate career:

> *When we were in Year 8, they started new electives, and cake was one of them, because I've always been into cakes and stuff. So when I did that course, I never really thought that I would want to have this as my career, and then when that course was ended, I realised that I was really good at it and that I might consider it.*

School initiatives also appeared to have an impact on students' confidence in their own skills, as well as their capacity to negotiate what sort of further education was relevant to them. One parent participant commented on the impact the "Skills & Thrills" program had on her son:

> *I think the whole presentation [Skills & Thrills] through the school with that seminar made him feel supported that he could go out and do a trade and that you're going to be ... successful in life doing that, you don't have to go to university. So, I think the pressure was off him. I think that was good, it was supportive. He walked away happy.*

A number of students, particularly in Stages 5 and 6, noted that they would seek advice from the CA or other members of the careers team, which was reiterated in teacher, parent, principal, and CA interviews. Indeed, one teacher commented on the ways in which students had become more engaged with the careers team and took advantage of the CA's "open door policy":

> *What we've seen over time now is that kids just feel like it's easy to drop in and conversate about [their] career. Even though we've got these kids and we've got to hold their hand, there is this large portion of kids that are ... [taking] more initiative. And you see them coming day in day out.*

Which aspects of EPPP were perceived most positively at School D?

Participants commented on the increased opportunities and quality of career advice available to students throughout the period the school participated in the EPPP. In particular, this enhanced the school's existing practices, as noted by the principal: "There's more knowledge there. So in that sense ... you don't know what you don't know, and if we don't know these things existed before, we certainly do now, and that means we can better cater to our kids".

Ostensibly, these opportunities were taken up by students, as several teacher participants noted that the number of students enrolled in SBATs had increased, which was unusual for this school:

> *One [student] went [to] McDonald's and he would go up into a managerial role ... The other girl, she did her SBAT through Year 12 in child studies and she's now got a full-time job. She's already started. She's already a few years up because of this SBAT in her apprenticeship.*

The CA also noticed this trend with increased SBATs at the school: "We're up to seven [students participating in SBATs], which is very unusual for us, because we only normally have one or two". The RIEP Adviser's contributions were also notable, providing several industry connections that led to students' participation in work experience. The CA valued this in particular, as it can be difficult for the school to achieve these connections independently:

> *We had [the RIEP Officer's] initiative, the industry one, I don't know which one that is, but hooking up to industry and getting industry to talk. There was [a landscaping business] for example, I've just sent them an email about one of our kids that attended something. There was graphic design, a graphic design one. Another kid got offered a work experience. We had two kids go for electrotechnology somewhere. ... I loved that one, because it is hard for us to always do.*

And the EDGE workshops were universally valued by participants, especially students, who both enjoyed attending the workshops and could articulate its relationship to their own career trajectories.

Participants commented on the ways in which they had hoped the EPPP would help streamline the schools existing initiatives, and there is evidence to suggest this was successful to an extent. Teachers commented that they had received support organising permission notes, risk management forms, and other time-consuming administration tasks, such that "it made it easy to slot kids into things. That was where the real benefit was".

Which aspects of EPPP were challenging at School D?

COVID-19

Some school-based participants highlighted the increased administrative burden that the EPPP introduced, which was then exacerbated by COVID-19. One of the key challenges for this school was the impact of COVID-19, which played out in a number of ways. Firstly, parents/carers were not permitted onsite under new regulations, and their participation in and awareness of school career initiatives dropped as a result. Secondly, students explained how events and activities were cancelled. Online variations of EPPP initiatives were introduced, but these were not viewed as appropriate by some participants, as students were already catching up with schoolwork they had missed out on and getting used to online learning. Thirdly, some students became completely disengaged, with one parent noting that her son "just went downhill, just before COVID-19 came through. He wasn't really interested after that. That's when he turned around – he said, mum, I just want to drop out of school".

Clarity of roles and resourcing

Participants also commented on the need for more clarity regarding certain roles in the EPPP prior to the school's participation. The principal, for instance, was not aware of what the HTC role entailed, and suggested a stronger brief would help to prepare the school, along with a scope and sequence of the EPPP as a whole.

Despite the resources brought in by the EPPP to help support the implementation of the pilots, this school heavily relied upon their own resources in the careers team. Indeed, a number of participants suggested that their participation would not be possible without this team. Notably, the principal was unsure how the EPPP budget could or should be spent, or whether it could be used to support the careers team in this instance.

The perceptions of external stakeholders: School D

Impact of COVID-19

Like other clusters participating in the EPPP in 2020, COVID-19 caused significant disruptions. For the School D cluster, one key issue for external stakeholders was "getting into some schools" as "some principals were more strict about letting visitors on site". The schools in this cluster were "heavily hit" by COVID-19, and many schools were closed for long periods of time with "kids out self-isolating". The impacts of COVID-19 and school shutdowns also meant more work needed to be done in much shorter periods, with one external stakeholder commenting:

> *We've been super busy because of COVID-19. It could be different next year where we can work with the kids one-on-one, spread out, with more time [but] there was a period of time [in 2020] where we couldn't go into schools, we couldn't visit kids, we couldn't enrol kids into TAFE and speak to parents and that kind of stuff.*

Importantly, the unusual modes of communication and networking with "key people", particularly parents/carers, suffered the most, with one stakeholder commenting about how difficult it was just to start having conversations to get the ball rolling. "You've just got to get your key people and those conversations will start. We're promoting on Facebook. All our signups are going on to Facebook, so there's lots of things happening. I just think it's going to take time".

Catering for a diverse student population

Alongside the disruptions of COVID-19, there were some key distinctions in the School D cluster that impacted the rollout of the EPPP. Perhaps most significant of these was the huge differences in the student population of South West Sydney. As one stakeholder commented, there were substantially more students in the School D cluster from CALD backgrounds, and this impacted the uptake of the program, as well as their preparedness for the EPPP:

> *I think my cluster and the [nearby] cluster schools are actually very similar in the sense that we're literally minutes away. The barriers that we face are very similar. We differ from [nearby location] I feel because [our students] come from more non-English speaking backgrounds, although [nearby location] is still multicultural. We get very newly-arrived migrants.*

There were also considerable differences in terms of the investments and motivations of families in the region:

> *I also feel like we end up having a really broad clientele. We would have some cultural backgrounds that are really aspirational and emphasise the importance of education. So, you're working on one end of the spectrum and on the other end you'll have kids with gaps of learning and they may not have had access to education for five or six years, because they're a refugee. I think where we face a broader range of barriers, because of the fact that we have different cultures and we have to find what works differently with different cultures.*

Support for careers advisers

An overwhelming barrier to the implementation of the EPPP in the School D cluster was support available for the existing CA positions. As one stakeholder suggested, there just wasn't enough staff available in these positions in schools to ensure that every student was adequately informed about career pathways:

> *I think the EPPP could work if school CAs and the careers team got more support. I find it crazy how in a school you have 17 or 20 English teachers but you have one or two CAs. Yes, they don't teach, but every kid will need to see a CA and especially now that they're talking about how careers education should start at an earlier stage. If those interventions should happen earlier, those links with families should happen earlier, then why aren't there 17 CAs?*

One stakeholder opined that for the EPPP to be effectively implemented from the start, there needed to much more investment from the Education Department to ensure CAs were not a "lone soldier". This included the employment of a transition adviser to ensure students seeking pathways beyond school and tertiary education were adequately supported, and if "the Department valued careers education a lot more and gave them that support then principals would value CAs a lot more".

The importance of school leadership

Like other clusters participating in the EPPP, feedback from stakeholders suggested that the implementation and uptake of the pilot was very much dependant on school leadership. Often, this was driven by a stakeholder's perception of the principal's personal investment in a particular pathway:

> *It depends on where the principal has come from. So, if they've come from a very traditional teaching background, like social science or English and they had no idea what their colleagues were working on, you know what their colleague the careers adviser did…they probably just think they do nothing, then when they start managing the school they don't see the value in it.*

Ultimately, however, the investment of leadership in CAs and different pathways for students had wide-reaching impacts on school culture and the number of staff that were working "on the ground". One external stakeholder commented that,

> *The schools that I struggle with are where there's great staff, but if there isn't a careers team and the [careers] person is on their own, it is so much harder for me to come in and implement things because they've got too much on their plate. I guess the inter-school communication systems aren't going great because it's this one person trying to send the message out to everyone else, whereas if you've got a team it works better.*

Involving community members

One aspect of the EPPP that really helped to increase the enthusiasm and momentum in schools was workshops, presentations and feedback from other community members with first-hand experience. In particular, the inclusion of stories and experiences from first-generation Australians and migrants meant that all students within the cluster were represented and inspired:

> *I really like [having] other community members, like ex-students who have done well, come back and the students can relate to them, because often the ex-student will say, I'm a first generation Australian. My experience is very similar to yours and this is what I'm doing now.*

In addition, schools that had more contact with past students, or mentoring opportunities within the family were often better prepared for the EPPP, particularly in terms of work readiness:

> *I think that a lot of students have already been working with family or have done weekend work or holiday work. And they just seem to have a bit more of a maturity about what the job's going to entail and, you say to them oh, how do you feel about… oh, I've been doing it forever.*

Engaging with past-students, mentors and employers through workshops and conversation with students was also more likely to inspire students and have a lasting impact on their behaviour:

> *Because the student, well, they are more likely to listen if someone else tells them something,when they've got the employers coming in and having a conversation. And the students that have got part-time jobs, they're the kids that you know straight away. You can see it when you have the conversations with them… they've got some of those skills so you know straight away, it just puts them a little ahead of the others.*

Networking across the cluster

Several stakeholders spoke about the advantages the EPPP presented in term of encouraging networking about employment opportunities and initiatives for students, and about networking and exchanging information about the EPPP. For example, for one internal stakeholder the EPPP allowed for more relevant information about resources to become available in their local area:

> *There's always been a CAs' network, but it's been quite large, across LGAs, councils or even sometimes councils will merge together and the information isn't as niched to that particular area. But because I only have the six schools, when we network, we're sharing ideas more closely and the principals have been quite open. The principals have been on-board, rather than just a CA tuning into a network meeting and having a bit of a gossip… the principals are sharing.*

Having networks in terms of industry was also important for creating SBAT opportunities for students. One stakeholder offered an example of the overall cumulative impact of networking opportunities on outcomes for students:

> *I'll just give an example of two different schools. One of them, they've got their networks. They've got lots of family members that are on board with their own businesses which is very helpful for them. There's a lot more students going into apprenticeships - like school-based apprenticeships with their family members and some of them have been working with their family for years. Then I've got the other end where students haven't been out even on work experience opportunities. It's not something the school has done. They don't have networks. They don't know anyone in any of the industries that they're interested in.*

While there were some obvious benefits of networking in schools, employer networking remained an area that needed to be further expanded in the School D cluster. One stakeholder said that "getting employers has been a lot more of a challenge". They were working with eight different schools, and from their experience found that "seven out of the eight need a little bit more help with finding employers or having those conversations". In addition, feedback from stakeholders suggested that more work needed to be done within schools to engage parents/carers, particularly regarding the promotion of SBATs and VET with specific mention of TAFE. One stakeholder was also a parent of a high school student, and said that they had worked together to look up information about what certain pathways required:

> *With my eldest boy I went online with him and we looked up different courses and ATAR results he would need to be able to do those degrees. If TAFE could promote that kind of information to the schools, even at a Year 8 or 9 level, just to let those kids know that there is another option outside of going through and getting an ATAR, [that would be beneficial].*

School support for careers education

Sustained investment in career pathways and SBAT culture was perceived as a key factor in determining the success of the EPPP. Again, this included the employment of more career staff to assist in the roll-out of the current EPPP initiatives.

As one stakeholder noted, having a team of CAs available at one school, or even if "the CA is supported", it meant they were more likely to action new initiatives and get "more from them" overall. "If there isn't anyone else there and they're being bombarded with students and other staff asking them for things, it's really hard for them to engage". A further imperative included adequate workload and time for CIT members to make the EPPP initiatives a success:

> *If someone [in the school executive] values careers that can make my CIT meetings more successful, there's more value to it. They can take more from it. So when you've got key personnel who are great and you've got a leadership team who are great and the two work well together it is really easy for someone on the outside to come in, implement and add value to what they're already doing.*

Feedback from stakeholders suggested that collaboration between the CA and VET coordinator could be formalised to ensure resources and reporting of information was shared, to engender "more of a team environment. Sometimes the VET coordinator and the CA don't report to the same head teacher or deputy principal, and they're put in separate parts of the school, which for us doesn't make sense".

There was an overwhelming response from external stakeholders that a cultural change within the schools was needed to shift current perceptions about SBATs for both students and parents:

I've got quite very multicultural schools and the expectation is that the kids go to uni. That's the be all and end all, uni. They don't even consider utilising an SBAT as a pathway. They don't know that that's even a possibility. So, my thing is one person at a time. You talk to one - people talk. You find your local person.

Supporting transitions out of school

One stakeholder suggested that the employment of a dedicated teacher for literacy and numeracy would be an important long-term investment for the School D cluster. While this position had not been formalised across all the cluster schools, early results suggested that specialised classes, such as "Job Ready Classes", were already showing promising results:

They created a set class of kids that expressed an interest in potentially leaving and wanting their education focused less around the curriculum and more about preparing for the workforce, and they've seen good results. We have two other schools trialling it next year. They do project-based learning, so things are still mapped against the syllabus for English, maths, science, geography, history, whatever, but it's more with a workplace focus.

The feedback from internal stakeholders was that "separate classes" in this instance would work, as they wouldn't be "fighting against" classes already in the mainstream curriculum, "because when you talk to a careers adviser and, say, a visual arts teacher, our purposes are completely different although we're all teachers". One stakeholder suggested hiring "an SLS or a teacher's aide to support these classes to really bring the students literacy and numeracy up to a level where they're work ready". This was echoed by other stakeholders, who underlined the importance of support for students making a transition from school:

I think having the mentors come in is amazing because you will have that person you can talk [about] that stuff to and they need to be open and honest and we'll work through things that come up because there will be challenges. Look at this year. This year we've had so many challenges thrown at us and we've all had to work together and that's something that I talk about with the kids all the time, that it is going to be a balancing act and it's going to take some time to get into that.

Student readiness

There was feedback from stakeholders that student readiness, both concerning student preparation and maturity to engage in VET and businesses, was necessary for success of the EPPP. This included timely organisation of administration work, such as attending to student IDs, but also extended to their knowledge, attitudes and expectations about work in general:

You can't organise a student to go out on a construction site if they don't have a white card. Legally, they're not allowed out on there. So it's about making sure that they're ready. Getting their resumes ready. Putting them through preparation for work. There's been a lot of courses through group training organisations and TAFE YES+ programs - getting those sorts of skills so that they can add it to their resume.

Often adequate preparation for student SBATs involved liaising closely with the organisation and business who were taking on the students. Importantly, without adequate preparation, students were just "not ready" to engage. One external stakeholder emphasised that students "need to be able to communicate. We had one go out to a real estate [and they said], he can't answer a phone. He's not ready for this industry as yet. He needs a little bit of work first".

Differently, there was some success reported by stakeholders who reinforced student participation in the EPPP (and in vocational education, training and apprenticeships more broadly) as "a choice that they've made". As outlined in the excerpt below, if students saw engaging in EPPP pilots as their decision, they were more likely to "make the most of it" and see their participation as an opportunity:

If they enrol in a TAFE course or a uni course or wherever they decide to go it's a choice that they've made, therefore they have to give themselves every opportunity to make the best of it. There's so many distractions. These kids have so many distractions and it's just really easy to come in with the good intention but then to easily drop off.

In addition, often the message was a "hard lesson" for students, who had an expectation that vocational education study and training would be a "bludge" and were perhaps not ready to fully engage:

Some of the students were ready for TAFE. Some, no. Some of them didn't like school, or don't like school and school is not for them. So, they're ready for whatever else can be offered to them to help them move forward and perhaps find a career path. Some of them were disinterested. All they cared about was their phones and their social life and having fun.

As a result, there was an effort by educators and trainees in this sector to find ways of engaging students from a real world perspective, and focussing on some of their interests and aspirations. For example, student readiness was positioned by educators as a choice, but also very necessary if students wanted to succeed in an adult learning environment:

There were a lot of times where they would get a bit distracted and whatnot and I would bring them back and say, listen, guys, this is not a classroom situation. You don't have to be here. If you come here it's your choice, therefore you need to make the most out of it. At school you need to go to school because that's the regulations and whatnot. But once you decide to leave school and you go into an adult learning environment it's on you now to make the most of it.

There was feedback from stakeholders that students needed to be "told this a lot more at school - that once they finish school then they're on their own to navigate their path and whatever they put in is what they're going to get out of it". This was echoed by the

businesses who underlined the need for students to understand that a "workplace is not school', and some awareness about the adversity and hard work involved:

> *They're in a workplace. It is a professional environment. They're working with adults and they need to just be aware of that. But that means - not that they have to act like adults but just to listen and be prepared to work hard. As long as they're aware of that and that it is exhausting, that it is tiring. Just to have a very real expectation that it is not like school.*

As outlined above, there was considerable variability in student readiness to engage in vocational education study, training, and apprenticeships. For example, there was some feedback from stakeholders that students attending training "didn't know why they were there":

> *You're relying on teenagers who don't know why [they're] here, but their teacher might have told them 20 times why and asked them a question. This is where I think a bit of the problem lies – the careers advisers can only do so much and explain so much.*

The lack of student preparedness was also seen in terms of education and training. One stakeholder spoke about the reluctance of many students to engage in training, and their lack of understanding about the basic tenets of work:

> *I think some of them thought they would just come here and it was a bit of a bludge. Even with keyboarding, I sat them there and I got them on to our keyboarding program and within the first five minutes of doing that they were all like, this is so hard, Miss, my fingers hurt, my back hurts.*

The issues with student readiness in the School D cluster was also recognised by other stakeholders who had contact with students. As one stakeholder put it, often readiness had more to do with the age and maturity of the student than their disinterest and disengagement. "It wasn't until I went out and actually went into a workplace and realised that it's a very adult world for them and some of them are still not ready".

A further barrier identified by stakeholders related to intergenerational employment in the area. One stakeholder mentioned that many students did not have first-hand experiences with work or careers from members in their immediate family, and as a result "the concept of going to work is foreign":

> *Some of the kids don't know how to work, so they're not interested in careers. For instance, I would get a student a job and then she'll call me in the morning and say, "Miss, I don't know what do". What do you mean, just go to work? She'll say, do I ask someone if I have to go to the toilet? How do I talk to people? So, I think social disadvantage is a barrier also.*

There was some understanding from stakeholders that the transition from school to work was a very steep learning curve for many students. One stakeholder said, "we throw them in, and they're supposed to be in an adult world one day a week if they're at TAFE and then they come back to school and they have to be in a student role". Feedback from stakeholders was that students participating in the EPPP needed to be better prepared to engage in training and TAFE:

> *If the school perhaps gives them the bigger picture and says, this is what you can have if you get to the end. Yeah, it might be a struggle and it might take time, but if you take the right steps then this is what you're going to come out with. You're going to have a certificate or a degree or a diploma.*

In addition, there was a suggestion that there needs to be a more stringent selection process to ensure students are getting the most out of the EPPP:

> *We contacted the CAs and asked them to pick the students that they thought were ready for a school based apprenticeship. We had students from five different schools participate. It was definitely an up and down rollercoaster. There were instances even when the police had to be called – kicking in doors, it was a bit of a roller coaster. So, the feedback that we received from the head teacher in particular was that he didn't think the age group was appropriate, that they're not mature enough to be a TAFE yet.*

Measuring EPPP success in meaningful ways

Reiterating the feedback from School C, there was concern voiced by stakeholders that student engagement was positioned as "just a KPI or a number" rather than generating real outcomes for students:

> *What we noticed in COVID-19 was, like, we'll just throw in a webinar, we need to submit numbers, but it's really about what can we do to actually generate student outcomes? Schools would rather not do anything at all unless it's worthwhile but because it is a pilot there is money involved.*

As suggested by one stakeholder, this mentality was particularly damaging in the long-term as it created more work for schools whilst having very little impact overall. In addition, it impacted the momentum of the EPPP, as ill-conceived initiatives the first time around meant students were less likely to engage again. "It annoys the kids as well, where they go, oh you again, well the first thing you did for me was boring. Then it's harder to engage with them again the second time round".

Unrealistic workload expectations

Echoing other clusters involved in the EPPP, there were unrealistic expectations placed on school on regards to workload and the turnaround of administration tasks. As outlined by a school-based stakeholder, schools were already strained for time and resources. The EPPP requests from external stakeholders added another invisible layer of stress to staff workloads:

> *I think schools need more help to get the other pilots out, because external stakeholders need a way in and also need advice about how schools run. They might have a negative experience and come back to us, and I say, well yeah, because you can't give a school two days' notice or a week's notice.*

Often, stakeholders working within schools suggested that the solution to extra administration was often very simple. Ultimately, EPPP personnel needed to have a better understanding of the systems within schools to ensure less administration was absorbed by school staff:

> *We were running pre-apprenticeship courses and Pilot 8, and a GTO led it. They sourced TAFE to deliver a course and they did their job, but because they didn't understand kids and how it worked there were issues in signing the paperwork. So they will get an employer to fill something out, it will come back to us and we'll say no it can't go ahead because this piece of paper i our insurance policy. If anything had to happen, these signatures need to be done, that bit can't be left empty.*

Communicating with parents/carers from diverse backgrounds

There was overwhelming feedback from internal stakeholders that more work needed to be done so that parents and carers were more engaged with the EPPP, and with the children's career pathways in general: "At the moment it's really odd, parents are really involved at a primary school level and then we find after Year 7, once the parents get over their anxiety of their students transitioning, they drop off". Parental/carer engagement was particularly important in the School D cluster, as CALD families were less likely to be aware of the requirements needed to pursue specific career pathways:

> *It's difficult when mum and dad have a certain view, and then they don't understand how school works. They might push their son or daughter to work towards being an architect, but their son doesn't come to school and struggles with English, or is really sporty and has said to us that they really like cars and wants to be a mechanic. The disconnect is wider if the parents don't speak English, if there's a big cultural gap.*

In addition, parents/carers often had very little knowledge about what was needed to complete a trade, and things have certainly changed dramatically in one generation:

> *Literacy and numeracy is now bigger in the workplace. Previously, if you wanted to be a tradie you followed someone around, you didn't need a qualification and boom you were a plasterer. But now you need a qualification, you need to go to TAFE and you need to be able to write and do a certain level of maths. I think parents don't understand that anymore. They don't realise how complicated jobs can be now.*

While stakeholders could certainly see the need for "one-on-one support" for both parents and students engaging in SBATs outside of school, there was limited staff to achieve this.

> *Schools have their hands tied. If a teacher is scheduled for a class and they're on a playground duty, they can't go and accompany a student to TAFE or they can't check up on a kid or they can't spend an hour with a student working on an enrolment form, because they've got to take care of, in some schools, 1700 other kids. There's one careers adviser and over 1000 kids.*

School E

School E is a comprehensive coeducational specialist secondary school located in the South West Sydney region. The school has a focus on a range of technologies across all key learning areas. According to participants, approximately 51% of the student cohort are from refugee backgrounds, some of whom have experienced trauma. An Intensive English Centre has been established at this school to provide English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) and cultural support to students. Due to their level on the Family Occupation and Educational Index (FOEI), the school receives equity loading through the Department of Education's Resource Allocation Model, which allows them to "fund anything" they "need to fund", as one interviewee noted. They also participate in certain equity schemes on a similar basis, such as early university entry schemes for students based on their Year 11 grades. Their focus on careers preceding involvement in the EPPP comprised the YES program (adapted for YES+); a White Card program held biannually; and a School to Work program, where participating students receive a personalised plan developed by the school's TA. The school also maintains close partnerships with a range of universities, including participation in Western Sydney University's FastForward program and tertiary "bootcamps" at other universities. With regards to NAPLAN the school is well below the national average on all measures, but performs similar to students from a similar background in Year 7 reading, spelling, grammar and numeracy and Year 9 writing and numeracy.

Executive Leadership and Resourcing

School E is led by a principal and leadership team that includes three deputy principals. It has a CA and fractional appointments for a TA and a VET coordinator. At the time of preparing this report, it is drafting their 2021 Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP will include the EPPP initiatives.

How was EPPP implemented at School E?

Prior to the implementation of the EPPP, the CA, TA and principal worked closely to plan their participation over the following 12 months. The principal noted that they were well positioned to implement the EPPP because of their prior experience with the School to Work program. "School to Work submissions that we have are quite extensive. [The] careers adviser ... sat down with the transition adviser and myself and we mapped it [EPPP] out for a 12-month period".

In practice, the CA appeared to be primarily responsible for implementing the EPPP, and together with the TA, was a key enabler. The CA noted that she would meet with the CIT twice a term, which seemed to chiefly involve herself, the TA and principal. The CA also appeared to be the key point of contact for the HTC, with whom she corresponded regularly: "She communicates through emails and texts and calls. ... Maybe at least an email a day, a text every couple of days, and a call every couple of days, too".

Despite the additional resources that the EPPP introduced, participation resulted in a demonstrably high administrative burden, as several participants emphasised. The CA said this administration pertained to tasks like collecting notes from students and organising events with insufficient notice:

> *Give us a timetable of events instead of telling us a week before something is up. I have to give a lot of forms to students and parents. Then chasing them up, so hey did you bring it today? I can't keep doing that for dozens, even hundreds of kids next year when we need this consent for stuff, it's so much.*

The lack of time to organise activities and events was a critical barrier to the implementation of EPPP, sometimes resulting in the school having to reject opportunities for lack of capacity to manage them. Moreover, the CA's comments suggested that the additional labour they engaged in impacted their physical and mental wellbeing:

> *I just get so excited about new opportunities and new things like, yes, this is great, this will so benefit our kids. A lot of the time they are really good, but sometimes I just don't have the time to facilitate it myself or to coordinate it and I feel bad asking someone else to do it.*

There was some tension around the HTC role. At times, participants constituted the HTC as proactive in the school, willing to help the CA, and particularly effective at liaising with parents, providing much needed support, as the CA explained:

> *Oh, she'll [HTC] say, I can do it [help organise an event] or I can help you with it, because she is very proactive, which is good in terms of speaking to parents. It's really helped a lot that she can speak Arabic as well, so she can get things done and speak to parents.*

The teachers also appreciated the support from the HTC:

> *I think that [the HTC role] is really good. It is very supportive for the transition adviser and the careers adviser. She is here almost every Thursday. All these programs which are run under EPPP, she helps in running those programs and seeing the students and kids who have done the EOI. So, helping them and interviewing them.*

Conversely, the CA spoke about the ways in which the HTC would be "telling us what we need to do". Often, this would exacerbate workload issues, result in insufficient timeframes to organise events, and make it difficult to identify appropriate students to participate in careers activities:

> *[The HTC has] a really short turnaround. I'm getting a lot of, hey there's this thing happening next week, give me some names. I'm like, no. I can give you names, but I need that consultation with the student and maybe even their parents to see if it's going to benefit them. I can't do that in a week, I have to talk to their teachers, see what's going on in the calendar, collect work.*

The CA felt that in order to effectively organise activities the HTC had introduced, she had to push boundaries within the school, in turn asking unreasonable and last-minute requests of her colleagues:

> *I understand that they are also in there, trying to meet their quota, but it's just really frustrating to just be put in the middle. Because when they push me to do things and I push it, then I'm just stepping on the toes of executives or the principal and their head teacher of admin who needs to find casual relief for things.*

The lack of time and increased demand on the CA and Transition Team in particular was a common theme throughout interviews. The principal commented that these time constraints were not only overwhelming the Transition Team, but also inconsistent with what a school could reasonably be expected to achieve:

> *T-I-M-E. The number of meetings that take place and just trying to find time to work with the immersion team and how they're actually working with it. ... from my point of view, we have the systems actually set up. However, we've not been able to implement the EPPP in the way that I thought we would be [able to], given the launch and how it would actually operate.*

One interviewee noted that their participation in the EPPP had "become bigger than what we actually envisaged to start off with". Without additional capacity to support the Transition Team in the following year, participants suggested that the EPPP may not be sustainable in its current form. Instead, the school would have to make strategic decisions around which aspects of the pilots they can reasonably implement:

> *I think the bottom line with [the CA] is, in its current format, it would not be sustainable [for a second year]. We would be probably looking at, okay, what works best for us within those pilots and then augmenting it with our current operations as well.*

How was EPPP perceived by school-based participants?

Principal

The principal valued many elements of the EPPP, noting that it usefully supplemented a lot of the careers programs they already had running in the school:

> *We had a lot of programs running that EPPP actually brought in. What I can see with what's happening with the kids, they have a deeper understanding now around the pathways because it's probably more intense than we've had previously.*

In particular, the principal appreciated the contributions of the CIT around building closer relationships with training organisations, explaining that they were more willing to accommodate school needs:

> *It probably gave us more exposure to those other groups that are sitting out there. I think it put TAFE in a different position. They were conducting the orchestra around a lot of areas that we were looking at ... Now what I believe is happening [is] that they are coming onboard more, rather than everything that happens in TAFE [dictating] what schools were actually doing.*

The principal emphasised that the value of the EPPP is highly contextual and requires tailoring to the demographics of the school and region. This school possessed the resources and infrastructure to take advantage of the EPPP, without which the pilot may have been less effective: "If we had just run EPPP by itself it wouldn't be having the impact it's had. But that's been added onto other roles and responsibilities within that pathway structure that we actually have". In the absence of those school resources, including equity loading through the Department of Education's Resource Allocation Model and an internally funded transition adviser, the school would need to strategically reconsider which pilots they could reasonably implement. Indeed, he explained that some schools would be required to make such strategic decisions:

> *I do think all of the pilots may not necessarily suit all of the schools, so it may be a situation where, alright, this is the pilot and this is how we're working with it and how it's going to roll out.*

One key concern pertained to the exponential increase in workload and administrative duties, as discussed in the "EPPP Implementation" section. The principal spoke about the unsustainability of this workload, emphasising that implementing any program requires a deep understanding of the school context, which the EPPP lacked:

> *The accountability demands from above that they're having to work with at the moment is filtering down towards us as well and that's not sustainable. You know, there's people sitting in Macquarie Street that really don't have much of an idea of the context of what we're actually dealing with. They're working in their bubbles and I've had some conversations earlier in the piece [saying] sorry, that doesn't happen.*

Careers adviser

The CA was highly engaged in the EPPP and excited by many of the opportunities it introduced for her students. In particular, she valued the pilots that were based around practical and interactive activities, rather than passive events: "Our students get the most benefit from real life experience, so they need work experience, they need to be out there doing the YES+ and also getting one-on-one careers advice, those are the things that [are] the most impactful". She also valued the work of the SBAT mentor, noting that it was the most effective pilot in their school, based on students' positive engagement with the mentor. The SBAT mentor also helped to reduce the CA's workload, redistributing the labour required to establish SBATs.

There were clear concerns about the demonstrably higher workload the EPPP introduced, as discussed in the "EPPP Implementation" section. As a result of the increased workload and short turnaround times, she was required to turn down opportunities for lack of capacity to organise them, despite their relevance to students. Additional duties introduced through the EPPP also seemed to detract from her other duties within the school:

> *It's competing for my time and resources, because when I'm doing paperwork with a student for something, then I'm not speaking with another student who may [need that help] ... because, yes, I'm on top of, it's not just the disengaged kids that I work with, it's also the gifted and talented in the form of university pathways, but also scholarships now, so I'm that scholarships person.*

In part, this higher workload was the result of activities introduced by the EPPP that "duplicated" activities the school had already implemented: "We have to start doing these things required [transition initiatives] ... which we do already, but because it's not an EPPP thing now, we have to another one with them".

Teachers

The teacher focus group reflected a combination of benefits and challenges pertaining to the EPPP. Broadly, interviewees noted the success of some pilots based on student enthusiasm. One teacher noted that the EDGE workshops were very successful. "We had 40 kids taking part in it, the girls and the boys. They had a haircut. They put on clothes and everything". Another teacher said that the HTC role "is really good. It is very supportive for the transition adviser and the careers adviser". Another teacher that the YES+ initiative was valuable "because it gave [the students] a base of the working world. Reality". She had heard good feedback from the students, about what they liked, what they didn't like, and what was just "really good to know".

Like other participants, teacher interviewees also emphasised the increase in workload, which they did not anticipate prior to their participation in EPPP:

> *It is a good program, but it has become bigger than Ben Hur. It is not easy at all. It has really increased the workload for everyone. It is good for the students that they get to go on different programs, but it is a lot of work.*

There were also concerns that this increased workload was impacting the emotional wellbeing of staff, who would work additional hours at school and home.

Parents/carers

Parent/carer interviewees spoke in Syrian and Arabic, with an interpreter present. They noted that they received most of their information about the career provisions available at the school from their children. These interviewees were not heavily involved in careers activities in the school, and they did not express an awareness of the EPPP or its individual pilots. However, they spoke favourably of the school's efforts to support their children more generally:

> *We can't find any negative things [about the school]. The school gives lots, they can help with this, our child, our children. The things that were provided from the beginning 'til now, we are very happy with that. I think whatever the school provided, the school knows that this is for the benefit of the child, of our child, so we have big trust in school and what it can provide.*

Students

Student interviewees appeared sporadically engaged with the EPPP initiatives. They expressed a combination of opinions and varying levels of awareness pertaining to the EPPP. Generally, awareness of the EPPP seemed to increase with year level. Stage 4 students did not express an awareness of the EPPP or its individual pilots. Stage 5 and Stage 6 students demonstrated awareness of some elements of the EPPP. Specifically, YES+ appeared to be popular with Stage 5 and one Stage 6 interviewee, who noted that it allowed them to explore their career interests. One Stage 5 student found the course in nursing particularly interesting because "we had to experience the machines there, machines that nurses use". Another Stage 5 student found their experience with the chef course "amazing": "I tried to see how being a chef is like and the experience of it, how to work with a team and be organised all the time. It helped me a lot to see how it's going to be like". The EDGE workshops were also popular with Stage 5 interviewees, who spoke about the ways in which they learned what to expect when applying for work: "It was preparing us for job interviews and what kind of questions they're going to ask and how to prepare or be organised".

Stage 6 students did not appear to have much engagement with EDGE workshops. They were more familiar with the Training awards ambassadors and spoke favourably of any event that allowed a visitor to share information about their profession:

> *In my opinion, it's really helpful because a lot of us don't know what we are going to do in the future, and they help us to start organising right now before at the end of Year 12. So, that's more helpful for those students who don't know what they're going to do in the future after high school.*

Some students in Stage 6 were eager to participate in an SBAT but noted that they had not yet been able to establish one.

Influences on student aspirations in School E

Participants strongly articulated two educational pathways that their students tended to follow – those who wished to pursue university and those who wished to pursue a VET pathway. The CA explained the school's "very distinct, two different types of people:

> *We've got the kids who really want to go to university – very popular is medical science or doctor, and then we've got the other half of the kids who really want a VET pathway who are looking for an apprenticeship – construction and plumbing are very popular and also barbering.*

Notably, these trends were co-constituted through students' engagement with their families, and strongly inflected by their cultural backgrounds and parental/carer views around the value of higher education, explored in more detail below.

Family

Participants explained that family both strongly influenced the sorts of careers students wanted to enter and also functioned as a primary source of careers advice and information for students. A number of student participants across Stages 4, 5 and 6 expressed that members of their family were a key source of career support, sometimes deemed more appropriate than support provided by the school. For example, one student noted that their parents did not require any information from the school about school to work transition, "because my dad has already worked it all out" (Student, Stage 4). Another Stage 4 student described how his family had all the information he needed to learn more about his desired career in policing: "I don't need them [my parents] to [obtain careers information from the school] either. ... They know everything. ... Because my uncles in Lebanon, they're all policemen. I always speak to my uncles, almost every day".

Other students emphasised the ways in which conversations with their parents had helped shape their career interests or to further explore those interests. A Stage 5 student was thinking about doing nursing, "then this term I swapped to mechanics, [because] as I said, my family and I, we talk a lot". Another Stage 4 student didn't know much about construction, but that was fine, as he would "pick it up straight away once I go out with [my dad] on construction [sites]".

In other instances, however, participants noted that parents were disengaged and disinterested in their children, which constituted a barrier for students' educational success and impacted their wellbeing. One teacher provided a vivid example:

> *A colleague last year had a very difficult student in Year 10. Then for about four weeks, this student was working really well in class and was doing a great job. The colleague saw the student's mother at the supermarket and said, your daughter has been doing a great job in science. The mother replied, I don't give a [….]. So that's definitely a barrier I think to some of our kids. ... they don't care even if their student [child] is doing well.*

Parent/carer views on further education

Interviewees commented on the ways in which some parents/carers held university in such high esteem that many of their students felt finishing high school and pursuing higher education was mandatory. This was particularly the case for migrant students, as noted by the CA:

> *It is deeply engrained in them that their parents usually tell them what they should be doing after school. Especially with the refugee and the new migrant parents it is very high, because back in their home countries it would just be school then university, straight into uni, and I think that that's just what they know, so then that's what they expect from their child.*

One teacher commented that the migrant parents she worked with held strong beliefs that "university and degrees are the only way to live a life or have a better life". As a result, many parents/carers were ostensibly unaware of, did not consider, or undervalued alternative educational pathways like VET:

> *EAL/D background and refugee background parents don't understand this [desire to pursue a vocational pathway]. For them, that's a barrier. They don't want their kids to take those pathways. For them, coming from that cultural background, that is unfortunately looked down [upon].*
>
> *Some of those thoughts that they have are very much around the refugee journey themselves, so they look at doctors, lawyers, the medical areas being something [worth pursuing]. I do believe their families are seeing that as within their cultures, as sitting in that socio-economic level, but also be able to give back to communities and be able to support them back home as well.*

Indeed, attempts to shift these parents'/carers' views on university and vocational pathways was an ongoing challenge in the school that seemed to be met with much resistance, as the CA discussed:

> *I have had parents come in just for an SBAT talk or for a pre-apprenticeship course in engineering, but they just didn't want anything to do with it. They were like, no, my child is going to university. I understand that they can do an apprenticeship in engineering and then go through that way, but I want them to go to university straight after school.*

According to the CA, some parents/carers also associated university with prestige, and they were reluctant to consider other vocational pathways for their children on that basis. This was true even if their child could complete an identical course and attain an identical qualification at university or training organisation:

> *Maybe it's just they don't understand, or they don't even know about the options, but for some reason, even if they do know, there's a stigma still with a lot of families with apprenticeships or TAFE, even though I tell them, you can get a bachelor's degree at TAFE now. They say, no Miss, it has to be university.*

Participants problematised these parental/carer views around the need to attend university for a number of reasons. Chiefly, students' career aspirations were sometimes at odds with their parents'/carers' own expectations for them to attend university. The CA said, "The students, they know what there is and they are really excited about [VET pathways], but it's the parents who don't what them to get into it more, or don't know about it". Another teacher described the kind of VET pathway exposure students were getting at school:

> *The kids would very much like to do this practical task and that is what they want. We are delivering in vocational pathways, we have hospitality. We are delivering both streams: food and beverage, hospitality, kitchen operations. Then we have retail services. We have construction. We also do entertainment, which is behind the scenes and all the kids do so well with all the functions we run in our school.*

The CA had also experienced concerns that the students who felt pressured to attend university would be underprepared due to prior interruptions to their schooling:

> *There are some kids who I think might struggle in their first years – they have an idea of the actual job, but I don't think they understand how difficult university is. So, some of them might be on a Year 6 reading and writing level, just because as refugees they probably missed two or three years of schooling probably in their own language, so then they also struggle with English, but because of the culture, the parents really want them to go straight into university.*

Compared to students who migrated to Australia, the CA felt that students born in Australia did not face the same pressure to attend university from their parents:

> *It's funny because the kids who aren't new migrants or who were born here in Australia, their parents are a little bit more open. As long as they find work and they are in training or doing something, not just sitting around doing nothing, because they really need to provide for their families.*

This created a stark contrast between her students' aspirations and the sorts of messaging they receive from family:

> *It's a little but sad sometimes because we'll have Year 8 students, Year 9 students who are working while they are at school because they are the only one who works in their family. So, sometimes the parents will tell them yes to university and the others will just tell them to either work or [get] an apprenticeship, again. I've even heard one parent say, don't worry about school, just make sure you just keep going to work, so the values are very different.*

Indeed, some students reflected this attitude of prioritising work over school and further education. One Stage 4 student said, "What I know is that if you're not happy at school just get out and work". And another Stage 4 student said their dad had influenced their career and study ambitions. "My dad wants me to get out of school and start working ... because he believes I'm wasting time. [It's] normal, it's all right with me".

Which aspects of EPPP were perceived most positively at School E?

Participants noted that the EPPP initiatives were most effective when they were practical and when they complemented the school's existing practices and programs. To this end, some of the school's existing initiatives were positively impacted by their participation in the EPPP, as the principal explained: "With our pathways programs we initially started off with 12 kids in our work studies and out pathways group, but now we're three times that number of students. EPPP has allowed us to push that". Indeed, participants noted that the EPPP allowed them to build stronger relationships with training organisations, who became more willing to accommodate the needs of the school. They also worked more closely with employers, who became more involved with the careers showcase previously held by the school, with 50 employers in attendance.

There was a clear appetite amongst the student cohort for SBATs, and the introduction of the SBAT mentor allowed the school to prioritise organising SBATs. It also encouraged students to take responsibility for independently researching local employers, thus keeping them engaged and active. The role of the SBAT mentor also lessened the workload of the CA. Importantly, though, while this was constituted as an important pilot for the school context, the reluctance of local employers to take on students meant that the school did not establish any SBATs, despite the number of interested students. The CA lamented:

> *I know the initiatives have good intentions, but it's just the way that they are being rolled out or delivered. Is there a lot of impact? I still don't have any kids signed up to an SBAT – my kids who went on a pre-apprenticeship, they haven't signed up to a full-time apprenticeship or SBAT.*

According to participants, YES+ was also an improvement on their already popular TAFE YES program, which preceded their involvement in the EPPP:

> *The students from Year 9 and from Year 10, especially the disengaged boys ... they now had the taste. Every boy wants to be a plumber or wants to go into the construction industry. So they see when they go and taste this for two to three days in the industry, when they see plumbing, it's not an easy job and it needs a lot of numeracy. They are not paying attention in maths class, right. Then they come out, come back and that's a reason to start engaging in the maths class.*

Which aspects of EPPP were challenging at School E?

Increased workloads

While the benefits of the EPPP were significant at the school, the school's participation resulted in a demonstrably higher workload for all staff involved, particularly for the CA and Transition Team. Indeed, a number of participants commented that, without additional administration support from someone familiar with the school context and student cohort, the continuing participation would not be sustainable in its current form. Alarmingly, a number of interviewees also commented on the impact this high administrative workload was having on wellbeing of staff. The CA said that she could "cope with it", but it had also been "quite stressful". "I don't know how many times I walk around and people tell me, cheer up. I've noticed that this year". Another teacher commented on the time required to administer the initiatives, saying, "We all stay back up to six o'clock. Only then we can do these programs. So, it takes a toll on our family life and on our health. That needs to be really some resources for that".

This high administrative workload was ostensibly due to a lack of administrative support in key areas, but also the ways in which the EPPP would replicate careers activities the school had already implemented, creating additional work.

Language and literacy

Some of the materials available to the school through the EPPP did not appear to be appropriately pitched at the school's student cohort, over 80% of whom have a non-English speaking background. Specifically, the Digital careers toolbox, which involves a lot of English text, could not be used effectively by students without an option to translate the language. Similarly, events that required students to passively watch or listen to a speaker for longer periods of time were not effective according to some participants, as some students struggled to comprehend the information, while others became quickly disengaged from activities that lacked interactivity. The CA said that, "The quzzies are fun and the kids really engage with that, but it's still very wordy for them, unless you are sitting next to them and telling them [what it means]". When they did utilise these websites, they required a high degree of support, as the CA explained:

> *For LifeLauncher, my feedback was that my kids don't understand what "imaginative" means. So how are they going to say yes or no? So, the feedback was if there was an option for it to be translated, just even a toggle or like a dropdown thing. Again, it's a nice little website, but our kids wouldn't use it unless we did it in the classroom – there's no pictures in it, it's all just words.*

Teachers also expressed some reservations with the digital resources:

> *I think that they [Digital careers toolbox websites] were very useful and the kids were very interested. ... I also think it might have been a bit too long, especially for our cohort of students. Students appreciate something concise, to the point, because they can't focus for that long.*

The CA noted that the most appropriate and engaging resources for students were those that were interactive, included images and videos, contained less written text, and involved fewer or shorter presentations:

> *The Skillsroad, I think that was the most interactive. Our kids loved it for the first few minutes, and then they got over it. Also, maybe the [EDGE workshop] presentation, just show some videos of those working in the kitchen or something, instead of just talking about her career progression. Especially with our kids, some of them just don't have the English language skills to keep up.*

Some parents/carers also noted that language was or would become a barrier for their children in their education and entering the workforce, with one parent participant commenting about their son: "I believe [studying is] going to be hard for him, from the language side and especially if they going to send him to ... different places and far and he will [have to] catch buses or trains".

School E employs in-house translators to support non-English speaking parents/carers to participate in school events. Indeed, the school would hold multiple versions of the same event, with one dedicated to non-English speaking parents/carers, who would receive translated versions of relevant material. However, the principal noted that the school's existing practices were not always commensurable with the EPPP, which produced a "learning curve":

> *As you know, we're 85 per cent [EAL/D parents] sitting in there, and that has its own challenges, considering our communication systems have really been truncated this year. ... So from my point of view, we have the systems set up. However, we've not been able to implement the EPPP in the way that I thought we would be.*

Reflecting on this language barrier, one student in Stage 4 emphasised the importance of her mother receiving careers material from the school in her first language:

My mum – she speaks English but only a little bit, so I think [careers information] would be best if they put it into a note so that she can understand it. [Or] a meeting. … Because I think a meeting would be best with the people that are going to be there during the journey to help her process what's going to happen.

Getting all teachers involved

The CA explained that she felt supported by the Transition Team and principal, but noted that other teachers were reluctant to embed careers provisions into their classroom practice. She spoke of how important it was for students to have careers content embedded in other key learning areas (KLAs), but also the ways in which it compounded her workload when she was the only one pushing this agenda: "I know how important careers education is and what a mammoth task it is. It should be embedded in subjects, it really is part of everyone's syllabus, yet I'm the one who is doing [it all]". At times, the CA had secured opportunities for professionals to speak directly to students as part of their regular classes, but the classroom teachers were disinterested:

ANSTO are happy to have an actual scientist do a Zoom meeting with your science class, or there's an entrepreneurship program for business studies, what do you think? There are all these things that can relate to different subjects, but they are just not willing.

Other teacher participants spoke of teachers' negative attitudes towards VET more broadly, but noted a concerted and semi-successful effort to shift these attitudes was taking place at the school:

What helps is that a couple of weeks back, [the HTC] and the SBAT mentor, they came and did a presentation in the executive meeting. So that really helped. So, the head teachers have some idea what this program is. It is such a huge problem.

The value and challenges of SBATs

The SBAT mentor was a valuable resource for the school, functioning as another key enabler for the implementation of the EPPP. The CA said that, at her school, there were so many students wanting a traineeship or apprenticeship "[the SBAT representative] would have a line of parents and students waiting to speak to her to find out more about SBATs". The CA also commented that the SBAT mentor helped to reduce her workload and worked productively with students and parents/carers:

[It's] the most effective pilot so far, because she has actually spent whole days here doing one-on-one consultations with the students. [She'll say], you have a resume, let me have a look at it and let's tailor it to this carpentry SBAT.

The CA and teachers noted that the school provides a wealth of information and support around SBATs for students, including "an entire 50-minute class just about SBATs, like what you do, what's involved and everything". Subsequently, there was a clear appetite for SBATs amongst students at their school, particularly with their Year 10 and 11 cohorts. The SBAT mentor would encourage students to research local employers, and the SBAT mentor would then make initial contact, as the CA described:

We are very lucky now to have the SBAT mentor who can do cold calling. See, she works with the students to say, okay, I want you to find me three employers around your area – research them, look at their Facebook pages, their websites. If it's a place that you think you might be interested in doing an SBAT, let me know and I can call on your behalf.

While participants valued the SBAT mentor, employees in the local area were reluctant to accept students from the school, which functioned as a major barrier to the pilot's success. Indeed, despite student interest in SBATs, the principal explained that the school was not able to place a single student:

I think I had four boys who wanted to be an SBAT in carpentry, construction last year, but none of them found an employer, so now they are trying to establish an SBAT in Year 12, which is also a new thing, that's part of the EPPP. … a late start SBAT, but they are still unsuccessful.

The CA was unsure why employers were reluctant to accept students, but speculated that it could be for a number of reasons:

Employers don't like the idea of having someone who only half knows what they are doing, so they are still at school, they are not fully engaged with, for example, everything there is to do with their plumbing SBAT, so they might only see them once a week, … and then having to babysit them or making sure that they are taking care of them.

[And] no businesses want a 16-year-old on their construction site. It could be because they don't have their licence. … It could be that employers don't even know what a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship is, but it's just so difficult for our kids to find employers, and I don't know why.

The CA suggested that being provided with a list of interested local employers identified in advance by the Department of Education— "like a recruitment list [with] what they are looking for to make it easier for the SBAT mentor to find places" — would have helped to expedite the process and more reliably secure SBATs for students. Participants were disappointed that SBATs could not be established for these students, as many were disengaged from school but motivated to independently identify and establish SBATs with employers. The CA reflected on the importance of these opportunities for disengaged students, particularly students from refugee backgrounds who had potentially experienced trauma, emphasising that employers and stakeholders need to take their backgrounds into consideration:

> *I know it's good to throw them in the deep end, treat them like adults and everything, but at the end of the day, we have some kids who have trauma, coming from different countries where there's war – some of them, their fathers were kidnapped and stuff like that. To understand that they might have some PTSD or some mental health issues, or even low literacy or numeracy skills, but if you give them a chance that they can learn through competency-based work, through activities. School just isn't really fit for a lot of our kids, but employers should give them a go – just understand that everyone is different.*

The perceptions of external stakeholders: School E

Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 was only briefly mentioned in the stakeholder interviews for School E. One stakeholder had noticed that the maturity levels of their students seemed to be lower than previous groups and attributed this to the loss of work experience from COVID-19. "They've missed out on doing work placements where you're forced into an industry and you have to act up and act a bit older". Another stakeholder talked about how they had to "suspend" the training of several of their SBATs from February and start them again in September. "This year's been a difficult year for the school-base because of COVID-19. I'm now working with training services and the Department of Education to look at whether we should be penalising those learners to get one in 30 days".

Student benefits

All of the external stakeholder participants commented on the tangible positive impact the pilots had had on students. These included building intrapersonal and trade-specific skills, gaining employment, and developing a better understanding of their future careers space. They all spoke about how engagement with some of the pilots gave students a better understanding of the reality of the VET and employment space, as well as their own ideas about their career trajectory. One stakeholder said that giving students opportunities for real-world experiences enabled them to "make some decisions about what subjects they want to choose for Year 12". Another found that the students' experiences with the TAFE courses increased their understanding of TAFE itself —"A lot of them didn't know TAFE until they came into the program" —as well as the kinds of jobs and industries they could explore in their future careers.

> *They felt the [YES+] tasters were helpful and they were good to find out what you don't like doing. The other thing they've said to us was around finding what they enjoy. They're looking for industries that will be beneficial and enjoyable for them.*

Another stakeholder emphasised that students "can benefit greatly from going to TAFE first before they make decisions around where they're going to specialise in a university degree". She stated that "VET students make better university students", and that by engaging with the TAFE sector prior to pursuing a tertiary degree, students can benefit from making connections with employers and building relevant skills:

> *We've certainly gotten feedback with our program, particularly in health, that our students with two years [of] employment experience make better training nurses. We know that within our better programs, with our fast-food friends, the employer-led programs that we have, we've got warehousing with [a local business], and they take ownership of those programs, and that's where we're getting the best results. Students [are] getting incredible employment opportunities, in depth pathways, opportunities, employment, a whole range of things.*

YES+ was perceived as being very successful, with "a full 20 kids wanting to do carpentry". One stakeholder spoke about a specific student who had really thrived in the YES+ pilot and seemed to have found his niche. "We've had one young kid, he's been top of the class each rotation. He was the best in electro, he was the best in robotics and apparently he's equally now the best in carpentry. He just loved the experience". One stakeholder discussed the skills that students would have gained from their participation in an EPPP automotive course. "They'll have quite good resumes as school leavers because they've done this three-week pre-apprenticeship course which has included the theory they did at TAFE, plus the work experience. If that information is formatted correctly, the resumes will read really well". And a business owner said that "90 percent" of the students he had taken on for work experience last year have gone on to take a place within the business.

> *We're taking on around 15 school-based apprentices this year and probably 50 per cent of them are EPPP learners and we have a very good rate at the other end when they come to full-time employment. So, we've got two young people finishing their second year of their school-based this year on 31 December and on 1 January they're being employed as full-time apprentices.*

Future implementation of the EPPP

While some external stakeholders experienced no substantive change in the way the SBAT initiative was run, they did appreciate the extra collaboration and funding that came as part of the EPPP, and the ability to communicate better with other stakeholders and leaders:

> *It's allowed us as a group training organisation to spend more time on getting things organised like buying the PPE for [the students undertaking SBATs] and organising the work placements and just being able to have time in your day to ring the head teachers that are working on it and say how's it going.*

Based on experience with YES+, one stakeholder said she would like to see more steps for younger students who participate in YES+ and want to continue on a specific trajectory. This could potentially involve more funding to support another program, which could eventually lead into an SBAT:

> *If we worked it out nicely schools can identify kids that might be potential for an SBAT or a traineeship, feed them through a YES program and get to see them a bit more. Then we have another program. They should be able to get funding based on an endorsement from TAFE and an endorsement from the SBAT coordinator. Come into another program where it's a bit more intense in that industry area that they think they're in love with and then they can pick up SBATs from there.*

This stakeholder had also been talking with the CIT about how to get more definable pathways, potentially into skills shortage areas, as a result of the success of the EPPP:

> *Maybe it's not every industry area and it's not being everything to everybody and maybe it is only in skill shortage areas that these are options that are available. But how do we get that path defined for young people with funding so that is accessible?*

Another stakeholder found that the EPPP had provided "a really good and strong reality check around what the day-to-day experience is of these schools". In this area, there are a lot of social, cultural, and economic issues that are "way beyond the remit and the ability of the EPPP to fix and fix quickly". However, they found that the pilot had helped to build positive and productive relationships with people in schools, and [the stakeholder] was grateful for the opportunity to "make some fundamental change in our broader program":

> *It's certainly not been easy with these guys going into schools, to actually earn their trust, to build positive and productive relationships, but also to hear now that there is planning activity happening for 2021, they are asking questions about programs that you would assume that every student in a New South Wales government high school has access to; it's not the case.*

Communication

For the external stakeholders, one of the biggest challenges with the EPPP centred around communication about the pilots. This included what kind of messaging was being used to encourage participation, as well as who was being communicated with. Several commented on the difficulties involved with getting businesses and industry on board, particularly in relation to the SBAT pilot with one stakeholder saying that she had heard about the SBAT "at a Steel Manufacturing Industry meeting" because they were doing some PR around the program. However, she also knew of a lot of other manufacturing companies who didn't have any SBATs and couldn't pinpoint why. "I don't know what the dis-incentive is there, if it's a lack of knowledge or a lack of openness to try something different". There was an acknowledged need to get more workplace providers on board, but connecting students with appropriate placements wasn't always easy. "For the SBATs, it's getting the alignment of an employer that's willing to take on the kids. Then you need to align that with the TAFE course or the private RTO that's going to do the theory side of it and that doesn't always match up".

The "organic" alignment of employers, industry, and students was the primary goal. "[When] employers and industry see the value of supporting young people while they're at school through their HSC, that's where we know we're getting the best outcomes and opportunities for kids". It was also recognised that industry needed to work harder to make connections with schools and students as one stakeholder, heavily involved in the EPPP pilot explained, "I've been involved in the EPPP TV, I've done a few of the recordings that are on the website and I was there from an industry perspective to talk about the EPPP program", but when speaking to colleagues across Sydney he found that some had not even heard of school-based apprenticeships. He believed that communication between schools and businesses needed to be "more vocal":

> *There's a lot of career days where we invite parents, and they invite the young people and they invite different schools but I've never seen many different industries going to these careers events. It's like they're not inviting the industry that's needed to give them the paid work placements and again, if that could be improved, I think that would help everybody as well.*

Some stakeholders also found some aspects of working with schools to be challenging. One mentioned the need for schools to be more "open to the VET sector", particularly those who weren't really "pushing the envelope" with regards to participation in TAFE and VET-related programs. Difficulties with schools working with TAFE were attributed to teachers in schools having a lack of knowledge and experience with VET pathways, possibly because it wasn't a pathway they took themselves.

> *I think it would be very difficult for even a technology teacher, for example, to talk about hospitality pathways with a lot of authority, because that's not necessarily the career trajectory that they took. There's definitely work to do around informing and educating other teachers in those academic subjects.*

Collaboration between all stakeholders was recognised as a key contributor to the success of EPPP. As one stakeholder explained, we need to "collaborate better" and to stop "pointing fingers and complaining about the same old things". She said that training organisations needed to take some responsibility for providing information about SBAT initiatives. "If there was a broader remit

around getting RTOs in New South Wales to support trainees and apprentices around career pathways, if the information was coming from there, that would support parents' understanding as well". The difficulty with working with schools is that "there's nothing compulsory, there's nothing mandatory about any of the work we do". This meant that the process of connecting with schools needs to be collaborative, and that there needs to be more work done for schools to see the benefits for them and their students. She also wanted to see the further education process flipped:

> *What I'm seeing, and it's only anecdotal, but students are undertaking their undergraduate degrees, and then going and doing VET course to get employability, and to get skills to make them employable in the field that they've actually just undertaken a degree in. I would like to see that flip, so that the education system supports VET into university.*

Literacy, numeracy, and employment skills

Despite the VET and SBAT learning environment being more practical and experiential, sound literacy and numeracy skills are important for students to have if they want to succeed. One stakeholder gave a particular example of a student who came to Australia as a refugee in Year 9 and enrolled in the SBAT initiative in Year 11. He had intensive English training, but little mathematics training. In all other ways, he was an ideal candidate for an SBAT—committed, interested, and capable—but his low numeracy skills presented a problem:

> *We had someone who has got 100 per cent work ethic; he's punctual, he's willing to learn, and from what I'm told by his direct supervisor, he's showing a proficiency in welding. So he's got strengths. His weakness is that in this type of industry, you need to rely on some basic maths skills. So that's where we're finding that he's actually struggling and he may not succeed in passing the course without having a bit more maths tuition.*

This issue with numeracy skills would definitely impact his ability to proceed with his SBAT. "If he can improve his maths, he'll do well. But if he can't improve his maths, he probably should choose something different".

Another stakeholder flagged that numeracy was a necessary skill for students working in areas like the automotive or electrical industry. However, they also noted that students needed to build their "soft skills" such as learning how to write a cover letter or a resume, and that schools should be addressing this skills shortage:

> *What we need to do is we need to embed more soft skills into these kinds of programs. Because by the time the kids get to us at the group training level, they don't know how to write a cover letter. Their resumes aren't even talking to the trade that they want to work in. They have an interest in that particular discipline, but they don't talk to it. There are lots of motherhood statements like "I'm a team player" and "I'm punctual", but not "I have a passion to work with cars" or "I have a passion with food, and I cook at home all the time", or "I want to be a florist and I cut the flowers in mum's garden" or something. There's nothing as simple as that in there.*

Schoolwork commitments

Some interviewees inferred that some students found it hard to balance their VET work and their schoolwork, and that there were some schools that didn't have effective practices in place to help support students:

> *A couple of them have had to go back to school for exams that have fallen on those days and things like that. So, the school responsibilities aren't changed to allow them to come and be a part of it and I think that's one of the big barriers for them. Some schools are very on board with what the program represents but others are still defaulting back to "you must catch up on your work" and I think if this is about giving kids pathways and alternatives, putting those rules on them makes it a bit harder.*

Another stakeholder thought that teachers and schools needed to adjust their expectations of students undertaking SBATs or VET programs, and understand that they are still in education, just of a different kind:

> *With students missing classes, I don't think those teachers really understand the benefits… yes, they might be missing an assessment task, but instead of berating the student for missing the assessment task, how about give them some support, because they're actually working in a hospital, or they're working on a construction site. There's other things that they're contributing to their education.*

Student attitudes and skills

One stakeholder made the point that the best thing a student could bring to a VET course or a workplace is not necessarily any particular skills, but a positive attitude. "An openness to learn and [to be] looking for something meaningful to do with themselves that is not academic. It's generally the type of person who is attracted to working with their hands". Another agreed with this perspective, saying:

> *I run induction days within the business and one of my first opening lines is, we're not looking for you to be experts in the industry. We're just looking for you to have an enthusiasm and a willingness to learn and an aspiration to want to work within the automotive industry at whichever level they aspire to be at.*

It was thought to be ideal if a student could come into an SBAT with some experience and knowledge, but "the attitude's really important", and enthusiasm is what he sees more often than not:

> *It's far better for everyone if the students have had some kind of exposure to the industry that they want to go and do the work placement or their apprenticeship or traineeship in. But initially, if we take this EPPP program that we did in automotive for example, one or two of the cohort had actually done something in the automotive space before. The rest were all brand new and just had worked on dad's car or their big brother's car or something like that.*

However, some intuitive skills and academic capabilities could also be beneficial, particularly in helping a school identify a student that may be suited to vocational learning. As one stakeholder explained,

> *I would really like to hear from the trades' teachers at the school, and say we've highlighted some individuals who show some natural skill in this subject and we think this is where they shine. So, they're not going to be doing advanced maths, but they've got enough maths to be able to do the work that they're doing here in class in the trades course and this is where they're really good.*

Another participant commented on how beneficial it can be to have more skills and knowledge going into an apprenticeship or job. These don't need to be trade-specific skills, but rather "work-ready skills" that show they are capable of managing themselves in a professional environment:

> *I always speak to careers advisers and say, nowadays a trade just isn't all about competency. We are looking for a level of language, literacy and numeracy skills within the automotive industry, but also what's important is them being job ready. I think just having some work ready skills from the school before they arrive around appearance, time keeping and just those basic work ready skills would be really good when they come to do work experience.*

Even if students may be lacking in maturity or confidence going into a vocational program, according to one stakeholder, these are exactly the intrapersonal skills that SBATs and taster programs like YES+ are able to build:

> *It contributes to work readiness, and certainly what I see in my particular program being an employment-based program, is that it raises maturity levels around career decision making, because students are getting a really insightful and in-depth view of the workplace. I see my space in the SBAT space, probably some more robust and in-depth analysis of students using that information to support career pathways, probably more so than other VET programs.*

The VET experience

The actual experience of VET can be its biggest selling point for students. As a stakeholder clarified, "It provides engagement, provides an introduction to the workplace, it gives an opportunity for students to try before they make some significant career decisions making for post school pathways. It's a much broader approach". Another said that the different environment and facilities that students can engage with can be a positive experience, as well as "seeing other students and teachers in that area [of vocational learning]". VET also presents a different approach to learning. "A vocational education gives you that opportunity for hands-on [learning], whereas university is far more theoretical, essay-based, academic". She also thought it was important to highlight that "VET is a nice place to start the next stage in education", especially for students with lower level literacy and numeracy skills. VET courses certainly have the possibility to lead to apprenticeships and jobs in trades, but it can also be an alternative pathway into university. The stakeholder said,

> *I say to the young people, even if you get to the end of the two years and you still decide to go to university, at least you've gained two years of experience in the workplace that you can take with you. Wherever you go and whatever job you do, you've had two years of working with people and [you've] learnt some new life skills [you] can take with [you].*

This point was reiterated by another stakeholder who felt that doing an SBAT or VET course with a training organisation in a certain field could give a student a range of knowledge and skills that they could potentially take with them into a university degree in a similar area. It could also be a more feasible option for students who may struggle financially with the costs involved with pursuing a university degree, or who might find going straight from high school to university to be difficult.

> *If you have a student that's struggled in high school, pathwaying straight through university to begin with I think is not putting them on a great path. Some areas of electrotechnology are a good example because you can come into TAFE and you can learn some of [the basics] before you progress through into areas like electro-engineering. You've got that foundational skill really developed and you understand the concepts. Even those kids that perhaps are set on where they want to go but may fall into a low socio-economic area - let's say they were to go into electrotechnology – doing an advanced diploma in electrotechnology is, what, $2000 compared to 12 months of university? Financially it just makes sense to take that pathway.*

Parents/carers

The opinions and perspectives of parents and carers, about the EPPP and their expectations for their children, could also potentially impact on a student's ability or willingness to participate in a VET or apprenticeship program. One stakeholder reported that some parents/carers didn't understand the value that external programs could have for their students, and they think "it's a distraction as opposed to a potential pathway. If we were called TAFE University they would probably be okay in sending their kids". This was attributed to the cultural expectations of some parents in the South Western Sydney community:

> *Vocational education truly isn't understood by our newly arrived immigrants. There's more opportunity for some of their young people to get into qualified employment through a vocational pathway as opposed to a university pathway. But the parents don't understand it. It's not in their homeland that they've come from, so they don't understand that TAFE or VET is a pathway for their young people. Equally, I've had some parents of students say things to me like "she will be starting her family". So [there are also] those sorts of family pressures of what their daughters will be doing after school.*

One stakeholder in South Western Sydney commented that VET needs to work on their messaging so that parents/carers can understand the programs and how they can put their children on a pathway to success:

> *The analogy I [use] is the barbecue conversation with parents. From a parent's perspective, if they're able to say at the barbecue, yes, my student got into business or got into engineering [at university], then the job's done as far as they're concerned. I think parents find that they have to justify the support and decision making around apprenticeships and traineeships and VET pathways. I think that that's one of our fundamental issues around that, is that the VET space is complex here.*

Behavioural issues

One stakeholder commented that there is a perception that VET is only the pathway for the "naughty" or "disengaged" kids, and that this is something that schools need to adjust in terms of who they target for participation in VET programs. It was thought that by being the place that you go to if you don't appear to have high aspirations, it can send a message to other students that VET is not an appropriate pathway for them:

> *[Schools] being more intentional about students participating in vocational education is a positive. Now, perhaps we aren't targeting kids that are going to be those high grade kids—you know, the 90 plus—maybe even 85 plus. But for the kids in the middle ground, they're the ones that could go on that supported pathway journey.*

The overall behaviour and maturity levels of students participating in the pilots was also changing. This was of concern for some stakeholders, not just because of the impact it had in the VET learning environment, but for what it meant for the student's readiness to step into a professional employment space:

> *The maturity levels on these kids is certainly very, very different and their attention on their phones is a lot greater. They could be in a lesson and then they're standing up doing a TikTok [dance] on the side. An employer is not going to tolerate that. They won't say "stop doing it" three times. They'll say... "now you can go". Also, less kids have casual jobs than what we normally find. So that local maturity of the young people just isn't there.*

This stakeholder also said that VET was not an ideal learning environment for students under the age of 15, and that this was something that needed to be considered if there were plans to extend the VET and YES+ pilots into the lower secondary school years. "There are other risks onsite. We have tobacco smoking and all that kind of stuff so we would need some policy changes to bring in younger kids if that was [going to be] the case".

Another commented that students in apprenticeships needed to have more commitment to a long-term vision of their career path, particularly with regard to how workplace training can add to their earning capacity in the future:

> *They're not prepared to continue on an apprenticeship wage. They see their mates and family members out doing labouring jobs at the moment and earning two and sometimes three times as much as what they are as an apprentice. But they don't have that long-term vision to say if I can stick this out for the three or four years that I've signed up for, I'll be okay.*

Business challenges

One stakeholder talked about how businesses need to consider the financial impact of taking on an SBAT. "It's not about the cash but there's obviously an expense". He also commented about the difficulties businesses can have with getting SBATs happening in certain parts of Sydney. He believed this was due to the values and expectations in certain areas about VET and university and that this needed to be addressed:

> *We have dealerships on both sides of the bridge. On the southern side of Sydney, I've probably got too many applications for school-based and apprenticeships. I go to the North Shore and I find it very difficult to engage with schools to talk about the VET sector. They're very much focused on a university pathway out for all their learners. I know from experience, 10 years in Australia, that not all schools on that side of the bridge [have] all their learners go to university. So, for me, I just think there needs to be more education across all schools about the benefits to the VET sector.*

During the EPPP pilot, he had also noted that there had been fewer female students applying for SBATs in his area, despite consistently trying to engage and employ female apprentices.

> *We've got probably five per cent of our apprentices [are females], which is above the national average. Last year two of the eight intakes for [SBAT] last year were females. This year, I've had real issues trying to get any resumes from the schools for females and the two we have placed, they've only lasted maybe two days and decided that it's not for them. So, it feels like it wasn't their vocation they were really looking for and the schools have tried to curtail them into that role. So, really struggled with females in the industry this year.*

Importance of relationships

All of the external stakeholders interviewed for the EPPP spoke about how important relationships were for the successful implementation of the pilots. They had developed relationships with multiple parties—students, school teachers, program leaders, mentors, parents, training organisations, and businesses.

The most utilised relationships for all stakeholders seemed to be with the school CAs and the HTCs introduced with the EPPP. The stakeholders spoke about contacting the CAs at schools about particular students in order provide better support for them. Another had an SBAT student who was working well but lacking in his numeracy skills. She made sure to raise this with the school, to see if he could get some more intensive maths tuition. "I've contacted the school counsellor and said we want to see him succeed in whatever he does". A further stakeholder found the relationship with the new HTC to be "a beautiful link" from the pilot, as it enabled her to continuing connecting with students who had proved to be passionate and capable in their chosen area. "If there are any apprenticeship positions coming up we know [we have] a candidate for electrical and he's excited and passionate about it. It's like case management for the kids to go yes, I'm here". The business owner also said the HTCs had been "a real treat to work with".

Some stakeholders found working with the CAs to be beneficial, particularly in terms of setting up SBATs. One described how a quick email turnaround had led to five students starting SBATs in the following January,

> *One of the EPPP schools, I e-mailed them on the Monday and said, we're open for business for school-based, and they'd sent me five candidates by the Tuesday. They're now starting with us in January. But that's because I've engaged with that school careers adviser for five months and we've got a really good relationship, so I just think—it's like anything, communication is key with whatever's happening.*

However, he did notice a difference between working with CAs with varying teaching loads. This wasn't just with the amount of time that the CA may have to speak with him, but more so with the capabilities and understanding that their students would bring to the workplace.

> *I will say we work with one of the EPPP schools and they've got a dedicated careers adviser so those [students] come very well prepared. I also work with other schools where the careers adviser is doing that in between lessons and in between their normal day activities and those young people are probably less prepared for the workplace. Some careers advisers, they probably have 10 or 15 minutes a day to look after all the learners that need careers advice, so as an employer, I can definitely gauge the difference in the kind of interaction the young people have depending on whether they've got a dedicated adviser or not.*

Appendix 5: Pilot implementation

Table 61. Pilot 1 - Digital Careers Toolbox Delivery

Cluster	Date	Activity	Student #	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Note
Grafton	23/07/2020	Myfuture - Link to information	**17**				17			
	7/09/2020	Skillsroad360 - Digital Careers Toolbox	**14**						14	
	11/09/2020	Skillsroad360 - Digital Careers Toolbox	**50**		23			16	11	
	18/09/2020	Skillsroad360 - Digital Careers Toolbox	**20**				14		6	
	21/09/2020	Skillsroad360 - Digital Careers Toolbox	**52**				52			
	23/09/2020	Skillsroad360 - Digital Careers Toolbox	**13**						13	
	24/09/2020	Skillsroad360 - Digital Careers Toolbox	**10**				10			
	25/09/2020	Skillsroad360 - Digital Careers Toolbox	**6**				6			
	9/10/2020	Skillsroad360 - Virtual Workplace + Job Fit Test	**10**				2		8	
Ballina Cluster	18/11/2020	Digital Toolbox Workshop	**80**			80				
Campbelltown		No data								
Liverpool Cluster	20/10/2020	Digital Carers Toolbox	**30**			30				
	9/11/2020	Digital Careers Toolbox	**22**			22				
	11/11/2020	Digital Careers Toolbox	**22**			22				
	18/11/2020	Digital Careers Toolbox	**27**			27				
	23/11/2020	Digital Careers Toolbox	**18**			18				

	24/11/2020	Myfuture Workshop	**27**			27				
	30/11/2020	Digital Careers Toolbox	**22**			22				
	3/12/2020	Digital Careers Toolbox	**20**			20				
	4/12/2020	Digital Careers Toolbox	**15**			15				
	7/12/2020	Digital Careers Toolbox	**13**			13				
	10/12/2020	Digital Careers Toolbox	**15**		15					
	11/12/2020	Digital Careers Toolbox	**20**			20				
Cowpasture Cluster	23/11/2020	Pilot 1 Lesson	**30**							* Subgroup unknown
	10/12/2020	Digital Careers Toolbox	**15**		15					

Table 62. Pilot 2 - New Model of Careers Education Delivery

Cluster	Date	Activity	Student #	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Note
Grafton	21/07/2020	Playground Career Talks & My Journey Expo Promotion	**50**			15	23	12		
	22/07/2020	Guest Speaker - Liam	**16**			16				
	23/07/2020	Interest in Trainee and Apprenticeship Pathway - Group	**17**				17			
	11/08/2020	Student Worksheet - SkillsOne Parent Showcase Video	**162**				162			
	17/08/2020	Next Step	**15**			3	12			
	25/08/2020	NSW Transport - Apprenticeship & Trainee Recruitment 2021	**17**				17			
	10/09/2020	Achieve Fest - 2-day program - Select group	**21**				21			

	16/09/2020	Interest in Trainee and Apprenticeship Pathway Group - iTAP	**17**				17			
	17/09/2020	Inspiring Careers in Hospitality & Hotel Services	**17**			17				
	18/09/2020	Employability Skills Presentation	**32**			32				
	18/09/2020	Career Talks - Playground	**20**			8	10	2		
	23/09/2020	Inspiring Women 2020 - Webinar	**2**				2			
	25/09/2020	Career Pathway Lesson	**8**			8				
	11/11/2020	Construction Pre-Apprenticeship	**14**				14			
	17/11/2020	Tradie Talk	**14**				14			
	27/11/2020	Tradie Talk	**97**							* Subgroup unknown
	30/11/2020	SwitchOn Electrical Career Program	**13**							* Subgroup unknown
Ballina	23/07/2020	My Journey Virtual Careers Expo	**112**							* Subgroup unknown
	30/07/2020	Career Talks	**10**				10			
	26/08/2020	Life Ready Workshop	**60**					60		
	15/09/2020	Career Talks	**28**							* Subgroup unknown
	4/11/2020	Careers Lesson and Survey Pilot 2	**60**			60				
	6/11/2020	Careers Lesson and Student Survey Pilot 2	**18**				18			
	6/11/2020	Careers Bites	**24**							* Subgroup unknown
	9/11/2020	Open P-Tech	**1**				1			

	11/11/2020	Year 10 and 11 GIT	**17**							* Subgroup unknown
	13/11/2020	TradeFit Program	**9**							* Subgroup unknown
	24/11/2020	Pilot 2 Survey	**70**			23	47			
	24/11/2020	Certificate III in Business Planning	**10**					10		
	27/11/2020	Youth In Film Workshop	**12**							* Subgroup unknown
	30/11/2020	Switch On	**12**							* Subgroup unknown
	9/12/2020	Aviation Careers Expo	**19**							* Subgroup unknown
Campbelltown	2/11/2020	Pre-Apprenticeship Automotive	**5**							* Subgroup unknown
	3/11/2020	GTO ACA Pre-surveys completed	**5**				5			
	3/11/2020	GTO MyGateway Construction	**1**			1				
	2/12/2020	GTO HTN Butchery	**2**				2			
Liverpool	21/07/2020	Home Room Careers Webinar	**100**				100			
	21/07/2020	Yr 10 Subject selection lesson	**18**				18			
	22/07/2020	My Journey Virtual VET Expo Day 1	**24**				24			
	22/07/2020	Yr 10 Subject selection SBAT/EVET overview	**100**				100			
	23/07/2020	My Journey Virtual VET Expo Day 2	**20**					13	7	
	27/07/2020	Yr 10 Subject selection lesson	**18**				18			
	28/07/2020	Home Room Webinar	**100**				100			

	30/07/2020	SBAT Recruitment	**46**					46		
	3/08/2020	Yr 10 Subject selection lesson	**18**				18			
	6/08/2020	Subject selection panels	**15**				15			
	11/08/2020	Home Room Webinar	**100**				100			
	13/08/2020	Visit student on work experience	**1**					1		
	18/08/2020	Home Room Webinar	**20**					20		
	25/08/2020	Home Room Webinar	**100**				100			
	25/08/2020	Student support meeting	**1**						1	
	1/09/2020	Home Room Webinar	**100**				100			
	2/09/2020	Resume Update AHS for targeted SBAT students.	**2**					2		
	7/09/2020	Resume Update for targeted SBAT students.	**3**				3			
	10/09/2020	MTHS meeting with student parents (phone)	**1**					1		
	10/09/2020	Resume Update for targeted SBAT students.	**5**				5			
	14/09/2020	Resume Update for targeted SBAT students.	**15**				15			
	15/09/2020	Home Room Webinar	**100**				100			
	17/09/2020	Resume Update for targeted SBAT students.	**5**				5			
	21/09/2020	Resume Update for targeted SBAT students.	**5**				5			
	21/09/2020	JBHS Life Launcher roll out Pilot 1 - Yr 10	**100**							* Subgroup unknown
	22/10/2020	MTHS Student support with resume and cover letter	**1**				1			
	22/10/2020	Auto pre-apprenticeship student support	**2**				2			

	28/10/2020	MyGateway resume and cover letter support	**10**				10			
	28/10/2020	MyGateway Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship interested students	**4**				4			
	29/10/2020	MyGateway resume and cover letter support	**3**				3			
	2/11/2020	Pre-Apprenticeship Automotive	**6**							* Subgroup unknown
	3/11/2020	GTO ACA Pre-surveys completed	**3**				3			
	3/11/2020	GTO MyGateway Construction	**3**			3				
	4/11/2020	GTO ACA Pre-surveys completed	**3**				3			
	17/11/2020	WSU Parental Consent Permission notes	**18**				18			
	25/11/2020	SALT Workshop	**20**				20			
	1/12/2020	EPPP Terrariums Orientation careers workshops	**260**						260	
	2/12/2020	GTO HTN Butchery	**7**				7			
	10/12/2020	Student referrals for PCYC Fit for Work	**23**				23			
	-	AHS Stage 6 milestone interviews	**30**					30		
Cowpasture	9/02/2020	Mock Interviews	**15**				15			
	27/07/2020	Yr10-11 Subject Selection	**135**				135			
	28/07/2020	Yr10-11 Subject Selection	**135**				135			
	30/07/2020	Subject Selection Prairiewood	**16**				16			
	31/07/2020	Career Coaching. Helping student and parent with pathways	**1**							* Subgroup unknown
	12/08/2020	Filming for EPPP TV ep 3. Supervision	**2**							* Subgroup unknown

	18/08/2020	Work Experience Coaching	**2**				2			
	24/08/2020	Yr8 Subject Selection	**130**		130					
	25/08/2020	Yr8 Subject Selection	**145**		145					
	15/09/2020	Work Experience Interviews	**1**				1			
	16/09/2020	Career Coaching	**1**				1			
	17/09/2020	Productivity Boot Camp Interviews	**11**							* Subgroup unknown
	21/09/2020	Minister Lee Visit	**7**				7			
	25/09/2020	Work Experience for potential SBAT kids	**15**							* Subgroup unknown
	8/10/2020	Subject Selection Cecil Hills	**15**				15			
	2/11/2020	Pre-Apprenticeship Automotive	**3**							* Subgroup unknown
	3/11/2020	GTO ACA Pre-surveys completed	**2**				2			
	3/11/2020	GTO MyGateway Construction	**4**			4				
	3/11/2020	GTO ACA Pre-surveys completed	**2**				2			

Table 63. Pilot 3 - TAFE YES+ Delivery

Cluster	Date	Activity	Student #	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Note
Grafton	2/06/2020	Online primer Day 1								
	4/06/2020	Online primer Day 2								
	18/08/2020	YEP11 Program	18				18			
	27/08/2020	Online primer Day 1								
	28/08/2020	Online primer Day 2								
	31/08/2020	YES+ Program (Primer)	12					12		

	31/08/2020	Online primer 1 hour of Day 1 program								
	1/09/2020	Online primer 1 hour of Day 1 program								
	4/09/2020	Online primer 1 hour of Day 1 program								
	7/09/2020	Online primer 1 hour of Day 2 program								
	8/09/2020	Online primer 1 hour of Day 2 program								
	11/09/2020	Online primer 1 hour of Day 2 program								
	19/10/2020	Single industry vocational taster								
	26/10/2020	Single industry vocational taster								
	2/11/2020	Single industry vocational taster								
	9/11/2020	Single industry vocational taster								
	16/11/2020	Single industry vocational taster								
	23/11/2020	Single industry vocational taster								
Ballina	14/08/2020	Student Group W - Orientation								
	20/08/2020	Student Group F Orientation								
	21/08/2020	Student Group W Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	21/08/2020	Student Group F Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	28/08/2020	Student Group W Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	28/08/2020	Student Group F Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	4/09/2020	Student Group W Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	4/09/2020	Student Group F Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	4/09/2020	Orientation								
	11/09/2020	Student Group W Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	11/09/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	15/09/2020	Student Group F Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	18/09/2020	Student Group W Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	18/09/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	21/09/2020	Yes Plus	18				18			
	21/09/2020	Student Group X - Orientation								
	22/09/2020	Student Group F Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	25/09/2020	Student Group W Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	25/09/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								

	15/10/2020	Student Group W Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	15/10/2020	Student Group X Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	16/10/2020	Student Group F Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	16/10/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	22/10/2020	Student Group W Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	22/10/2020	Student Group X Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	23/10/2020	Student Group F Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	23/10/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	29/10/2020	Student Group X Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	30/10/2020	Student Group W Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	30/10/2020	Student Group F Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	30/10/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	6/11/2020	Student Group F Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	6/11/2020	Student Group X Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	6/11/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	13/11/2020	Student Group X Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	13/11/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	20/11/2020	Student Group X Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	20/11/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	26/11/2020	Student Group X Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	3/12/2020	Student Group X Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	10/12/2020	Student Group X Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
Campbelltown	23/07/2020	TAFE YES+ Orientation	7				7			
	24/07/2020	TAFE YES+ Orientation	14				3			* Subgroup unknown
	30/07/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	6/08/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	13/08/2020	TAFE YES+ Liverpool TAFE	7				7			
	13/08/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	14/08/2020	TAFE YES+ Miller TAFE	3				3			
	20/08/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								

	24/08/2020	TAFE Graduation Liverpool TAFE Pilot 3	7				7			
	25/08/2020	TAFE Graduation Miller TAFE Pilot 3	3				3			
	27/08/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	28/08/2020	TAFE YES+ Industry visits from Woolworths and Multiplex and Liverpool Council	3				3			
	3/09/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	10/09/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	17/09/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	18/09/2020	TAFE YES+ Industry visits from Woolworths and Multiplex and Liverpool Council	3				3			
	23/09/2020	TAFE Graduation Wetherill Park TAFE Pilot 3- blue group	5							* Subgroup unknown
	24/09/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	25/09/2020	TAFE Graduation Wetherill Park TAFE Pilot 3- red and green group	6							* Subgroup unknown
	12/10/2020	Orientation, Ind 1 x 3 weeks								
	19/10/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	26/10/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	2/11/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	9/11/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	10/11/2020	TAFE Yes Plus Wetherill Park Package 5	6							* Subgroup unknown
	16/11/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	23/11/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	30/11/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	7/12/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
Liverpool	21/07/2020	TAFE YES+ Induction	25				25			
	23/07/2020	TAFE YES+ Orientation	23				23			
	24/07/2020	TAFE YES+ Orientation	28							* Subgroup unknown
	30/07/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	6/08/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	13/08/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	13/08/2020	TAFE YES+ Liverpool TAFE	23				23			
	13/08/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								

	14/08/2020	TAFE YES+ Miller TAFE	21				21			
	20/08/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	24/08/2020	TAFE Graduation Liverpool TAFE Pilot 3	23				23			
	25/08/2020	TAFE Graduation Miller TAFE Pilot 3	21				21			
	27/08/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	28/08/2020	TAFE YES+ Industry visits from Woolworths and Multiplex and Liverpool Council	21				21			
	1/09/2020	TAFE YES+ interview for Term 4 reserve list	10				10			
	2/09/2020	TAFE YES+ interview for Term 4 reserve list	3				3			
	3/09/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	10/09/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	17/09/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	18/09/2020	TAFE YES+ Industry visits from Woolworths and Multiplex and Liverpool Council	21				21			
	22/09/2020	TAFE YES+ student meeting for term 4 enrolment.	7				7			
	23/09/2020	TAFE Graduation Wetherill Park TAFE Pilot 3- blue group	2							* Subgroup unknown
	24/09/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	25/09/2020	TAFE Graduation Wetherill Park TAFE Pilot 3- red and green group	4							* Subgroup unknown
	12/10/2020	Orientation, Ind 1 x 3 weeks - see WS sheet								
	13/10/2020	TAFE YES+ Orientation Package 6	15				14			* Subgroup unknown
	19/10/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	26/10/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	2/11/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	5/11/2020	Executive Director/Director visit to TAFE YES+	14				14			
	9/11/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	10/11/2020	TAFE Yes Plus Wetherill Park Package 5	4							* Subgroup unknown
	16/11/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	23/11/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	30/11/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	7/12/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
Cowpasture	23/07/2020	TAFE YES+ Orientation	31				31			

	24/07/2020	TAFE YES+ Orientation	52							* Subgroup unknown
	30/07/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	6/08/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	13/08/2020	TAFE YES+ Liverpool TAFE	31				31			
	13/08/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	14/08/2020	TAFE YES+ Miller TAFE	22				22			
	20/08/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	24/08/2020	TAFE Graduation Liverpool TAFE Pilot 3	22				22			
	25/08/2020	TAFE Graduation Miller TAFE Pilot 3	22				22			
	27/08/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	28/08/2020	TAFE YES+ Industry visits from Woolworths and Multiplex and Liverpool Council	22				22			
	3/09/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	10/09/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	17/09/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	18/09/2020	TAFE YES+ Industry visits from Woolworths and Multiplex and Liverpool Council	22				22			
	23/09/2020	TAFE Graduation Wetherill Park TAFE Pilot 3- blue group	7							* Subgroup unknown
	24/09/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	25/09/2020	TAFE Graduation Wetherill Park TAFE Pilot 3- red and green group	20							* Subgroup unknown
	12/10/2020	Orientation, Ind 1 x 3 weeks - see WS sheet								
	13/10/2020	TAFE YES+ Orientation Package 6	4				4			
	19/10/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	26/10/2020	Industry 1 x 3 weeks								
	2/11/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	9/11/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	10/11/2020	TAFE Yes Plus Wetherill Park Package 5	20							* Subgroup unknown
	16/11/2020	Industry 2 x 3 weeks								
	23/11/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	30/11/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								
	7/12/2020	Industry 3 x 3 weeks								

	-	TAFE YES+ interview for Term 4 reserve list	9				9			
	-	TAFE YES+ interview for Term 4 reserve list	7				7			

Table 64. Pilot 4 - NSW Training awards ambassadors delivery

Cluster	Date	Activity	Student #	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Note
Grafton	4/08/2020	Arcadia EPPP								
	3/08/2020	Arcaida Meldruma								
Ballina	19/03/2020	Liam Muldoon								
Campbelltown		No data								
Liverpool		No data								
Cowpasture	31/08/2020	Edge Workshop	23				23			

Table 65. Pilot 5 - Increase the uptake of SBATs Delivery

Cluster	Date	Activity	Student #	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Note
Grafton	13/10/2020	identifying SBAT opportunities - Contact 6 additional Aboriginal SBAT students by email to provide required documents	6				6			
	27/10/2020	Meeting with prospective SBAT students	3				3			
	28/10/2020	Facilitate GJ Gardner Homes presentation to 7 prospective SBATs	7				7			
	2/11/2020	presentation and promotion of SBATs - Yr 9&10 and to Yr 11 student assemblies	200							* Subgroup unknown
	3/11/2020	presentation and promotion of SBATs students filmed for EPPP TV	3					3		
	3/11/2020	presentation and promotion of SBATs - GJ Gardner Homes presentation	9				7	2		
	4/11/2020	Mentoring	1				1			
	11/11/2020	Novaskill pre-apprenticeship program and discuss SBATs with students and Novaskill	15							* Subgroup unknown
	17/11/2020	Weekly visit, meet with Principal and Careers adviser	3				3			
	18/11/2020	Weekly visit, meet with SBAT Coordinator	5					5		
	1/12/2020	Mentoring in 5x Blocks of 24 mins	25			25				
	8/12/2020	Support with EOIs and promoting SBATs Follow-up actions/ Mentoring	11			11				
	9/12/2020	Support with EOIs and promoting SBATs/ Mentoring	2					2		
Ballina	1/10/2020	Follow-up work re: SBAT	1				1			
	13/10/2020	Re : Support Traineeships	4				4			
	13/10/2020	EOIs/resumes and follow-ups/ advice on leaving	3				3			
	19/10/2020	Re : Support Traineeships	4				4			
	20/10/2020	EOIs/resumes and follow-ups/ advice on leaving	4				4			
	21/10/2020	Identifying and promoting SBATs re: EOIs	1					1		
	22/10/2020	EOIs/resumes and follow-ups/ advice on leaving	4				4			
	27/10/2020	EOIs/resumes and follow-ups/ advice on leaving	11				10	1		
	29/10/2020	Arranged interview MEGT NAB Bank EOI	1				1			
	30/10/2020	Mentoring	4				3	1		
	2/11/2020	Promoting SBATs& SBA's EOIs	1				1			

	2/11/2020	Accepted students into Traineeships	4				4			
	4/11/2020	EOIs/resumes and follow-ups/ advice on leaving	5				5			
	5/11/2020	EOIs/resumes and follow-ups/ advice on leaving	5				5			
	9/11/2020	F/up - agreed to Riley Smart-Foster SBA	1					1		
	10/11/2020	Promoting SBATs & SBA's EOIs/ interviews	8				8			
	11/11/2020	Reverse marketing of EOIs MEGT & VERTO	5				5			
	12/11/2020	Promoting SBATs & SBA's EOIs/ interviews	8			1	5	2		
	16/11/2020	SBAT enrolled - survey emailed Text sent to 11 SBATS and follow-up email	11							* Subgroup unknown
	17/11/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	4				4			
	18/11/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	3				3			
	26/11/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	2				1	1		
	27/11/2020	Promoting SBATs & SBA's EOIs	7			1	5	1		
	27/11/2020	Presentation to students undertaking Trade Fit Course.	9				9			
	1/12/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	2				2			
	3/12/2020	re: ATSI SBT	1				1			
	7/12/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	5				3	2		
	7/12/2020	attended interviews with students for SBAT opportunity	2				2			
	10/12/2020	meetings re: ATSI SBAT issues	1				1			
	10/12/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	2				2			
	14/12/2020	discussions re: MyCar, work exp and SBA opportunity	3				2	1		
Campbelltown	13/10/2020	Mentoring - reset goals for term 4	9				9			
	16/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	6				6			
	20/10/2020	survey completion	3				3			
	20/10/2020	Mentoring	3				3			
	20/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	3				3			
	23/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	11				11			
	27/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	2				2			
	30/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs 2 surveys /6 EOIs	8				6		2	

	3/11/2020	Mentoring	19				19			
	6/11/2020	Student interviews re: SBATs in Engineering	5				5			
	10/11/2020	Interviewing/ Mentoring students and associated activity planning	2				2			
	10/11/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	9					9		
	11/11/2020	Meeting employers and stakeholders and Principals in pilot	16							* Subgroup unknown
	13/11/2020	Interviewing students and associated activity planning	5				4	1		
	17/11/2020	Interviewing students and associated activity planning	1				1			
	19/11/2020	SBAT enrolled - survey emailed	10							* Subgroup unknown
	19/11/2020	mentor student and CA Catch up re SBATs	1				1			
	24/11/2020	Interviewing/ Mentoring students and associated activity planning	2			1	1			
	27/11/2020	Follow up emails to students and CAs re SBAs etc and surveys Various schools and dates	2							* Subgroup unknown
	27/11/2020	Interviewing/ Mentoring students and associated activity planning 1 x SBT survey	8				8			
	27/11/2020	Follow up emails to students and CAs re SBAs etc and surveys Various schools and dates	2							* Subgroup unknown
	1/12/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	1				1			
	1/12/2020	Progress meeting with 7 Yr 10 Students	7				7			
	1/12/2020	Interviewing/ Mentoring students and associated activity planning	4				3	1		
	1/12/2020	Student interviews re EOI SBATs	4				3	1		
	15/12/2020	Assisted student with SBAT application form and discussed the sign-up process	2				2			
Liverpool	12/08/2020	SBAT Student interest meeting	5					5		
	2/09/2020	SBAT Recruitment	17				17			
	12/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI	11				11			
	14/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	6				6			
	15/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	10				10			
	20/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	9				9			
	21/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	7				7			

	23/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	2				2			
	27/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	8				8			
	28/10/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	3				3			
	29/10/2020	Survey completion	20				20			
	2/11/2020	Survey completion	8				7	1		
	2/11/2020	Student interviews re: EOI SBATs	12				11	1		
	5/11/2020	Mentoring	8			1	7			
	9/11/2020	survey completion Ashcroft	13				11	2		
	9/11/2020	met with 7 x Students and obtained 4 new EOIs	7				7			
	19/11/2020	SBAT enrolled - survey emailed	5							* Subgroup unknown
	23/11/2020	Student interviews re EOI SBATs	9				6	3		
	30/11/2020	Mock Interviews	6				6			
	4/12/2020	3 x Year 11 SBAT surveys	9				7	2		
	4/12/2020	Interviewing/ Mentoring students and associated activity planning	9				7	2		
	7/12/2020	EOI Meetings	10				8	2		
	9/12/2020	EOI Meetings	3				1	2		
	9/12/2020	EOI Meeting and vacancy referral	1				1			
	12/12/2020	Student follow up re SBAT enquiry	1					1		
Cowpasture	26/10/2020	Survey completion	5				3	2		
	26/10/2020	SBAT promotion	48				31	17		
	6/11/2020	Mentoring	6				5	1		
	9/11/2020	EOI catch up with Transition Advisor. Reviewing EOIs and student progress	14				14			
	9/11/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	14				6	8		
	12/11/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	22				19	3		
	17/11/2020	Visit at workplace re Monika's Good News Story. School Support	1						1	
	19/11/2020	SBAT enrolled - survey emailed	10							* Subgroup unknown
	19/11/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	7				6	1		
	23/11/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	6				3	3		

	27/11/2020	Follow up emails to students and CAs re SBAs etc and surveys Various schools and dates	3							* Subgroup unknown
	2/12/2020	First meeting with 3 x Yr 12 students and 4 x Yr 10 students	7				4	3		
	7/12/2020	Planning meeting with TA	8				4	4		
	10/12/2020	Online meeting with HT Secondary Studies to discuss progress of 36x Yr 10 after 2 weeks and 7x Yr 12 Students	43				36	7		
	10/12/2020	UWS Post surveys	4				4			
	10/12/2020	Mentoring and EOI's for SBATs	6				3	3		

Pilot 6 – Master Builder Association - No data

Table 66. Pilot 7 - EDGE Workshop Delivery

Cluster	Date	Activity	Student #	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Note
Grafton	3/08/2020	EDGE Workshop	38							* Subgroup unknown
	4/08/2020	EDGE Workshop	22							* Subgroup unknown
	17/08/2020	EDGE Workshop	32							* Subgroup unknown
Ballina		No data	0							
Campbelltown	10/08/2020	EDGE Webinar	8							* Subgroup unknown
	7/09/2020	EDGE Webinar	8							* Subgroup unknown
	9/11/2020	EDGE Workshop	39							
	10/11/2020	EDGE Workshop	30				30			
	7/12/2020	EDGE Workshop	24							
Liverpool	25/08/2020	Pre-survey EDGE Webinar	25				25			
	1/09/2020	EDGE Webinar	25				25			
	15/09/2020	EDGE Webinar	24							
	22/10/2020	EDGE Pre-Surveys	20			20				
	22/10/2020	EDGE permission note reminders	30				30			
	26/10/2020	EDGE Workshop	37				37			

	28/10/2020	EDGE - pre-surveys	40				40			
	2/11/2020	EDGE Workshop	32				32			
	14/12/2020	EDGE Workshop	25			25				
Cowpasture	29/07/2020	EDGE Webinar	33				33			
	31/08/2020	EDGE Webinar	23				23			
	22/10/2020	EDGE Pre-Surveys	20			20				
	16/11/2020	EDGE Workshop	23							* Subgroup unknown
	23/11/2020	EDGE Workshop	20							
	30/11/2020	EDGE Workshop	30							* Subgroup unknown

Table 67. Pilot 8 - Free and Try Delivery

Cluster	Start Date	End Date	Activity	Student #	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	15	16	17	18	Note
Grafton			No data												
Ballina	30/11/2020	28/02/2021	EPPP Schools Pilot pre-apprenticeship training	**14**							3	11			
Campbelltown	11/02/2020	27/11/2020	EPPP Schools Pilot pre-apprenticeship training	**8**											* Subgroup unknown
	30/11/2020	12/04/2020	EPPP Schools Pilot pre-apprenticeship training	**9**							6	3			
Liverpool			No data												
	11/02/2020	27/11/2020	EPPP Schools Pilot pre-apprenticeship training	**4**											* Subgroup unknown
	27/10/2020	-	Pilot 8 Supported interested Auto students	**2**				2							
	29/10/2020	-	Pilot 8 Supported interested Auto students	**3**				3							
	14/12/2020	-	MBA Pilot 8	**20**				20							
	16/11/2020	18/12/2020	EPPP Schools Pilot pre-apprenticeship training	**12**							3	6	3		
Cowpasture	11/02/2020	27/11/2020	EPPP Schools Pilot pre-apprenticeship training	**3**											* Subgroup unknown

Table 68. Pilot 9 - Wrap Around Services U17's Delivery

Cluster	Date	Activity	Student #	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	15	16	17	18	Note

Grafton		No data												
Ballina		No data												
Campbelltown		No data												
Liverpool	5/08/2020	U17 Wrap Around trouble shooting.	**9**											*Subgroup unknown
	8/12/2020	U17 Wrap Around referral	**1**				1							
Cowpasture	20/08/2020	Specialised support for Wrap Around candidate	**1**					1						

Table 69. Pilot 10 - RVP (North Coast) Delivery

Cluster	Date	Activity	Student #	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	15	16	17	18	Note
Grafton	5/08/2020	Commenced	**3**											*Subgroup unknown
	6/08/2020	Commenced	**5**											*Subgroup unknown
	12/08/2020	Commenced	**4**											*Subgroup unknown
	14/08/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
	24/08/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
	26/08/2020	Commenced	**5**											*Subgroup unknown
	9/09/2020	Commenced	**2**											*Subgroup unknown
	10/09/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
Ballina	13/07/2020	Commenced	**3**											*Subgroup unknown
	14/07/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
	23/07/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
	29/07/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
	30/07/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
	31/07/2020	Commenced	**6**											*Subgroup unknown
	4/08/2020	Commenced	**6**											*Subgroup unknown
	10/08/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown

	12/08/2020	Commenced	**2**											*Subgroup unknown
	24/08/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
	26/08/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
	31/08/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
	2/09/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
	14/09/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown
	9/10/2020	Commenced	**1**											*Subgroup unknown

Appendix 6: EPPP Cost Benefit Analysis

Introduction and overview

This analysis sets out the evidence on the economic benefits of career guidance that exposes these high school students to VET pathways as a career choice. As discussed in previous sections, career guidance encompasses a wide range of activities (EPPP interventions) that take place within the education system and beyond it. Although career guidance is primarily concerned with the individual student and their long-term choices and outcomes, it also offers major social and economic benefits. It is these additional benefits that further justify public investment in the area.
To guide decisions about the future expansion of the EPPP, it is necessary to ascertain whether EPPPs are good investments for the taxpayer, by examining whether the benefits of investing in EPPPs exceeds the costs. Cost benefit analysis is an evaluation tool that is designed to assist in choosing among alternative courses of action or policies when resources are limited, and this analysis will focus on this goal. Both costs and benefit associated with EPPP will be estimated, with special focus on the returns of investment to tax payers, as the costs of the EPPP is primarily funded from public sources.

The completion of a VET qualification generates important benefits to the student in terms of better employment and job opportunities, in addition to an expanded range of options for further education. Furthermore, stable employment assists with better health, increased knowledge, and an ability to learn new things. However, there are also benefits to the taxpayers, who themselves pay much of the costs of public investment in schools and TAFE. Increasing the number of qualified workers with VET degrees benefit society in the form of higher economic productivity and income, as well as greater technology advancement and inventive activity. Society also experiences fiscal benefits through higher tax revenues and reduced costs for spending on public health and criminal justice.

In education, cost benefit analysis has been used in cases where some of the educational outcomes are market-oriented, such as in vocational education. It also enables a comparison among projects with very different goals, as when both costs and benefits can be expressed in monetary terms comparisons can be made. However, the estimation of benefits for this study is particularly challenging due to the relatively short time-frame required of the analysis—quantifying all of the realised benefits is difficult. An examination of the program logics reveals that some of the key benefits likely to be derived from the pilots may take years to manifest themselves through successful completion of training programs and improved labour market outcomes. The delayed nature of the benefits is a commonplace feature of these types of programs, as discussed in the broader literature below.

Given relatively recent introduction of the EPPP, some of the important data necessary to conduct a full cost benefit analysis is not yet available. However, data provided by the Department of Education, in addition to information gathered from various stakeholder surveys and case study notes, will be used to assemble a short-run analysis of costs. While the longer-term benefits will be difficult to identify and measure in this time-period, estimates of the long-term labour market outcomes will be created using survey responses from student participants. Using this framework, this study will compare the benefits and costs of additional VET graduates produced by the EPPP. Net Present Value, and Cost-Benefit Ratios will also be calculated, in addition to estimations of the marginal benefit of each pilot under specific assumptions.

Following a discussion of the current literature in this area, the methodology will be outlined, and then analysis and results will be categorised according to the groupings of individual pilot initiatives identified above: Pilots of an experiential nature (Pilots 3, 7, 8), pilots that incorporate mentoring (Pilots 5, 9, 10), resource intensive pilots (Pilots 1, 4, 6), and a pilot that combines all three approaches (Pilot 2).

Measuring the costs and benefits of VET: Previous studies

One of the first attempts to apply cost benefit analysis of taxpayer investment in education was conducted in 1972, with the analysis of the costs and benefits of reducing high school drop outs (Levin and Belfield, 2007). A more refined analysis was applied to the experimental study of a specific investment in early childhood education in the famous Perry-Preschool evaluation (Barnett, 1985). In this approach, the author estimates the elements of pilot costs, and then extends costs and benefits to include future costs associated with reduced educational outcomes (e.g., delinquency, crime, welfare), increased costs in the form of future education, and additional long-term benefits in the form of earnings increased. The study identifies the net present value of the public investment as positive, and Bennet argues that the majority of the economic benefits accrue to taxpayers. In the years since these early applications of cost-benefit analysis to education, many studies have used a similar framework. Dalziel et al. (2015) present an overview that includes many of these recent works, and investigate the effectiveness of using of cost benefit analysis for the evaluation of childhood education. Their review identifies generally positive social benefits of such programs, but they are careful to emphasise the need to incorporate a sufficiently extended timeframe of analysis, such that long-term outcomes can be observed.

Analysis of the costs and benefits of Vocational Education and Training (VET) have been completed on various programs across the world. In terms of common methods and approach, a relatively recent overview of the literature that investigates the return on investment to VET programs is provided by Schueler et al. (2017). These authors establish a framework for identifying the costs and benefits of VET, which they develop based on a range of previous studies. Their recommended analysis and

approach is intended to cover a wide scope of possible costs and benefits. In terms of costs, the authors identify three main investors or stakeholders that incur the costs of VET: the individual VET candidate, businesses and employers, and the government. In each case, there may be some combination of direct or explicit costs, and also some opportunity (implicit) and indirect costs. For individual stakeholders, the direct costs can include tuition, books and materials, and childcare. The other costs to the individual participants are opportunity costs, such as foregone or reduced earnings, and the costs of non-completion.

For businesses and employers, Schueler et al. (2017) nominate the direct costs as encompassing course costs, salary or wages to staff while on training, and any course design and development costs that they incur. The intangible costs for employers can include a loss of productivity while the employee is attending a course, the costs of inducting the trainee, the cost of higher wastage rates while the trainee is still obtaining proficiency, and a range of opportunity costs (e.g., other investments the employer could make instead of investing in training). For the government, Schueler et al. (2017) identify the primary costs as the addition to public expenditure associated with funding the training. Indirect costs are identified to include payroll tax rebates, workforce development programs, and bonuses given to employers for apprenticeship completions.

While still not an exhaustive list of the possible costs, this summary highlights the long list of direct, indirect, intangible, and opportunity costs that relevant for a comprehensive analysis of costs and benefits for VET programs. Furthermore, this list of stakeholders included in the summary could be further extended—other agents could include the education providers themselves, such as Training Organisations, and also those supporting the individual candidate, such as parents or carers.

In a similar approach to the measurement of costs, the standard methodology adopted to measure benefits in a cost benefit analysis is to identify stakeholders and then list the benefits to each, including financial, non-market, intangible, long-run and short-run. While there is no doubt that benefits of education and training are significant, the clear identification and measurement of these effects continues to be challenging.

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop, 2013) specifically considers the challenges of measuring the benefits of education and training. In developing a framework through which to consider the benefits of VET, Cedefop distinguish between market and non-market benefits, and then the range of different stakeholders, including individuals, organisations, and the broader society (and ultimately the country under consideration). Similarly, Schueler et al. (2017) also identify the three main beneficiaries as individuals, organisations (or businesses) and the broader economy, in assessing the framework appropriate for the measurement of the Return on Investment (ROI) to VET.

According to Schueler et al. (2017), the range of individual benefits include those that are directly employment related, such as employability, wages or salary increases, professional mobility and productivity, and also those that are not connected to employment, such as pathways to higher education and further study, an expanding range of skills, personal wellbeing, and self-esteem. Similarly, Schueler et al. contend that the employer can access benefits that are market related, including sales, profitability, and productivity, while also obtaining non-market benefits, such as a motivated workforce, improvements in culture, and employee wellbeing. The benefits garnered by the wider economy include those that are tangible, such as higher employment and participation rates, reduced unemployment, and productivity gains, and also a significant list of non-tangible social benefits, comprising improved health and environment, reduced crime rates, and social cohesion and inclusion.

In their synthesis of previous literature and their proposed analytical frameworks, both Schueler et al. and the contribution by the group at Cedefop, are careful to emphasise the challenges in measuring the wide range of benefits that accrue to investment in VET programs. Schueler et al. note problematic variation in estimates of benefits, i.e., a lack of consistency in estimates, and also cite the difficultly of untangling the specific benefits that accrue to each of the broad groups of stakeholders. Indeed, there is obviously significant overlap between the benefits obtained by different groups, particularly in the case of benefits that are not explicitly captured by market metrics and tangible outcomes. This wide range of social benefits flow across individuals, employers, and the economy, rather than falling entirely to one specific group of stakeholders. Cedefop is particularly careful to emphasise the blurred boundaries between different benefits accrued in the market and nonmarket context, and contends that social benefits may feedback into market benefits through reduced crime and lower unemployment. The authors even go so far as to question the common contention that social benefits of this type of investment may actually outweigh private returns (Cedefop, 2013: 30-31).

If this challenge of disentangling benefits across stakeholders is not complex enough, Cedefop (2013: 11) notes the difficulty of identifying the causation between the education program and the creation of benefits. In particular, Cedefop notes the time lag between participation in education and training programs, and the manifestation of the benefits that follows this participation. This lag is such that many attempts to identify a positive impact of education and training might be failing due to the application of a time period that is simply not long enough. The report recommends more sophisticated statistical methods, such as using panel data or twin studies, to exploit a longer time period and introduce a more effective “control” comparison. Such methods can begin to address the problems of the various omitted variables, and other related issues of causation, that exist in such analysis.

A study that does indeed incorporate a longer time horizon through the use of panel data is presented by Polidano and Ryan (2016). Their analysis is aimed at understanding the long-term benefits that accrue, in terms of monetary wages earned and employment outcomes, to individuals who complete a VET qualification. These authors exploit the Household Income and Labour Dynamics of Australia (HILDA) survey to track participants over time, observing short, medium, and longer-term changes in employment status and earnings. They apply a fixed effects regression model to estimate the impact of acquiring a new qualification, and their estimates suggest that the improvement in labour market outcomes for females tend to be larger than those detected for males. They also note ongoing stability in estimated effects across time, which suggests that the impact detected in the first year following

the completion of a VET qualification remains evident up to five years later. The implication of this finding is that while long-term studies following VET programs are appropriate to identify the impacts of such programs in observed labour market outcomes, it is possible that the longer term differential effects of a VET qualification can be observed in the first period (year) or two following completion.

The study by Polidano and Ryan (2016) is particularly valuable in highlighting the fact that many VET enrolled students are studying a qualification at the same AQF level, or lower, than what they already possess. Furthermore, about half of these are university degree holders. The failure to recognise this is a shortcoming of previous literature, and means that many studies have not been able to identify the impact of VET completions by individuals who already hold a qualification at the same level or higher. In considering this group, the authors find that the benefits (of the VET completion) in terms of full-time employment are less visible, and that wages are significantly lower. This demonstrates such career shifts can be costly to individuals in purely fiscal terms, and that through such changes individuals obtain non-pecuniary benefits. These shifts in occupation are due to earlier career choices they have discovered to be unsatisfactory to them, and their decision to remedy their circumstances is not necessarily motivated by wages.

While the focus of Polidano and Ryan (2016) is upon the effects of VET enrolment and completion, the implications of their analysis are particularly relevant to a study of programs that aim to improve career decisions, such as the EPPP. It highlights that fact that many individuals who attend university may not necessarily have made this choice with full awareness of the employment pathway they were committing to, given their later decision to pursue a VET qualification in order to access a different domain of employment. The role, therefore, of programs like the EPPP in assisting students to understand both the options available to them and the reality of a professional life in a specific field of employment, can be particularly valuable in preventing students committing to a career path with which they are ultimately incompatible. The costs of such unsatisfactory "matches" between individuals and career paths, are of course relevant to a thorough cost benefit analysis of programs like the EPPP. In fact, preventing such errors is surely one particular benefit of the program.

An important aspect of any assessment of the long-term benefits of completing a VET program is recognition of the counterfactual, i.e., the cost of not completing high school and not being engaged in work and study in the post-school years. More specifically, the avoidance of individual and social costs such as unemployment and welfare dependency is an important long term social benefit of having students successfully complete VET and enter long term employment. The report of Lamb and Huo (2017) is an attempt to identify precisely this cost. The authors apply an economic model to estimate these costs using national research evidence, and national survey and census data. They employ methods developed in US studies that examine the financial costs to both society and the public sector of cohorts of young people who are not sufficiently prepared for further study and work. Through a comparison of different economic profiles (early school leavers, individuals who completed Year 12 or equivalent qualifications, disengaged youth) Lamb and Huo (2017) derive annual and lifetime costs to society in terms of health, government assistance, crime, earnings and employment. Lamb and Huo (2017) estimate that the average lifetime fiscal cost to Australian governments (or the taxpayer) is $334,600 for each early school leaver (at a 2014 net present value) (Lamb and Huo, 2017: 46). Remarkably, the total social cost estimate (including fiscal plus other non-fiscal costs converted to monetary values) for the same group is nearly double this value, and is $616,200 for each early school leaver. Such estimates and figures represent enormous potential long-term benefits of VET completions, and are the type of impacts that much of the literature aims to establish.

Where the present analysis deviates from the literature presented above, is that the policy intervention under consideration below is not a VET program, but a set of initiatives attempting to better inform students about the nature of VET programs and the associated career paths. In other words, the benefit of the EPPP framework is specifically derived from the marginal change in enrolment and successful completion of VET programs, not the entirety of the VET program itself. While many of the stakeholders and relevant costs and benefits are the similar, the EPPP programs must be assessed in terms of its ability to improve both short-run and long-run engagement and outcome with VET programs.

In the next section we outline the method and approach we have used to pursue this early cost benefit assessment of the EPPP initiative, detailing the various cost assumptions, the benefit calculations, and the estimates we make of the effectiveness of each pilot. While a comprehensive cost benefit analysis, which would integrate all potential costs and benefits over an extended time-period, cannot be completed yet, this early cost benefit assessment is useful in considering the relative efficiency of each of the pilots, and provides some estimates of benefits that assists with decisions regarding the potential expansion of the EPPP initiative to a larger number of schools.

Method of analysis

Estimates of costs

In this section we outline the method by which costs have been estimated, benefits projected, and both net present values and benefit-cost ratios of the respective pilots have been calculated. The key assumptions of the analysis are outlined, and some of the challenges identified. The cost estimations for this study were built on the basic pilot cost data provided by the NSW Depart of Education. The Department of Education is the key stakeholder in terms of costs, and the majority of the costs fall upon this organisation. Accordingly, costs statements were obtained from the Department to aid this estimation. While some estimation of specific costs has been provided for the 2019-2020 financial year, a more detailed break-down of EPPP costs have been provided for the 2020-2021 financial year. This cost statement has allowed us to make some distinction between categories of

costs, including setup and operational costs. It is this latter set of costs (2020-2021 values) that have been used more extensively in estimating the ongoing cost estimates and projects of the EPPP.

The specific break-down of pilot costs includes a fixed cost (or setup cost) in the majority of the pilots. This was incurred during the first year of pilot delivery, attributed to the 2019-2020 financial year period. Additional explicit costs for staffing include training, salaries, school staff, and these are provided by the Department of Education. Some additional setup costs are incurred for resource-based pilots, for pilots such as the Digital careers toolbox, and therefore the staffing costs are less (in proportional terms) for these particular initiatives.

The estimates of the in-kind contributions are the more difficult aspect of costs included in the analysis. Additional costs opportunity costs, in terms of time-spent by stakeholders, have been added to the cost estimates and noted as in-kind contribution. Where possible, these costs are estimated through consultation with stakeholder surveys that identified increased administration costs for schools, and specifically highlighted additional time invested by teachers in the management of the pilots. Furthermore, these surveys also highlighted additional transport costs for students. The replacement method was used to impute stakeholders time (as an opportunity cost), to these groups of stakeholders:

- Careers advisers
- Teachers
- Parents/carers
- Students
- TAFE (imputed)

The estimates of these specific stakeholder costs were applied consistently across each pilot assessment. Costs for each individual student are measured in terms of student time and a standard hourly wage (entry level wage of each age group). Similarly, the time of parents is allocated an opportunity cost equal to the minimum average wage. Careers advisors have been allocated additional time costs of up to 20 hours each, and teachers at 10 hours. Furthermore, school administration is estimated with the replacement method at 10% of a clerk's time. All these school-based costs were estimated using standard NSW Teacher salary rates (NSW Government School Salary Rates, 2020-2021). These costs are of course estimates, but they are a recognition that the pilots have additional costs that were beyond the original budget, and not identified until noted by those stakeholders "on the ground" to support the pilot delivery. These cost estimates for each pilot have been carried forward for a period of 10 years, to obtain long-term costs in order to make a comparison with benefits that are likely to emerge over this longer period.

Estimates of benefits

The established literature focussing on the cost benefit analysis of education, and VET programs in particular, has emphasised the challenge of estimating the long-term benefits of such programs. Furthermore, estimating the benefits to the EPPP is particularly difficult at this time. The EPPP is in its infancy, and the first full year of the pilots is yet to be complete and occurred during COIVD-19, which means that there was little data currently available to ascertain the success (or otherwise) of the individual pilots. It will not be until we can observe the impact of the EPPP upon VET enrolment and completion rates that the true value of the programs can be assessed. Furthermore, as noted above, the cost-benefit analysis of the EPPP focuses on the impact of these pilot initiatives on their marginal effect of entry into the TAFE and completion, i.e., this is not intended to be an analysis of VET programs, but instead a set of initiatives aimed to improve pathways for high school students moving into VET programs. Therefore, the cost benefit analysis begins with an assessment of overall benefits relative to costs, and then applies a more rigorous focuses on the potential marginal impact of this initiative in improving the transition into VET programs, and the completion rate of such programs.

Two key assumptions have been made to attempt a first estimation of the EPPP. First, pilots have been allocated a success rate. This is based on the survey data, although limited, as an attempt obtain the input of the participants, rather than the preferences and biases of the research team. These success rates are drawn from student surveys, in response to questions about how much they like the pilot, and how useful they believe it to be. These values are used to create an index that is intended to rank the pilots in terms of their effectiveness. While this is imperfect, the value of asking the students is particularly high in this case: it is the students upon who the EPPP initiatives is intended to exert an effect, and thus their own account of the experience is the key focus here.

The effectiveness of pilots is assumed to have an impact on the enrolment in VET programs, and the completion rate. With regard to the enrolment in TAFE, the current literature suggests that 28% of all high school students will attend. The analysis here makes the assumption that the enrolment will increase up to a maximum of 35% due to the impact of the EPPP. Furthermore, in this analysis it is assumed that the completion rate will achieve 90%, which is also higher than the 78% observed in the literature. The increase in these rates is assumed to be the transmission mechanism between the EPPP and the long-term benefits associated with improved labour market outcomes for the target students.

Second, the estimation of benefits has used a "market" measure in terms of the increase in earnings achieved by individuals who complete a higher level TAFE qualification. As noted by a recent study by KPMG (Parker, 2018) who considered the benefits of TAFE for the Victorian economy, using the higher wages earned by individuals who graduate from such qualifications is one way

to estimate the productivity gains. As they also note, this does not recognise the range of confounding factors that also affect individual productivity, and is another key reason why longer term longitudinal studies are appropriate to attempt to control for such factors, and it also fails to acknowledge the social benefits (Parker, 2018, p.45). In that sense, it is a conservative estimate of productivity increases of individual pilot participants who succeed in transitioning to the labour market. Furthermore, one of the key reasons that higher qualifications can be used for this study, is that this is an assessment of a pilot that is directed at high school students who are about to move into VET programs, rather than the overall group of VET program participants. Therefore, it avoids the problems identified by Polidano and Ryan (2016), related to the fact that many VET participants are enrolled in a program of study at, or below, the AQF level of their current qualification.

Finally, the benefits to society and the economy are estimated using previous studies that attempt to quantify the range of socials costs generated when individuals prematurely exit education. Estimates of these social benefits were derived by inflating the cost savings of the study by Lamb and Huo (2017) which used the 2016 census data to estimate the cost of leaving school early and not being actively engaged in work and study in the post-school years. This cost saving was further adjusted using the benefits of the work Educational Attainment, published by the Department of Education in 2017. The values are then expressed in terms of 2020 prices for the present analysis. Following the approach and original estimates of Lamb and Huo, the benefits estimated in this analysis include Tax revenue to the government, reduced reliance on welfare, reduced costs due to lower crime, and improved health. These are some of the key benefits of programs such as the EPPP, which aim to ensure better matches between individuals and VET programs, and improved long-run labour market outcomes.

Finally, these estimates of various costs and benefits have been projected for a ten-year period, and have been subject to a discount rate of 3 percent. The net present value is presented, but our key focus is the Benefit-Cost Ratio of these pilots. This ratio is a simple measurement of the projected benefits relative to the costs, and any Benefit-Cost Ratio that is above one indicates that the future benefits outweigh the present costs, although a minimum value of 1.33 is sometimes recommended for long-term projects where estimates can vary significantly. We report this ratio for both the total costs and benefits, and also as part of our more rigorous marginal analysis of the projected long-run benefit of the EPPP. In the next section the results are tabled and discussed in an effort to identify the individual pilots within the EPPP that represent more effective public investments.

Assessing the EPPP

In this section the results of the cost benefit analysis are presented and discussed. The base results are considered across the three main pilot delivery types, and then the more rigorous standard of the marginal benefit is applied and discussed for each. An analysis of five case study schools is presented, with an adjustment of a particular component of the analysis in each case. Each case study is used to highlight different potential outcomes in terms of costs, and how this impacts the return on investment for each pilot, i.e., if such an adjustment was applied to a particular school.

Experiential pilots

The group of experiential pilots was the largest, and comprises Pilots 3, 7, and 8. The cost of these pilots varied considerably, with one of the group being particularly expensive, while the others relatively cost-effective. In terms of short run analysis, TAFE YES+ (Pilot 3) was observed to be an expensive pilot with a total present value cost per student above $15,000. Pilot 8, Fee free “test and try”, was also one of the more expensive pilots in the short-run, although still less than a third of the per student cost of YES+. EDGE workshops however, were relatively inexpensive compared to these other two experiential pilots.

Over the longer time all these per-student costs decrease and we observe costs begin to smooth over a longer time horizon. The biggest reduction comes from YES+, and while still relatively expensive, its costs fall much further than the other pilots when extended to 10-year projects. In terms of Benefit-Cost Ratio, it is the EDGE workshops (Pilot 3) that delivers the largest long-run return on investment based on current data. Estimates of the total benefit, present a Benefit-Cost Ratio approaching 15—a remarkable return on public investment. Similarly, Fee free “test and try” (Pilot 8) also presents a strong Benefit-Cost Ratio, at a level above 6. YES+ delivers a lower Benefit-Cost Ratio of 2.59, a return that is still positive over the longer term.

When we introduced a more robust analysis, wherein we measured only the additional (or marginal) benefit of a successful pilot program, the benefit-cost ratios decline. In this approach we focus solely on the additional benefits created if the individual EPPP pilot generates an enrolment rate of 35%, and a completion rate of 85-90%. This would represent an increase of 7% above the average for VET enrolments, and 7-12% above average for VET completion. As can be observed in CBA **Table 71**, the Benefit-Cost Ratio of the EDGE program falls to approximately 4, while the Fee Free “test and try” program declines to 1.7. Though these are reductions, given the limited data and relatively high setup costs, these are still good results. Unfortunately, the YES+ program again presents as expensive relative to the benefits it can deliver at this time, and its Benefit-Cost Ratio falls below 1 when this marginal analysis is applied.

Mentoring pilots

The group of mentoring pilots comprised Pilots 5, 9, and 10. In terms of the cost of provision, these are some of the more expensive pilots, and given their nature this is not surprising. Generally, the initial setup costs for these programs appears to be quite high, and in two of the cases the cost per student does not decrease; some of these pilots remained relatively expensive even when considered over the longer time period.

Increasing uptake of SBATs (Pilot 5) is very costly per student, with a present estimate of over $15,000 per student over the short-run. The cost remains relatively high over the long-run, which further contributes to a relatively low Benefit-Cost Ratio of just under 2. Similarly, RVP (North Coast) (Pilot 10), which was administered solely on the North Coast, is also particularly expensive per student, and it also does not obtain a significant cost reduction over the longer term projects. Instead, it maintains a long-run per student cost that is significantly higher than any other pilot in the EPPP, and the Benefit-Cost Ratio falls to below 2. The stand-out pilot of this group, in terms of cost-effectiveness, is Wrap around u17's (Pilot 9), which has a Benefit-Cost Ratio of just over 7, and also demonstrates a substantial per unit cost reduction over the long term. Of this mentoring group, the current cost data and student feedback, although limited at this stage, suggests that Wrap around u17's deliver a strong return on investment, based on the analysis of total benefits relative to costs.

When we apply the more rigorous analysis to these programs, and examine the Benefit-Cost Ratio solely based on the present value of their marginal benefits, the value for both Increasing the uptake of SBATs and the RVP (North Coast) falls to around 0.5, while the Wrap around u17's falls to a Benefit-Cost Ratio of just below 1. Once again, given the significant costs and low number of participants observed in the current data, we would suggest caution in the interpretation of this result. However, it does draw attention to the need to obtain large number of participants for costly programs to ensure they deliver adequate return on investment, and spread costs per student.

Resource and combined pilots

The resource focussed pilots were the Digital careers toolbox (Pilot 1), Training awards ambassadors (Pilot 4), and the Tertiary apprenticeship pathway with the MBA (Pilot 6). These pilots were very inexpensive per student over the short run period, and were the cheapest of all the EPPP initiatives. The projected per student costs over the longer time horizon remains low. The Benefit-Cost Ratio for both the Digital careers toolbox and the Tertiary apprenticeship pathway programs is around 3, which makes them two quite efficient pilots, based on these long-run projections. The Training awards ambassadors deliver a Benefit-Cost Ratio of 2.85, lower than the other resource based initiatives, but a return that is still positive over the longer- term.

The combined pilot, New model of careers education (Pilot 2), is included in this discussion, although this pilot integrates elements of experiential, mentoring and resource pilots. Like the resource pilots, this pilot is very inexpensive when measured per student over the short-run. In fact, the New model of careers education is identified as being the least expensive of all programs in these estimates. This is, however, slightly misleading, as the qualitative analysis reveals that the schools often invested their own resources to support this pilot, a point discussed later. The Benefit-Cost Ratio for this pilot is just under 4.

The more rigorous approach to these pilots again results in a reduction of the Benefit-Cost Ratio when only marginal benefit is considered in relation to costs. In the case of the Digital careers toolbox, the survey response of some sections of the student groups was less positive than anticipated. This resulted in a reduction in estimated long-run benefits, and nullified the more rigorous Benefit-Cost Ratio. However, this a resource based pilot, and can be used more synchronously and asynchronously by students across schools and regions without significant increases in operational costs. In this sense, the "scale-up" potential the Digital careers toolbox might be more significant than many other pilots, although effectiveness may be sensitive to the needs of individual cohorts, and content may need to be adjusted accordingly.

The Tertiary apprenticeship pathway with the MBA maintains a positive Benefit-Cost Ratio, even in the context of the more rigorous marginal analysis, and suggests that it has the potential to deliver benefits on investment. The New model of careers education obtains a Benefit-Cost Ratio of slightly above 1, which is primarily due to the strong student response. This pilot is clearly effective, but also costly due to the fact that it is labour intensive. Obtaining scale efficiencies for this pilot, while not impossible, is of course more challenging. The most interesting insight from this additional analysis however, is delivered in the case of the Training awards ambassadors pilot. While the initial Benefit-Cost Ratio for this program seemed low at around 2.5, this more rigorous analysis obtains a value of above 4. This demonstrates that not only was it inexpensive, but it is inexpensive relative to the additional benefits it might create—an important finding. Overall, the following programs appear to be most cost-effective based on the use of Cost-Benefit analysis based on total benefits:

- 1. Digital Careers Toolbox
- 6. The Tertiary Apprenticeship pathway with the MBA
- 7. EDGE workshops
- 8. Fee Free "test and try"
- 9. Wrap around u17's

The following programs each deliver a Cost-Benefit Ratio of above 1, when the more rigorous marginal analysis is applied:

- 2. New Model of Careers Education
- 4. Training Awards Ambassadors
- 6. The Tertiary Apprenticeship pathway with the MBA
- 7. EDGE workshops

- 8. Fee Free “test and try”

Based on the current costs data, and assumptions regarding enrolment and completion rates, the analysis demonstrates that the resource group were particularly cost-effective. Further consideration of pilot costs and delivery is presented below.

Table 70: Student costs and BCR for total costs and benefits

Pilot	Pilot Name	0.28*	0.78*	Index = (Like+Usefullness) *100	Description	2 YEAR PERIOD		10 YEAR PERIOD			
		% Enrolled in VET	% Completed VET	% Effectiveness		Cost/Student	Cost/School	Cost/Student	Cost/School	NPV	BC Ratio
1	Digital Careers Tool Box	30	80	50	PV Direct Cost	$16.26	$13,241.69	$4.41	$35,878.92	$86,389,693.70	3.1714
					PV Total Cost	$120.94	$196,920.68	$2,033.60	$1,657,682.54		
2	Career Immersion Team	35	85	67	PV Direct Cost	$30.50	$73,397.46	$56.54	$414,302.69	$151,566,127.23	3.9526
					PV Total Cost	$36.81	$292,938.22	$291.91	$2,138,890.41		
3	Yes+	35	85	83	PV Direct Cost	$13,734.75	$45,782.50	$2,164.95	$317,526.51	$13,525,268.01	2.5900
					PV Total Cost	$15,115.86	$50,386.18	$2,416.68	$354,446.61		
4	Training Awards Ambassadors	35	85	85	PV Direct Cost	$16.25	$26,453.25	$14.59	$118,821.24	$13,967,650.80	2.8510
					PV Total Cost	$40.46	$65,884.71	$38.62	$314,422.20		
5	Increasing SBATs	35	85	85	PV Direct Cost	$12,031.23	$47,623.63	$2,623.77	$272,762.73	$8,725,187.99	1.9661
					PV Total Cost	$15,356.60	$60,786.56	$3,619.63	$376,290.19		
6	MBA Tertiary Pathways	35	85	65	PV Direct Cost	$1.34	$3,861.63	$8.54	$24,569.75	$12,236,929.51	3.0788
					PV Total Cost	$159.05	$73,217.48	$85.30	$245,268.10		
7	EDGE Workshops	35	85	87	PV Direct Cost	$404.75	$27,860.55	$349.83	$167,974.81	$72,793,246.96	14.7569
					PV Total Cost	$512.20	$35,256.20	$459.16	$220,474.28		
8	Test and Try UoCs with GTOs	35	85	88	PV Direct Cost	$3,141.49	$14,398.50	$1,040.16	$81,045.82	$14,172,271.59	6.4147
					PV Total Cost	$4,419.57	$20,256.37	$1,399.65	$109,056.20		
9	Wrap-around Services	NA	90	95	PV Direct Cost	$6,716.71	NA	$1,011.89	NA	$10,867,079.57	7.1856
					PV Total Cost	$6,808.28	NA	$207.57	NA		
10	RVP	35	90	77	PV Direct Cost	$5,680.88	NA	$4,672.12	NA	$2,378,011.27	1.8514
					PV Total Cost	$7,403.34	NA	$6,206.96	NA		

Table 71: Marginal Analysis of benefits and BCR

Pilot Number	Pilot Name	SCENARIO 1*	SCENARIO 2**	DIFFERENCE		BENEFIT/COST MEASUREMENTS	
		NPV	NPV	NPV	BC	PVB	PVC
1	Digital Careers Tool Box	$86,389,693.70	$86,389,693.70	$0.00	0.000	$218,964,591.89	$39,784,380.86
2	Career Immersion Team	$97,618,731.55	$151,566,127.23	$53,947,395.68	1.051	$202,899,497.00	$51,333,369.77
3	Yes+	$7,667,351.57	$13,525,268.01	$5,857,916.44	0.689	$22,031,986.58	$8,506,718.58
4	Training Awards Ambassadors	$30,612,835.74	$66,653,446.92	$36,040,611.18	4.776	$21,513,783.64	$7,546,132.84
5	Increasing SBATs	$4,004,140.36	$8,725,187.99	$4,721,047.63	0.523	$17,756,152.61	$9,030,964.62
6	MBA Tertiary Pathways	$9,174,776.41	$12,236,929.51	$3,062,153.10	1.022	$18,123,363.87	$2,995,324.81
7	EDGE Workshops	$52,031,921.90	$72,793,246.96	$20,761,325.06	3.924	$78,084,629.66	$5,291,382.70
8	Test and Try UoCs with GTOs	$9,708,207.80	$14,172,271.59	$4,464,063.79	1.706	$16,789,620.43	$2,617,348.84
9	Wrap-around Services	$9,189,724.29	$10,867,079.57	$1,677,355.28	0.955	$12,623,914.65	$1,756,835.08
10	RVP	$1,248,260.34	$2,378,011.27	$1,129,750.93	0.404	$5,171,145.01	$2,793,133.74

Table 72: Pilot rankings based on cost and impact

EPPP Pilot	Rank (as per student cost)	Rank (as per school cost)	Rank (as per CB-Ratio) Marginal Impact	Rank (as per CB-Ratio) Total Impact
1.Digital careers toolbox	3	7	10	5
2.New Model of Careers Advice	1	8	4	4
3. YES+	9	3	7	8
4. Training Awards Ambassadors	2	5	1	7
5. Increasing uptake of SBATs	10	4	8	9
6. Promoting MBA pathway	4	6	5	6
7. EDGE Workshops	5	2	2	1
8. Fee free “test and try” VET	6	1	3	3
9. Wrap around U17’s	7	N/A	6	2
10. RVP	8	N/A	9	10

CBA insights from case study schools

The five case study schools are addressed here with regard to how the cost-benefit analysis might be adjusted given what we learn from each specific school. This additional analysis is based on the qualitative analysis completed at those schools, where the semi-structured interviews revealed specific issues that were experienced. In each case, one aspect of the EPPP pilot is identified as potentially different from the assumptions used in the base cost-benefit analysis presented above, which is then recalculated to examine the implications of that school specific issue. This is particularly instructive in considering the experiential and mentoring based pilots, which appear relatively expensive in the current data.

School A

The first two schools are from the North Coast NSW Cluster of EPPP schools. School A is the smallest of the five case study schools, and has a significantly smaller full-time equivalent staffing level than the other schools in this case study analysis. It is apparent in the interviews that the EPPP pilots overwhelmed this school, and all the additional costs associated with the EPPP identified by the stakeholder surveys emerged here. In particular, the EPPP pilot created significant administrative workload increases for the school, and this was expressed by the educators. An additional insight learned in this qualitative analysis is that the EDGE pilot was perceived to have run too late, as some students were already involved in workplaces before they did the EDGE workshop.

What is clear is that this school does not appear to have as many existing programs upon which the EPPP initiatives can be scaffolded upon, so introducing it was more difficult. Setup costs might be higher in this school. Interestingly, this school has the second lowest student-to-teacher ratio of the five schools, yet this did not appear to be a factor that could mitigate the challenge of EPPP relative to other schools. This again suggests that existing structures are important, rather than student-to-teacher ratios.

To reflect the experience of this school, we reconsidered the estimations of the EDGE workshops pilot by raising the setup costs to acknowledge this impact. At this school, the number of students who completed the EDGE workshop was relatively large (n = 39), and it was a pilot that was particularly popular at this school. Interestingly, when we raise the setup costs to acknowledge the significant in-kind effort of the school (allocating nearly $100,000 of additional costs), the pilot is still cost-effective over the longer- term. This suggests that at this school, the EDGE pilot was still beneficial, and a cost-effective investment. In fact, the Benefit-Cost Ratio that emerges from the estimations applied to this school is relatively high and falls only from 12 to 8. Of course, we are not applying the more rigorous methodology here, but the result demonstrates the potential value for Pilot 7, when large numbers of students participate to spread the setup costs. Indeed, we also considered an even larger number of students, and the pilot can deliver an enormous return on investment in such circumstances. The table of adjusted results for this School are presented in Appendix 6, **Table 84** .

School B

School B is double the size of School A in terms of student enrolments, and nearly double the size of the School A in terms of full-time equivalent teaching staff. They have the largest percentage of Indigenous students of all five case study schools, although the lowest percentage of students with a language in addition to English. This school appears to have more comfortably introduced the EPPP. The key reason appears to be that structures are already in place that allow the introduction of the EPPP in a manner that is consistent with some of their existing programs.

The case study of this school revealed that the school is already engaged in delivering similar programs, and certainly their existing structures and initiatives in this area seem to have some synergy with the EPPP. However, additional insights regarding this school emerged in relation to the potential for the EPPP to deliver benefits, due to its proximity to a VET location. Based on this school's experience, the benefits of the pilot, in terms of creating successful pathways, might be more pronounced when a school is domiciled closer to a VET institution.

The fixed costs associated with setting up the EPPP may be lower at schools that already possess some form of similar initiatives, and perhaps some existing structures that help support it. Therefore, we adjust the cost-benefit analysis of the YES+ pilot to reflect lower set-up costs, and increased success rate experienced by this school. Furthermore, this school experienced some variability in the numbers of students participating in YES+, and so this analysis is adjusted accordingly in order to examine different sized cohorts. Lower school-based costs do not appear to change the Benefit-Cost Ratio significantly for this pilot. This may be due to the fact it is a relatively expensive pilot, and this large expense falls outside the school. Additions to the cost on a per student basis does not result in significant changes to the Benefit Cost Ratio. In the case of this individual school, the estimate of the ratio remains well above 2, regardless of adjustments in school costs. This suggests the larger numbers of students is again the key to obtaining cost-effectiveness in the more expensive pilots. The table of adjusted results for this school are presented in Appendix 6, Table 85.

School C

The three additional case study schools are from the South West Sydney Cluster. School C is the second-largest of the five case study schools, and it has a much higher percentage of students with additional languages other than English (although still significantly lower than the other two schools in the South West cluster). This school was successful in introducing the EPPP but had some barriers.

A number of the pilots were strongly endorsed by this school. YES+ was considered a success, with a bigger number of students engaged compared to the original Yes program. The EDGE workshops were also considered a success by the school, although the students were not inspired by the resources. Increasing uptake of SBATs was also considered a significant success. This school believed that was EPPP was absorbing the opportunities they had already developed and redistributing to other schools. In fact, the school was not able to satisfy student demand for participation in the EPPP and was frustrated that the same number of places were allocated to this school as to smaller schools in the region. This school has the highest student-to-teacher ratio (approximation) than any of the other schools.

An important insight obtained from this case study, is that Pilot 5, Increasing uptake of SBATs, was considered particularly successful, and the that demand for this particular pilot substantially outstripped current places. Therefore, we consider an adjustment in the cost-benefit analysis for the SBAT pilot, to reflect a higher number of enrolments this school could potentially experience.

The school initially maintained nine enrolments in the Increasing uptake of SBATs program across the year. At this level of enrolment, we calculate the long-term Benefit-Cost Ratio to be above 1, but would fall below this value if a marginal analysis was applied to identify the additional benefit. Therefore, to reflect the potential for higher enrolments at this school, we include an increase in student numbers up to 25. In response, the Benefit-Cost Ratio increased significantly to 3.4. This suggests an increase in enrolments can have a big impact on the cost-effectiveness of this pilot for a school such as this one, and that student numbers of above 30 would seem to generate the type of benefits that can cover the short-term costs. Once again, this is evidence that one of the relatively expensive pilots (Increasing uptake of SBATs) can quickly become cost-effective once enrolments increase. The table of adjusted results for this School are presented in Appendix 6, **Table 86**.

School D

School D is the biggest of the five case study schools in terms of enrolment, and has a very large percentage of students with a language background other than English (86%). The school was able to successfully introduce and embed the EPPP primarily due to the allocation of additional resources in the creation of a “careers team” that supported the introduction of the New model of careers education. The school has a strong background in delivering initiatives that are very much like the EPPP. In fact, there is significant overlap between what they already provide, and what the EPPP proposed to introduce.

The school allocated funds to a careers team to support the CA, as they are approaching the enrolment level at which they would actually become eligible for a second CA. This school-funded team clearly made a significant difference to the successful introduction of the EPPP to the school. The educators (particularly the CA) interpreted the EPPP as supporting what they already doing, and some efficiencies were noted regarding how the EPPP actually reduced some of the burden of the administrative costs associated with running these programs. However, even in this instance, the school is contributing a large budget of its own through this careers team funded in-house.

The analysis reviews the cost-benefit calculation of the New model of careers education, to incorporate a larger in-kind contribution, consistent with the experience of this case-study school. Given the relatively low numbers of enrolments (15 students), and also the significant in-kind contribution of the school, it is unlikely that the pilot was cost-effective in this implementation. However, if we revise the analysis to add the some of the additional in-kind contribution experienced by the school, and then also assume a doubling in total school enrolments (up to 30), the Benefit-Cost Ratio increases to above 1.5. Once the analysis assumes the level of 80 enrolments, and an even higher in-kind contribution, the Benefit-Cost-Ratio jumps to a value approaching 6. Furthermore, when additional costs are added to this analysis, the enrolment level of 80 sees very little change in the Benefit-Cost-Ratio from this value of approaching 6. The lesson from the school experience is that despite their additional investment in supporting the EPPP, if enrolments can obtain value of 30 or above, the overall return on investment is likely to outweigh the costs. The table of adjusted results for this school are presented in Appendix 6, Table 87.

School E

School E is the smallest in the South West region, and the second smallest overall. Like School D, it has a very high percentage of students with a language background other than English (above 80%). There is more focus on the stakeholders in this particular case study. However, a key theme for the school did emerge in this analysis. Student “readiness” was discussed as an issue in this case, with student ability in relation to numeracy and writing as being an additional challenge to success. The pilot Increasing uptake of SBATs enrolments at this school were relatively high, and this appears to be a program of particular focus for the school.

We recalculate the Increasing uptake of SBATs pilot based on the assumption of a higher enrolment rate in VET programs (50%) following participation in the pilot, given this schools investment in this program. The Benefit-Cost Ratio is significantly higher in this scenario, increasing far above the value in the cross-school total analysis (we observe values of 5, 8, and 13 in these scenarios, relative to the overall value of 1.96). If schools can focus on a particular program and obtain even higher transition rates

into VET courses, then the benefits increase even further. The extended analysis based on this case suggests that focus on those EPPP initiatives that schools can specialise in that benefit the students will likely deliver better outcomes than doing smaller amounts of each pilot without generating the bigger uptake that the EPPP aims to deliver. The table of adjusted results for this school are presented in Appendix 6, **Table 88**.

Overall insights from the case study schools

The analysis reveals that the costs of the EPPP for individual schools are less to do with student to teacher ratios and even the size of the school, but related to whether the school already has some existing programs that are similar or overlap with the EPPP, and existing relationships with VET. If they do, then such schools may experience some efficiency gains with the introduction of EPPP.

Schools that do not have an extant commitment to the EPPP style pilots, such as School A, will find the setup costs significant, and the initial delivery and management of the pilots challenging. Schools that have a stronger foundation and existing commitment to EPPP style pilots may find some efficiency gains in terms of how EPPP pilots overlap with their existing efforts, and can benefit from this if they can align them.

The case studies have also provided an important opportunity to explore those pilots that appear to be expensive per student in the base analysis, and explore the issues that these schools highlight during the interviews. This additional analysis, based on the case studies, demonstrates that the Benefit-Cost Ratio and the general cost-effectiveness of the experiential pilots is heavily dependent upon the obtaining a critical number of enrolments for the costs to be spread such. Pilots such as YES+ and Increasing uptake of SBATs, which are relatively expensive to set up, can deliver a positive return on investment when numbers of students participating is at a level approaching what might be considered a “normal” class size. We would estimate, that groups of 30-40 students make these pilots viable and deliver significant long term benefits that outweigh costs.

Recommendations

The cost benefit analysis should be interpreted tentatively at this stage, as offering insights for decisions rather than binding rules. Given the first delivery of the pilots is continuing during 2021, and the data collection is ongoing, we would encourage further review. However, there are some early lessons to be learned from this analysis, that can be considered in the future expansion of the pilots.

The analysis suggests that the following pilot initiatives appear to be immediately cost-effective, delivering a positive return on investment when considered over the long term:

1. Digital Careers Tool Box
2. New Model of Careers Education
4. Training Awards Ambassadors
6. The Tertiary Apprenticeship pathway with the MBA
7. EDGE workshops
8. Fee Free “test and try”

The common characteristic of these pilots is that they all appear to be initiatives with a low per-student cost, given the current data. These pilots were able to be integrated at the schools and obtain the number of students adequate to achieve sufficient spread of the costs, and deliver (projected) long-run benefits. Indeed, a number of these were resource-based pilots, which means their costs are relatively low, and it is easier to expose larger numbers of students to these resources. The EDGE workshops stand out as the costliest of this group, but the demand from students was strong, and the ability of schools to ensure significant numbers of participants in this pilots resulted in a cost-effective delivery of a generally well-received pilot capable of delivering significant long-run benefits. On the other hand, some groups of students did not respond as positively to the Digital Careers Toolbox, and while its cost structure allows relative inexpensive upscale, the student response to this resource is sensitive to content, and it may benefit from customisation according to the needs of specific student cohorts.

However, we would also suggest caution in the interpretation of these findings and advise the need to consider the significant benefits that can be generated by those pilots that are not presently cost-effective due to lower student enrolments. The New model of careers education appeared to draw larger in-kind support from teachers at schools than is likely represented in the cost data, an insight we garnered from the Qualitative analysis at the case study schools. This is potentially a much more expensive program than we can currently verify. However, the additional analysis, based on the fourth case study school, demonstrates that even with these costs, this pilot is indeed cost-effective when considered over the long term.

Furthermore, a number of other pilots obtained endorsement from all stakeholders during the evaluation and would likely generate significant benefits if they could be delivered to a larger number of students. In particular, both the YES+ pilot (Pilot 3) and the Wrap around u17's (Pilot 9) obtained support from the qualitative case study analysis. However, during the roll-out of the EPPP over the last 18 months, they have not obtained student enrolments sufficient to spread the costs.

The case-study analysis suggests that these pilots can be cost-effective once student groups rise above 30 at a school. A scale up of the following initiatives would benefit from ensuring a base number of enrolments in such pilots before set up costs are incurred:

3. YES+

5. Increasing uptake of SBATs

9. Wrap around u17's

In the case of YES+ and Increasing uptake of SBATs, we would recommend minimum numbers of students attending per school, or combining schools if possible so that a critical number can participate. The pilots are relatively expensive, but can deliver important outcomes, so delivering them to significant groups is important. Similarly, the Wrap around u17's (Pilot 9), is also a relatively expensive pilot per student, but can have enormous benefits. Indeed, these services are highly valued by educators and work to raise completion rates of VET programs. We would emphasise that the numbers of students required to cover these costs is not enormous, but that running these programs for groups that is relatively small does not appear to cover the per unit costs.

The RVP (North Coast) pilot (Pilot 10), is perhaps the most difficult to assess at this stage. Like the three pilots discussed above, this was shown to be particularly expensive per individual student, and it was administered to a selected regional cohort. At this point we would only note the cost of the pilot and categorise it with the above three as benefiting from increased enrolments until further information is gathered about this pilot.

Cost Benefit Analysis Tables

Table 73. EPPP CBA summary

Index = (Like+Usefullness)*100	Description	2 YEAR PERIOD		10 YEAR PERIOD					
% Effectiveness		Cost/ Student	Cost/ School	Cost/ Student	Cost/ School	PVB	PVC	NPV	BC Ratio
70	PV Direct Cost	$16.26	$13,241.69	$4.41	$35,878.92	$218,964,591.89	$40,364,133.66	$179,180,211.03	5.5038
	PV Total Cost	$135.77	$221,077.05	$1,032.89	$1,681,838.90				
67	PV Direct Cost	$30.50	$73,397.46	$56.54	$414,302.69	$202,899,497.00	$51,333,369.77	$151,566,127.23	3.9526
	PV Total Cost	$36.81	$292,938.22	$291.91	$2,138,890.41				
83	PV Direct Cost	$13,734.75	$45,782.50	$2,164.95	$317,526.51	$22,031,986.58	$8,506,718.58	$13,525,268.01	2.5900
	PV Total Cost	$15,115.86	$50,386.18	$2,416.68	$354,446.61				
85	PV Direct Cost	$16.25	$26,453.25	$14.59	$118,821.24	$51,979,364.25	$7,546,132.84	$44,433,231.41	6.8882

	PV Total Cost	$40.46	$65,884.71	$38.62	$314,422.20				
85	PV Direct Cost	$12,031.23	$47,623.63	$2,623.77	$272,762.73	$17,756,152.61	$9,030,964.62	$8,725,187.99	1.9661
	PV Total Cost	$15,356.60	$60,786.56	$3,619.63	$376,290.19				
65	PV Direct Cost	$1.34	$3,861.63	$8.54	$24,569.75	$18,123,363.87	$2,995,324.81	$15,128,039.05	6.0506
	PV Total Cost	$119.00	$54,782.73	$43.41	$124,805.20				
87	PV Direct Cost	$404.75	$27,860.55	$349.83	$167,974.81	$78,084,629.66	$5,291,382.70	$72,793,246.96	14.7569
	PV Total Cost	$512.20	$35,256.20	$459.16	$220,474.28				
88	PV Direct Cost	$3,141.49	$14,398.50	$1,040.16	$81,045.82	$16,789,620.43	$2,617,348.84	$14,172,271.59	6.4147
	PV Total Cost	$4,419.57	$20,256.37	$1,399.65	$109,056.20				
95	PV Direct Cost	$6,716.71	NA	$1,011.89	NA	$12,623,914.65	$1,756,835.08	$10,867,079.57	7.1856
	PV Total Cost	$6,808.28	NA	$1,071.24	NA				
77	PV Direct Cost	$5,680.88	NA	$4,672.12	NA	$5,171,145.01	$2,793,133.74	$2,378,011.27	1.8514
	PV Total Cost	$7,403.34	NA	$6,206.96	NA				

Experiential pilots CBA tables

Table 74. TAFE YES+

Period		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
YEAR	**Description**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Number of Schools			**0**	**480**	**480**	**480**	**480**	**480**	**480**	**480**	**480**
Start-Up Cost		**$159,000.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**
TAFE Youth Strategy (YES) start-up costs		$159,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Operating Costs		**$10,700.00**	**$929,080.08**	**$902,019.50**	**$875,747.08**	**$850,239.89**	**$825,475.62**	**$801,432.64**	**$778,089.94**	**$755,427.13**	**$733,424.39**
Enrolment in YES+ Courses	$1,123.50	$0.00	$539,280.00	523572.82	508323.12	493517.59	479143.30	465187.67	451638.51	438483.99	425712.61
Local Customisation	$700.00	$0.00	$336,000.00	326213.59	316712.23	307487.60	298531.65	289836.55	281394.71	273198.75	265241.50
Establishing the Media Hubs and recording four podcasts/livestream episodes	$291.67	$700.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00

Ten 10 min videos proposed by the Minister	$416.67	$10,000.00	$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Communication-Employee Cost-	$1,200.00	$0.00	$28,800.00	27961.17	27146.76	26356.08	25588.43	24843.13	24119.55	23417.04	22734.99
Communication-Operating Cost	$1,041.67	$0.00	$25,000.08	24271.92	23564.97	22878.61	22212.25	21565.29	20937.17	20327.35	19735.29
Subtotal -A	**$169,700.00**	**$929,080.08**	**$902,019.50**	**$875,747.08**	**$850,239.89**	**$825,475.62**	**$801,432.64**	**$778,089.94**	**$755,427.13**	**$733,424.39**	**$169,700.00**
Costs to School											
# of Students (Years 10-12)	80 total /20 per school	0	480	480	480	480	480	480	480	480	480
# School Admin	0.5/1 per school	0	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
# Teachers	0.5/1 per school	0	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
Costs to Stakeholders											
In-kind contribution (stakeholders)		**$0.00**	**$110,488.32**	**$107,270.21**	**$104,145.84**	**$101,112.46**	**$98,167.44**	**$95,308.20**	**$92,532.23**	**$89,837.12**	**$87,220.50**

# of Students (Years 10-12)	48 hours	$0.00	$78,105.60	75830.68	73622.02	71477.69	69395.81	67374.58	65412.21	63507.00	61657.28
# School Admin	12 hour	$0.00	$16,191.36	15719.77	15261.91	14817.39	14385.81	13966.81	13560.01	13165.06	12781.61
# Teachers	12 hours	$0.00	$16,191.36	15719.77	15261.91	14817.39	14385.81	13966.81	13560.01	13165.06	12781.61
Subtotal -B											
PV TOTAL COSTS		**$169,700.00**	**$1,039,568.40**	**$1,009,289.71**	**$979,892.92**	**$951,352.35**	**$923,643.06**	**$896,740.83**	**$870,622.17**	**$845,264.24**	**$820,644.89**
BENEFITS											
Year		**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
# of students enrolled in YR 12		0	80	80	480	480	480	480	480	480	480
Tax Revenue Framework				**Year 1 Training**	**Year 2 Training**	**Completion 1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
# Students Completed VET;35% enrolled; 85% completed		0	0	0	0	23.8	23.8	142.8	142.8	142.8	142.8
Pilot attributes to 83% of a (one)						19.754	19.754	118.524	118.524	118.524	118.524

successful VET GRADUATE											
Benefit (Social and Fiscal Revenue and Saving)	**Annual**		**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Gross Income	$13,325.27	$0.00	$0.00	0.00	0.00	192712.28	374198.61	1498610.93	2557206.05	3766892.08	4903941.58
TAX	$5,404.66	$0.00	$0.00	0.00	0.00	78163.02	151772.86	607828.21	1037188.47	1527830.35	1989011.27
Welfare	$2,236.41	$0.00	$0.00	0.00	0.00	32343.32	62802.56	251515.12	429181.44	632205.66	823039.15
Crime	$465.92	$0.00	$0.00	0.00	0.00	6738.19	13083.87	52398.98	89412.80	131709.51	171466.49
Health	$93.18	$0.00	$0.00	0.00	0.00	1347.64	2616.77	10479.80	17882.56	26341.90	34293.30
Marginal Excess Tax Burden	$559.10	$0.00	$0.00	0.00	0.00	8085.83	15700.64	62878.78	107295.36	158051.42	205759.79
PV TOTAL BENEFITS		**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$319,390.29**	**$620,175.31**	**$2,483,711.81**	**$4,238,166.67**	**$6,243,030.92**	**$8,127,511.57**

Table 75. EDGE workshops

COSTS

Period		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
YEAR	**Description**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Number of Schools		**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**
Set Up Costs/Employee		**$218,700.00**	**$362,845.00**	**$352,276.70**	**$352,276.70**	**$352,276.70**	**$352,276.70**	**$352,276.70**	**$352,276.70**	**$352,276.70**	**$352,276.70**
Deliver EDGE workshops to students in SWS	300 students	$70,800.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Deliver EDGE workshops to students in North Cost	180 students	$56,700.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Services of three Work Placement Service Provider (WPSP) to track and monitor the work placements commenced and completed by EDGE participants.	3 WPSP	$60,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Transport fund for students to attend work experience, work placement or interviews.		$15,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00

Salary for staff supporting EDGE workshops		$16,200.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Delivery of Workshops	18 workshops	$0.00	$70,284.00	$68,236.89	$68,236.89	$68,236.89	$68,236.89	$68,236.89	$68,236.89	$68,236.89	$68,236.89
Delivery of Workshops of 11 workshops in three schools	60 students	$0.00	$191,846.00	$186,258.25	$186,258.25	$186,258.25	$186,258.25	$186,258.25	$186,258.25	$186,258.25	$186,258.25
Services of Work Placement Service Providers (WPSPs)	2 in South Western Sydney; 1 North Coast	$0.00	$30,000.00	$29,126.21	$29,126.21	$29,126.21	$29,126.21	$29,126.21	$29,126.21	$29,126.21	$29,126.21
Cleck Grade 9/10	2X25%	$0.00	$70,715.00	$68,655.34	$68,655.34	$68,655.34	$68,655.34	$68,655.34	$68,655.34	$68,655.34	$68,655.34
Operating Costs		**$17,000.00**	**$70,108.08**	**$68,066.10**	**$68,066.10**	**$68,066.10**	**$68,066.10**	**$68,066.10**	**$68,066.10**	**$68,066.10**	**$68,066.10**
Pilot lead travel expenses		$0.00	$1,950.00	$1,893.20	$1,893.20	$1,893.20	$1,893.20	$1,893.20	$1,893.20	$1,893.20	$1,893.20
Communications - contribution to central support		$0.00	$14,358.00	$13,939.81	$13,939.81	$13,939.81	$13,939.81	$13,939.81	$13,939.81	$13,939.81	$13,939.81
Establishing the Media Hubs and recording four podcasts/livestream episodes	$291.67	$7,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00

Ten 10 min videos proposed by the Minister	$416.67	$10,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Communication-Employee Cost-	$1,200.00	$0.00	$28,800.00	$27,961.17	$27,961.17	$27,961.17	$27,961.17	$27,961.17	$27,961.17	$27,961.17	$27,961.17
Communication-Operating Cost	$1,041.67	$0.00	$25,000.08	$24,271.92	$24,271.92	$24,271.92	$24,271.92	$24,271.92	$24,271.92	$24,271.92	$24,271.92
Subtotal - A		**$235,700.00**	**$432,953.08**	**$420,342.80**	**$420,342.80**	**$420,342.80**	**$420,342.80**	**$420,342.80**	**$420,342.80**	**$420,342.80**	**$420,342.80**
Costs to Schools											
# of Student places-Stage 5 & 6		418	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
# Careers Advisers		24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
# Teachers		24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
Costs to Stakeholders											
In-kind contribution (STAKEHOLDERS)		**$38,124.80**	**$54,444.80**	**$52,859.03**	**$52,859.03**	**$52,859.03**	**$52,859.03**	**$52,859.03**	**$52,859.03**	**$52,859.03**	**$52,859.03**
Careers Advisers	5 hours	$16,272.00	$16,272.00	$15,798.06	$15,798.06	$15,798.06	$15,798.06	$15,798.06	$15,798.06	$15,798.06	$15,798.06
Parents	2 hour	$8,360.00	$24,680.00	$23,961.17	$23,961.17	$23,961.17	$23,961.17	$23,961.17	$23,961.17	$23,961.17	$23,961.17

Teachers	10 hours	$13,492.80	$13,492.80	$13,099.81	$13,099.81	$13,099.81	$13,099.81	$13,099.81	$13,099.81	$13,099.81	$13,099.81
School Administration	10% Clerk Grade 9/10	$0.00	$14,632.06	$14,205.88	$14,205.88	$14,205.88	$14,205.88	$14,205.88	$14,205.88	$14,205.88	$14,205.88
Students	10 hours	$40,755.00	$120,315.00	$116,810.68	$116,810.68	$116,810.68	$116,810.68	$116,810.68	$116,810.68	$116,810.68	$116,810.68
In-kind services (DoE)		**$0.00**	**$84,926.00**	**$82,452.43**	**$82,452.43**	**$82,452.43**	**$82,452.43**	**$82,452.43**	**$82,452.43**	**$82,452.43**	**$82,452.43**
Employee Costs - Partnerships	30% Clerk Grade 9/10	$0.00	$43,896.00	$42,617.48	$42,617.48	$42,617.48	$42,617.48	$42,617.48	$42,617.48	$42,617.48	$42,617.48
Employee Costs - Partnerships	10% Clerk Grade 5/6	$0.00	$10,888.00	$10,570.87	$10,570.87	$10,570.87	$10,570.87	$10,570.87	$10,570.87	$10,570.87	$10,570.87
Employee Costs - Partnerships	10% Clerk Grade 11/12	$0.00	$17,518.00	$17,007.77	$17,007.77	$17,007.77	$17,007.77	$17,007.77	$17,007.77	$17,007.77	$17,007.77
Employee Costs - Communications	10% Clerk Grade 7/8	$0.00	$12,624.00	$12,256.31	$12,256.31	$12,256.31	$12,256.31	$12,256.31	$12,256.31	$12,256.31	$12,256.31
Subtotal -B		$38,124.80	$139,370.80	$135,311.46	$135,311.46	$135,311.46	$135,311.46	$135,311.46	$135,311.46	$135,311.46	$135,311.46
PV TOTAL COSTS		**$273,824.80**	**$572,323.88**	**$555,654.25**	**$555,654.25**	**$555,654.25**	**$555,654.25**	**$555,654.25**	**$555,654.25**	**$555,654.25**	**$555,654.25**
BENEFITS											
Year		**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**

# of students participated in the program		418	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
Tax Revenue Framework				**Year 1 TAFE**	**Year 2 TAFE**	**Completion 1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
# Students Enrolled in VET- 35%		0	0	167.2	493.6	493.6	493.6	493.6	493.6	493.6	493.6
Completed TAFE 85%; Pilot attributed to 87%						66.88	197.44	197.44	197.44	197.44	197.44
Benefit (Social and Fiscal Revenue and Saving)	**Annual**		**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Gross Income	$13,325.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,119,724.81	$4,425,323.88	$8,010,854.15	$12,142,852.99	$16,274,851.83	$20,406,850.67
TAX	$5,404.66	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Welfare	$2,236.41	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$187,925.84	$742,711.70	$1,344,479.02	$2,037,961.34	$2,731,443.66	$3,424,925.99
Crime	$465.92	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$39,151.22	$154,731.60	$280,099.80	$424,575.28	$569,050.76	$713,526.25
Health	$93.18	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$7,830.24	$30,946.32	$56,019.96	$84,915.06	$113,810.15	$142,705.25
Marginal Excess Tax Burden	$559.10	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$46,981.46	$185,677.92	$336,119.75	$509,490.34	$682,860.92	$856,231.50

PV TOTAL BENEFITS		**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**		**$1,401,613.57**	**$5,539,391.43**	**$10,027,572.68**	**$15,199,795.00**	**$20,372,017.33**	**$ 25,544,239.65**

Table 76. Fee free "test and try"

COSTS											
Period		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
YEAR	**Description**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Number of Schools		**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**
Set Up Costs/ Employee		**$115,214.00**	**$154,550.00**	**$164,139.81**	**$159,359.03**	**$154,717.51**	**$150,211.17**	**$145,836.09**	**$141,588.44**	**$137,464.50**	**$133,460.68**
Pre-apprenticeship/traineeship costs		$60,800.00	$0.00	$59,029.13	$57,309.83	$55,640.61	$54,020.01	$52,446.61	$50,919.04	$49,435.96	$47,996.08
Train students in their chosen part qual.		$54,414.00	$0.00	$52,829.13	$51,290.41	$49,796.52	$48,346.13	$46,937.99	$45,570.87	$44,243.56	$42,954.91
Payment for RTO delivery. Costs absorbed within the Smart & Skilled TPPPQ Program budget.		$0.00	$100,700.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Contract with GTOs	7 GTOs	$0.00	$53,850.00	$52,281.55	$50,758.79	$49,280.38	$47,845.03	$46,451.48	$45,098.53	$43,784.98	$42,509.69
Operating Costs		**$17,000.00**	**$58,800.08**	**$57,087.46**	**$55,424.71**	**$53,810.40**	**$52,243.11**	**$50,721.47**	**$49,244.14**	**$47,809.85**	**$46,417.33**
Communication material cost		$0.00	$5,000.00	$4,854.37	$4,712.98	$4,575.71	$4,442.44	$4,313.04	$4,187.42	$4,065.46	$3,947.05

Establishing the Media Hubs and recording four podcasts/livestream episodes	$291.67	$7,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Ten 10 min videos proposed by the Minister	$416.67	$10,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Communication-Employee Cost-	$1,200.00	$0.00	$28,800.00	$27,961.17	$27,146.76	$26,356.08	$25,588.43	$24,843.13	$24,119.55	$23,417.04	$22,734.99
Communication-Operating Cost	$1,041.67	$0.00	$25,000.08	$24,271.92	$23,564.97	$22,878.61	$22,212.25	$21,565.29	$20,937.17	$20,327.35	$19,735.29
Subtotal -A (Direct Cost)		**$132,214.00**	**$213,350.08**	**$221,227.26**	**$214,783.75**	**$208,527.91**	**$202,454.28**	**$196,557.56**	**$190,832.58**	**$185,274.35**	**$179,878.01**
Costs to Stakeholders											
# of Participating Students		0	110	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220
# Careers Advisers		24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
# Teachers		24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
Costs to Stakeholders											

In-kind contribution (STAKEHOLDERS)		**$64,850.40**	**$64,850.40**	**$62,961.55**	**$61,127.72**	**$59,347.30**	**$57,618.74**	**$55,940.52**	**$54,311.19**	**$52,729.31**	**$51,193.50**
Careers Advisers	5 hours @ $67.80	$8,136.00	$8,136.00	$7,899.03	$7,668.96	$7,445.59	$7,228.73	$7,018.19	$6,813.77	$6,615.31	$6,422.63
Parents/carers	2 hours @ $20.00	$49,968.00	$49,968.00	$48,512.62	$47,099.63	$45,727.80	$44,395.92	$43,102.84	$41,847.41	$40,628.56	$39,445.20
Teachers	5 hours @ $56.22	$6,746.40	$6,746.40	$6,549.90	$6,359.13	$6,173.91	$5,994.09	$5,819.50	$5,650.00	$5,485.44	$5,325.67
Student Participating	20 hours @ $11.47	$0.00	$21,450.00	$41,650.49	$40,437.36	$39,259.58	$38,116.09	$37,005.92	$35,928.07	$34,881.63	$33,865.66
School Administration (10% Clerk Grade 9/10)	14632.06	$175,584.72	$175,584.72	$170,470.60	$165,505.44	$160,684.89	$156,004.75	$151,460.92	$147,049.44	$142,766.45	$138,608.20
In-kind services (DoE)		**$0.00**	**$10,888.00**	**$10,570.87**	**$10,262.98**	**$9,964.06**	**$9,673.85**	**$9,392.08**	**$9,118.53**	**$8,852.94**	**$8,595.09**
Employee Costs - Partnerships		$0.00	$10,888.00	$10,570.87	$10,262.98	$9,964.06	$9,673.85	$9,392.08	$9,118.53	$8,852.94	$8,595.09
Subtotal -B (Imputed Costs)		**$64,850.40**	**$75,738.40**	**$73,532.43**	**$71,390.71**	**$69,311.37**	**$67,292.59**	**$65,332.61**	**$63,429.72**	**$61,582.25**	**$59,788.59**
PV TOTAL COSTS		**$197,064.40**	**$289,088.48**	**$294,759.69**	**$286,174.46**	**$277,839.28**	**$269,746.87**	**$261,890.17**	**$254,262.30**	**$246,856.60**	**$239,666.60**
BENEFITS		**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**

# of students participating in the program		0	110	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220
Periods				**Year 1 Training**	**Year 2 Training**	**Completion**					
# Students Completed VET;35% enrolled; 85% success		0	0	0	0	32.725	65.45	65.45	65.45	65.45	65.45
Pilot attributes to 88% of a (one) successful VET GRADUATE*						28.80	57.60	57.60	57.60	57.60	57.60
Benefit (Social and Fiscal Revenue and Saving)	**Annual**		**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Gross Income	$13,325.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$280,942.00	$818,277.68	$1,390,277.61	$1,992,538.41	$2,558,536.64	$3,089,873.75
TAX	$5,404.66	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$113,948.50	$331,888.85	$563,888.82	$808,162.43	$1,037,728.15	$1,253,235.51
Welfare	$2,236.41	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$47,151.11	$137,333.32	$233,333.30	$334,412.04	$429,404.75	$518,580.21
Crime	$465.92	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$9,823.15	$28,611.11	$48,611.11	$69,669.18	$89,459.32	$108,037.54
Health	$93.18	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,964.63	$5,722.22	$9,722.22	$13,933.84	$17,891.86	$21,607.51

Marginal Excess Tax Burden	$559.10	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$11,787.78	$34,333.33	$58,333.33	$83,603.01	$107,351.19	$129,645.05
PV TOTAL BENEFITS		**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$465,617.16**	**$1,356,166.50**	**##########**	**$3,302,318.90**	**$4,240,371.91**	**$5,120,979.57**

Table 77. New model of careers education (combination)

COSTS											
Period		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
YEAR	**Description**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Number of Schools		**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**
Set Up Costs/ Employee		**$549,500.00**	**$952,800.00**	**$925,048.54**	**$898,105.38**	**$871,946.97**	**$846,550.46**	**$821,893.65**	**$797,955.00**	**$774,713.59**	**$752,149.12**
Training Sessions for Careers Advisers		$12,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Salaries	5 head teachers	$537,500.00	$896,000.00	$869,902.91	$844,565.93	$819,966.93	$796,084.39	$772,897.47	$750,385.89	$728,529.99	$707,310.67
School Staff		$0.00	$56,800.00	$55,145.63	$53,539.45	$51,980.05	$50,466.06	$48,996.18	$47,569.11	$46,183.60	$44,838.44
Operating Costs		**$46,500.00**	**$212,739.08**	**$206,542.80**	**$200,526.99**	**$194,686.39**	**$189,015.92**	**$183,510.60**	**$178,165.63**	**$172,976.34**	**$167,938.19**
Student transport		$0.00	$31,204.00	$30,295.15	$29,412.76	$28,556.08	$27,724.35	$26,916.84	$26,132.86	$25,371.71	$24,632.73
Information Session for Parents		$29,500.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00

Events		$0.00	$85,650.00	$83,155.34	$80,733.34	$78,381.88	$76,098.92	$73,882.44	$71,730.53	$69,641.29	$67,612.90
Meetings and Operational Expenses		$0.00	$9,775.00	$9,490.29	$9,213.88	$8,945.51	$8,684.96	$8,432.00	$8,186.41	$7,947.97	$7,716.48
Promotional Material and Distribution		$0.00	$18,200.00	$17,669.90	$17,155.25	$16,655.58	$16,170.46	$15,699.48	$15,242.21	$14,798.27	$14,367.25
Resources for School delivered Program		$0.00	$9,100.00	$8,834.95	$8,577.62	$8,327.79	$8,085.23	$7,849.74	$7,621.11	$7,399.13	$7,183.62
Professional learning for School Staff and HT		$0.00	$5,010.00	$4,864.08	$4,722.41	$4,584.86	$4,451.32	$4,321.67	$4,195.80	$4,073.59	$3,954.94
Establishing the Media Hubs and recording four podcasts/livestream episodes	$291.67	$7,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Ten 10 min videos proposed by the Minister	$416.67	$10,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Communication-Employee Cost-	$1,200.00	$0.00	$28,800.00	$27,961.17	$27,146.76	$26,356.08	$25,588.43	$24,843.13	$24,119.55	$23,417.04	$22,734.99
Communication-Operating Cost	$1,041.67	$0.00	$25,000.08	$24,271.92	$23,564.97	$22,878.61	$22,212.25	$21,565.29	$20,937.17	$20,327.35	$19,735.29

Subtotal -A (Direct Cost)		**$596,000.00**	**$1,165,539.08**	**$1,131,591.34**	**$1,098,632.37**	**$1,066,633.37**	**$1,035,566.38**	**$1,005,404.25**	**$976,120.63**	**$947,689.93**	**$920,087.31**
Costs to Stakeholders Cost/School											
#of student Stage 4		0	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210
# of Students Stage 5		0	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805
# of Students Stage 6		0	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525
# Careers Advisers		0	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
# Teachers		0	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
Costs to Stakeholders											
In-kind contribution (STAKEHOLDERS)		**$35,116.94**	**$4,969,333.30**	**$4,824,595.43**	**$4,684,073.24**	**$4,547,643.92**	**$4,415,188.27**	**$4,286,590.55**	**$4,161,738.40**	**$4,040,522.72**	**$3,922,837.59**
Careers Advisers	20 hours- @$67.80 per hour	$0.00	$32,544.00	$31,596.12	$30,675.84	$29,782.37	$28,914.92	$28,072.74	$27,255.09	$26,461.25	$25,690.53
Parents	1 hour - @ 20per hour	$0.00	$390,790.00	$379,407.77	$368,357.06	$357,628.21	$347,211.85	$337,098.89	$327,280.47	$317,748.03	$308,493.23

Teachers	10 hours- @56.22 per hour	$0.00	$13,492.80	$13,099.81	$12,718.26	$12,347.82	$11,988.18	$11,639.01	$11,300.01	$10,970.88	$10,651.34
Student Stage 4 (Year 7 & 8)	12hours- @$7.30 per hour	$0.00	$631,596.00	$613,200.00	$595,339.81	$577,999.81	$561,164.87	$544,820.26	$528,951.71	$513,545.35	$498,587.71
Student Stage 5 (Year 9 &10)	24hours - @9.38 per hour	$0.00	$1,531,941.60	$1,487,321.94	$1,444,001.89	$1,401,943.58	$1,361,110.27	$1,321,466.28	$1,282,976.97	$1,245,608.71	$1,209,328.85
Student Stage 6 (Year 11 &12)	36hours- @$11.47per hour	$0.00	$2,281,176.54	$2,214,734.50	$2,150,227.67	$2,087,599.68	$2,026,795.81	$1,967,762.92	$1,910,449.44	$1,854,805.28	$1,800,781.83
School Administration	10% Clerk Grade 9/10	$35,116.94	$87,792.36	$85,235.30	$82,752.72	$80,342.44	$78,002.37	$75,730.46	$73,524.72	$71,383.22	$69,304.10
In-kind services (DoE)		**$88,176.00**	**$176,352.00**	**$171,215.53**	**$166,228.67**	**$161,387.06**	**$156,686.47**	**$152,122.78**	**$147,692.02**	**$143,390.31**	**$139,213.90**
Staff portional workload (.3)	PEO - SW Sydney	27,990	55,980	$54,349.51	$52,766.52	$51,229.63	$49,737.50	$48,288.84	$46,882.37	$45,516.86	$44,191.13
Staff portional workload (.3)	PEO - North Coast	27,990	55,980	$54,349.51	$52,766.52	$51,229.63	$49,737.50	$48,288.84	$46,882.37	$45,516.86	$44,191.13
Staff portional workload (.3)	Leader, Senior Pathways	32,196	64,392	$62,516.50	$60,695.64	$58,927.80	$57,211.46	$55,545.10	$53,927.29	$52,356.59	$50,831.64

Staff portional workload (.3)	PEO - SW Sydney	27,990	55,980	$54,349.51	$52,766.52	$51,229.63	$49,737.50	$48,288.84	$46,882.37	$45,516.86	$44,191.13
Subtotal -B (Imputed Costs)		**$123,292.94**	**$5,145,685.30**	**$4,995,810.97**	**$4,850,301.91**	**$4,709,030.98**	**$4,571,874.74**	**$4,438,713.34**	**$4,309,430.43**	**$4,183,913.03**	**$4,062,051.49**
PV TOTAL COSTS		**$719,292.94**	**$6,311,224.38**	**$6,127,402.31**	**$5,948,934.28**	**$5,775,664.35**	**$5,607,441.11**	**$5,444,117.59**	**$5,285,551.06**	**$5,131,602.97**	**$4,982,138.80**
BENEFITS		**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
# of students enrolled in YR 12		0	2555.3	2968.9	3340	3465	3645	3565			
Periods		**HS**	**HS**	**Year 1 Training**	**Year 2 Training**	**Completion 1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
# Students Enrolled in VET (35%); Completed VET (85%)		0	0	0	0	760.20175	883.24775	993.65	1030.8375	1084.3875	1060.5875
Pilot attributes to 70% of a (one) successful VET GRADUATE						509.3	591.8	665.7	690.7	726.5	710.6
Benefit (Social and Fiscal Revenue)	**Annual Benefit**		**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Gross Income	$13,325.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,968,874.34	$10,429,134.96	$16,942,065.99	$24,397,752.35	$27,742,039.71	$37,944,723.66

TAX	$5,404.66	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,015,347.63	$4,229,998.80	$6,871,607.18	$9,895,591.86	$11,252,016.11	$15,390,167.64
Welfare	$2,236.41	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$833,936.95	$1,750,344.33	$2,843,423.66	$4,094,727.67	$4,656,006.67	$6,368,345.23
Crime	$465.92	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$173,736.87	$364,655.07	$592,379.93	$853,068.26	$970,001.39	$1,326,738.59
Health	$93.18	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$34,747.37	$72,931.01	$118,475.99	$170,613.65	$194,000.28	$265,347.72
Marginal Excess Tax Burden	$559.10	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$208,484.24	$437,586.08	$710,855.92	$1,023,681.92	$1,164,001.67	$1,592,086.31
PV TOTAL BENEFITS		**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$8,235,127.40**	**$17,284,650.25**	**$28,078,808.66**	**$40,435,435.72**	**$45,978,065.82**	**$62,887,409.14**

Mentoring pilots CBA tables

Table 78. Increasing the Uptake of SBATs

COSTS											
Period		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
YEAR	**Description**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Number of Schools		**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**
Set Up Costs/Employee		**$356,226.00**	**$572,116.00**	**$555,452.43**	**$539,274.20**	**$523,567.19**	**$508,317.66**	**$493,512.29**	**$479,138.14**	**$465,182.66**	**$451,633.65**
Set Up Costs -Smooth the transition to an SBAT		**$356,226.00**	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
SBAT Mentors	4x Clerk 7/8 @ $126,240	$0.00	$505,200.00	$490,485.44	$476,199.45	$462,329.57	$448,863.66	$435,789.96	$423,097.05	$410,773.83	$398,809.55
SBAT Project Officers	120 days @ P464.69	$0.00	$66,916.00	$64,966.99	$63,074.75	$61,237.62	$59,454.00	$57,722.33	$56,041.10	$54,408.83	$52,824.11
Operating Costs		**$1.00**	**$214,624.08**	**$191,868.04**	**$186,279.65**	**$180,854.03**	**$175,586.44**	**$170,472.27**	**$165,507.06**	**$160,686.46**	**$156,006.27**
SBAT Mentor Operating Expense-Travel/Accommodation /Meals		$0.00	$40,000.00	$38,834.95	$37,703.84	$36,605.67	$35,539.48	$34,504.35	$33,499.37	$32,523.66	$31,576.37

SBAT Mentor Leases - Office Rental		$0.00	$2,640.00	$2,563.11	$2,488.45	$2,415.97	$2,345.61	$2,277.29	$2,210.96	$2,146.56	$2,084.04
Communications		$0.00	$24,884.00	$24,159.22	$23,455.56	$22,772.39	$22,109.11	$21,465.16	$20,839.96	$20,232.97	$19,643.66
Communications (Refresh of SBAT in NSW website)		$0.00	$76,300.00	$74,077.67	$71,920.07	$69,825.31	$67,791.56	$65,817.05	$63,900.05	$62,038.88	$60,231.92
Communication-Employee Cost		$0.00	$28,800.00	$27,961.17	$27,146.76	$26,356.08	$25,588.43	$24,843.13	$24,119.55	$23,417.04	$22,734.99
Communication-Operating Cost		$0.00	$25,000.08	$24,271.92	$23,564.97	$22,878.61	$22,212.25	$21,565.29	$20,937.17	$20,327.35	$19,735.29
Establishing the Media Hubs and recording four podcasts/livestream episodes		$1.00	$7,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Subtotal -A		**$356,227.00**	**$786,740.08**	**$747,320.47**	**$725,553.85**	**$704,421.21**	**$683,904.09**	**$663,984.55**	**$644,645.20**	**$625,869.12**	**$607,639.93**
Costs to Stakeholders											
# of Students		0	95	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
# Careers Advisers		24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
# Teachers		24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24

Costs to Stakeholders											
In-kind contribution (STAKEHOLDERS)		**$64,850.40**	**$64,850.40**	**$62,961.55**	**$61,127.72**	**$59,347.30**	**$57,618.74**	**$55,940.52**	**$54,311.19**	**$52,729.31**	**$51,193.50**
Careers Advisers	10 hours @ $67.80	$16,272.00	$16,272.00	$15,798.06	$15,337.92	$14,891.19	$14,457.46	$14,036.37	$13,627.54	$13,230.63	$12,845.27
Communication - TNSW	DoE	$0.00	$18,174.96	$17,645.59	$17,131.64	$16,632.66	$16,148.22	$15,677.88	$15,221.24	$14,777.91	$14,347.48
Clerk 11/12 Manager SBATs (Pilot Coordinator)	0.4 Current workload- DoE	$0.00	$58,800	$57,087.38	$55,424.64	$53,810.33	$52,243.04	$50,721.40	$49,244.07	$47,809.78	$46,417.26
CEO (ETS) Leader, Vocational Education (Pilot Lead)	0.25 Current workload- DoE	$0.00	$45,600	$44,271.84	$42,982.37	$41,730.46	$40,515.01	$39,334.96	$38,189.28	$37,076.97	$35,997.06
Teachers	10 hours @$56.22	$13,492.80	$13,492.80	$13,099.81	$12,718.26	$12,347.82	$11,988.18	$11,639.01	$11,300.01	$10,970.88	$10,651.34
Subtotal -B (Imputed Costs)	**$64,881.74**	**$251,028.62**	**$299,953.51**	**$291,217.00**	**$282,734.95**	**$274,499.95**	**$266,504.81**	**$258,742.53**	**$251,206.34**	**$243,889.65**	**$64,881.74**
TOTAL COSTS	**$421,108.74**	**$1,037,768.70**	**$1,047,273.98**	**$1,016,770.85**	**$987,156.17**	**$958,404.04**	**$930,489.36**	**$903,387.73**	**$877,075.47**	**$851,529.58**	**$421,108.74**
BENEFITS		**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**

# of students participating in the program		0	95	300	300	300	300	300			
Period Description				**Year 1 Training**	**Year 2 Training**	**Completion**					
# Students Enrolled in VET (35%); Completed (85%)		0	0	0	0	28.2625	89.25	89.25	89.25	89.25	89.25
Pilot attributes to 85% of a (one) successful VET GRADUATE						24.023125	75.8625	75.8625	75.8625	75.8625	75.8625
Benefit (Social and Fiscal Revenue)	**Annual Benefit**		**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Gross Income	$13,325.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$234,360.19	$946,063.12	$415,653.88	$2,469,258.93	$3,548,061.38	$2,965,917.04
TAX	$5,404.66	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$95,055.18	$383,717.91	$168,586.89	$1,138,868.60	$1,439,073.85	$1,202,959.36
Welfare	$2,236.41	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$39,333.18	$158,779.82	$69,760.09	$471,255.97	$595,478.83	$497,776.29
Crime	$465.92	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$8,194.41	$33,079.13	$14,533.35	$98,178.33	$124,058.09	$103,703.39
Health	$93.18	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,638.88	$6,615.83	$2,906.67	$19,635.67	$24,811.62	$20,740.68
Marginal Excess Tax Burden	$559.10	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$9,833.29	$39,694.96	$17,440.02	$117,813.99	$148,869.71	$124,444.07

PV TOTAL BENEFITS		**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$388,415.15**	**$1,567,950.76**	**$688,880.91**	**$4,315,011.49**	**$5,880,353.48**	**$4,915,540.82**

Table 79. Wrap around u17's

Period		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
YEAR	**Description**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Number of students		**0**	**50**	**50**	**220**	**220**	**220**	**220**	**220**	**220**	**220**
Employee & Student Cost		**$104,925.00**	**$108,827**	**$87,500**	**$296,154**	**$227,811**	**$175,239**	**$134,799**	**$103,692**	**$79,763**	**$61,356**
Employee Costs-Support Officer	for 2 regions	$104,925.00	$108,827.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Enrollment in tutorial support courses@ $1,575 per person		$0.00	$78,750.00	$60,576.92	$205,029.59	$157,715.07	$121,319.28	$93,322.52	$71,786.56	$55,220.43	$42,477.25
Local customisation @ $700		$0.00	$35,000.00	$26,923.08	$91,124.26	$70,095.58	$53,919.68	$41,476.68	$31,905.14	$24,542.41	$18,878.78
Operational Costs		**$0.00**	**$122,083.50**	**$41,384.68**	**$31,834.37**	**$24,487.97**	**$18,836.90**	**$14,489.93**	**$11,146.10**	**$8,573.92**	**$6,595.32**
Communication-Employee Cost		$0.00	$60,000.00	$22,153.85	$17,041.42	$13,108.78	$10,083.68	$7,756.68	$5,966.67	$4,589.75	$3,530.58
Communication-Operating Cost		$0.00	$52,083.50	$19,230.83	$14,792.95	$11,379.19	$8,753.22	$6,733.25	$5,179.42	$3,984.17	$3,064.75

Ten 10 min videos proposed by the Minister		$0.00	$10,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Subtotal -A (Direct Cost)		**$104,925.00**	**$230,910.50**	**$128,884.68**	**$327,988.21**	**$252,298.63**	**$194,075.87**	**$149,289.13**	**$114,837.79**	**$88,336.76**	**$67,951.36**
Costs to Stakeholders Cost/School											
#of TAFE STUDENT		0	50	50	220	220	220	220	220	220	220
Costs to Stakeholders											
In-kind contribution /services											
TAFE Admin services	10 hours	$0.00	$653.30	$1,005.08	$3,092.54	$2,378.88	$1,829.91	$1,407.62	$1,082.79	$832.91	$640.70
TAFE Students	10 hours	$0.00	$3,925.00	$6,038.46	$20,437.87	$15,721.44	$12,093.41	$9,302.63	$7,155.87	$5,504.51	$4,234.24
Subtotal -B (Imputed Costs)		**$0.00**	**$4,578.30**	**$7,043.54**	**$23,530.41**	**$18,100.32**	**$13,923.32**	**$10,710.25**	**$8,238.65**	**$6,337.42**	**$4,874.94**
PV TOTAL COSTS		**$104,925.00**	**$235,488.80**	**$135,928.22**	**$351,518.63**	**$270,398.94**	**$207,999.19**	**$159,999.38**	**$123,076.44**	**$94,674.19**	**$72,826.30**
BENEFITS		**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
# of students enrolled @TAFE (target)		0	50	50	220	220	220	220	220	220	$220

Period		Year 1 Training	Year 2 Training	Completion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
# Students Completed VET (@90%)		0	0	0	42.5	42.5	187	187	187	187	187
Benefit (Social and Fiscal Revenue)											
Social and Fiscal Benefits		$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$491,609.68	$756,322.59	$1,818,083.15	$2,349,522.84	$2,667,956.33	$2,714,298.01	$1,782,372.05
Gross Income	$13,325.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$296,625.25	$456,346.54	$1,096,986.88	$1,417,644.58	$1,609,779.56	$1,637,740.99	$1,075,439.68
TAX	$5,404.66	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$120,309.54	$185,091.60	$444,931.74	$574,988.71	$652,917.58	$664,258.58	$436,192.32
Welfare	$2,236.41	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$49,783.26	$76,589.63	$184,109.69	$237,926.36	$270,172.79	$274,865.62	$180,493.37
Crime	$465.92	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$10,371.51	$15,956.17	$38,356.18	$49,567.99	$56,286.00	$57,263.67	$37,602.79
Health	$93.18	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,074.30	$3,191.23	$7,671.24	$9,913.60	$11,257.20	$11,452.73	$7,520.56
Marginal Excess Tax Burden	$559.10	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$12,445.81	$19,147.41	$46,027.42	$59,481.59	$67,543.20	$68,716.41	$45,123.34
Social Transfer		$0.00	$43,750.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Did not access tutorial support (3) diverted to other services		$0.00	$4,725.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00

Did not access local customisation(3) diverted to other services		$0.00	$2,100.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Funds reallocated to scholarship admin support		$0.00	$36,925.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Social Transfer		$0.00	$43,750.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Did not access tutorial support (3) diverted to other services		$0.00	$4,725.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Did not access local customisation(3) diverted to other services		$0.00	$2,100.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
PV TOTAL BENEFITS		**$0.00**	**$43,750.00**	**$0.00**	**$491,609.68**	**$756,322.59**	**$1,818,083.15**	**$2,349,522.84**	**$2,667,956.33**	**$2,714,298.01**	**$1,782,372.05**

Table 80. RVP (North Coast)

Period		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
YEAR	**Description**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Number of TAFE students		**0**	**50**	**50**	**50**	**50**	**50**	**50**	**50**	**50**	**50**
Set Up Costs /Maintenance Cost		**$0.00**	**$213,244**	**$192,470**	**$186,864**	**$181,421**	**$176,137**	**$171,007**	**$166,026**	**$161,191**	**$156,496**
Total Net Cost of Service		$0.00	$166,372.00	$161,526.21	$156,821.57	$152,253.95	$147,819.37	$143,513.95	$139,333.93	$135,275.66	$131,335.59
Establish On-line registration system		$0.00	$15,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Contract Management Support	0.4FTE	$0.00	$31,872.00	$30,943.69	$30,042.42	$29,167.39	$28,317.86	$27,493.07	$26,692.30	$25,914.85	$25,160.05
Operational Costs		**$0.00**	**$70,800.08**	**$59,029.20**	**$57,309.91**	**$55,640.69**	**$54,020.08**	**$52,446.68**	**$50,919.11**	**$49,436.03**	**$47,996.14**
travel expenses		$0.00	$4,000.00	$3,883.50	$3,770.38	$3,660.57	$3,553.95	$3,450.44	$3,349.94	$3,252.37	$3,157.64
Establishing the Media Hubs and recording four podcasts/livestream episodes		$0.00	$7,000.00	$6,796.12	$6,598.17	$6,405.99	$6,219.41	$6,038.26	$5,862.39	$5,691.64	$5,525.86

Communication-Employee Cost		$0.00	$28,800.00	$27,961.17	$27,146.76	$26,356.08	$25,588.43	$24,843.13	$24,119.55	$23,417.04	$22,734.99
Communication-Operating Cost		$0.00	$25,000.08	$24,271.92	$23,564.97	$22,878.61	$22,212.25	$21,565.29	$20,937.17	$20,327.35	$19,735.29
Ten 10 min videos proposed by the Minister		$0.00	$10,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Subtotal -A		**$0.00**	**$284,044.08**	**$251,499.11**	**$244,173.89**	**$237,062.03**	**$230,157.31**	**$223,453.70**	**$216,945.34**	**$210,626.54**	**$204,491.79**
Costs to Stakeholders											
In-kind contribution STAKEHOLDERS		**$0.00**	**$86,123.00**	**$83,614.56**	**$81,179.19**	**$78,814.75**	**$76,519.17**	**$74,290.46**	**$72,126.66**	**$70,025.88**	**$67,986.29**
Supervision of contract staff		$0.00	$38,796.00	$37,666.02	$36,568.95	$35,503.84	$34,469.74	$33,465.77	$32,491.04	$31,544.70	$30,625.92
time allocated to support staff		$0.00	$13,796.00	$13,394.17	$13,004.05	$12,625.29	$12,257.57	$11,900.55	$11,553.93	$11,217.41	$10,890.69
School Administration	9 pilot schools	$0.00	$9,000.00	$8,737.86	$8,483.36	$8,236.27	$7,996.38	$7,763.48	$7,537.36	$7,317.82	$7,104.68
Travel Cost to Students	50 students @100	$0.00	$5,000.00	$4,854.37	$4,712.98	$4,575.71	$4,442.44	$4,313.04	$4,187.42	$4,065.46	$3,947.05
TAFE Administration		$0.00	$13,796.00	$13,394.17	$13,004.05	$12,625.29	$12,257.57	$11,900.55	$11,553.93	$11,217.41	$10,890.69

Student participants		$0.00	$5,735.00	$5,567.96	$5,405.79	$5,248.34	$5,095.47	$4,947.06	$4,802.97	$4,663.08	$4,527.26
Subtotal -B		**$0.00**	**$86,123.00**	**$83,614.56**	**$81,179.19**	**$78,814.75**	**$76,519.17**	**$74,290.46**	**$72,126.66**	**$70,025.88**	**$67,986.29**
TOTAL COSTS		**$0.00**	**$370,167.08**	**$335,113.67**	**$325,353.08**	**$315,876.77**	**$306,676.48**	**$297,744.16**	**$289,072.00**	**$280,652.42**	**$272,478.08**
BENEFITS		**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Short-Run											
# of students participating in the programme; 35% enrolled in VET		50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
		Year 1 Training	**Year 2 Training**	**Completion**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
# Students Completed VET; 90% success rate; 77%		0	0	12.1275	12.1275	12.1275	12.1275	12.1275	12.1275	12.1275	12.1275
Benefit (Social and Fiscal Revenue and Saving)											
Gross Income	$13,325.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$121,860.47	$236,622.27	$373,311.84	$501,838.17	$622,560.84	$626,097.33	$637,851.41
TAX	$5,404.66	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$49,425.93	$95,972.67	$151,413.19	$203,542.76	$252,507.19	$253,941.57	$258,708.97

Welfare	$2,236.41	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$20,452.11	$39,712.83	$62,653.74	$84,224.59	$104,485.74	$105,079.27	$107,051.99
Crime	$465.92	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,260.86	$8,273.51	$13,052.86	$17,546.79	$21,767.86	$21,891.52	$22,302.50
Health	$93.18	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$852.17	$1,654.70	$2,610.57	$3,509.36	$4,353.57	$4,378.30	$4,460.50
Marginal Excess Tax Burden	$559.10	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$5,113.03	$9,928.21	$15,663.43	$21,056.15	$26,121.43	$26,269.82	$26,763.00
TOTAL BENEFITS		**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$201,964.56**	**$392,164.19**	**$618,705.64**	**$831,717.81**	**$1,031,796.64**	**$1,037,657.81**	**$1,057,138.36**

Resource pilots' CBA tables

Table 81. Digital careers toolbox

Period		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
YEAR	**Description**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Number of TAFE students		**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**
Set Up Costs /Maintenance Cost		**$230,000.00**	**$17,000**	**$16,505**	**$16,025**	**$15,558**	**$15,105**	**$14,665**	**$14,238**	**$13,823**	**$13,420**
Evaluation,project support and contingency		$230,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
A landing page to house the three tools		$0.00	$3,400.08	$3,301.05	$3,204.90	$3,111.55	$3,020.93	$2,932.94	$2,847.51	$2,764.58	$2,684.05
Users Guide for Careers Advisors		$0.00	$3,400.08	$3,301.05	$3,204.90	$3,111.55	$3,020.93	$2,932.94	$2,847.51	$2,764.58	$2,684.05
Worksheet for Students		$0.00	$3,400.08	$3,301.05	$3,204.90	$3,111.55	$3,020.93	$2,932.94	$2,847.51	$2,764.58	$2,684.05
Fact Sheet for Parents		$0.00	$3,400.08	$3,301.05	$3,204.90	$3,111.55	$3,020.93	$2,932.94	$2,847.51	$2,764.58	$2,684.05
Video users guide to assist self-guided usage		$0.00	$3,400.08	$3,301.05	$3,204.90	$3,111.55	$3,020.93	$2,932.94	$2,847.51	$2,764.58	$2,684.05

Operational Costs		**$0.00**	**$70,800.08**	**$59,029.20**	**$57,309.91**	**$55,640.69**	**$54,020.08**	**$52,446.68**	**$50,919.11**	**$49,436.03**	**$45,154.33**
Establishing the Media Hubs and recording four podcasts/livestream episodes		$0.00	$7,000.00	$6,796.12	$6,598.17	$6,405.99	$6,219.41	$6,038.26	$5,862.39	$5,691.64	$2,684.05
Communication-Employee Cost		$0.00	$28,800.00	$27,961.17	$27,146.76	$26,356.08	$25,588.43	$24,843.13	$24,119.55	$23,417.04	$22,734.99
Communication-Operating Cost		$0.00	$25,000.08	$24,271.92	$23,564.97	$22,878.61	$22,212.25	$21,565.29	$20,937.17	$20,327.35	$19,735.29
Ten 10 min videos proposed by the Minister		$0.00	$10,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Subtotal -A (Direct Costs)		**$230,000.00**	**$87,800.48**	**$75,534.45**	**$73,334.41**	**$71,198.46**	**$69,124.72**	**$67,111.38**	**$65,156.68**	**$63,258.91**	**$58,574.61**
Costs to Stakeholders											
#of student Stage 4		7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210
# of Students Stage 5		6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805
# of Students Stage 6		5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525
# Careers Advisers		24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24

# Teachers		48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
Costs to Stakeholders											
In-kind contribution STAKEHOLDERS											
Careers Advisers	20 hours- 2$67.80 per hour	$32,544.00	$32,544.00	$31,596.12	$30,675.84	$29,782.37	$28,914.92	$28,072.74	$27,255.09	$26,461.25	$25,690.53
Communication - TNSW (Doe)	DoE	$0.00	$18,174.96	$17,645.59	$17,131.64	$16,632.66	$16,148.22	$15,677.88	$15,221.24	$14,777.91	$14,347.48
Parents	2 hour - @ 20per hour	$494,140.00	$494,140.00	$479,747.57	$465,774.34	$452,208.10	$439,036.99	$426,249.50	$413,834.47	$401,781.04	$390,078.68
School Administration	10% Clerk Grade 9/10	$35,116.94	$87,792.36	$85,235.30	$82,752.72	$80,342.44	$78,002.37	$75,730.46	$73,524.72	$71,383.22	$69,304.10
Teachers	20 hours- @56.22 per hour	$53,971.20	$53,971.20	$52,399.22	$50,873.03	$49,391.29	$47,952.71	$46,556.03	$45,200.03	$43,883.52	$42,605.36
Participating Students		**$916,377.80**	**$926,449.20**	**$2,053,523.52**	**$1,993,712.15**	**$1,935,642.87**	**$1,879,264.92**	**$1,824,529.05**	**$1,771,387.43**	**$1,719,793.62**	**$1,669,702.54**
Student Stage 4 (Year 7 &8)	10hours- @$7.30 per hour	$230,143.20	$230,143.20	$511,000.00	$496,116.50	$481,666.51	$467,637.39	$454,016.88	$440,793.09	$427,954.46	$415,489.76

Student Stage 5 (Year 9 &10)	10hours-@$Imputed.,158 per hour	$255,323.60	$265,395.00	$619,717.48	$601,667.45	$584,143.16	$567,129.28	$550,610.95	$534,573.74	$519,003.63	$503,887.02
Student Stage 6 (Year 11 &12)	15hours-@$11.47per hour	$430,911.00	$430,911.00	$922,806.04	$895,928.20	$869,833.20	$844,498.25	$819,901.22	$796,020.60	$772,835.53	$750,325.76
Subtotal -B (Imputed Costs)		**$2,448,527.74**	**$2,539,520.92**	**$4,773,670.84**	**$4,634,631.88**	**$4,499,642.61**	**$4,368,585.05**	**$4,241,344.71**	**$4,117,810.40**	**$3,997,874.18**	**$3,881,431.24**
TOTAL COSTS		**$2,678,527.74**	**$2,627,321.40**	**$4,849,205.29**	**$4,707,966.30**	**$4,570,841.07**	**$4,437,709.77**	**$4,308,456.09**	**$4,182,967.08**	**$4,061,133.09**	**$3,940,005.85**
BENEFITS		**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
# of students enrolled in YR12		0	2555.3	2968.9	3340	3465	3645	3565			
Tax Revenue Framework				**Year 1 Training**	**Year 2 Training**	**Completion**					
# Students Completed VET (35% to VET & 85% completed)		0	0	0	0	894.355	1039.115	1169	1212.75	1275.75	1247.75
Pilot attributes to 85% of a (one) successful VET GRADUATE						592.96	688.93	775.05	804.05	845.82	827.26
Benefit (Social and Fiscal Revenue and Saving)	**Annual**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**

Gross Income	$13,325.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$3,633,952.88	$10,896,111.16	$19,619,478.85	$25,490,189.03	$32,834,403.07	$39,643,741.14
TAX	$5,404.66	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,473,910.96	$4,419,401.73	$7,957,550.86	$10,338,678.07	$13,317,450.20	$16,079,279.62
Welfare	$2,236.41	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$609,894.19	$1,828,717.96	$3,292,779.67	$4,278,073.68	$5,510,669.05	$6,653,495.02
Crime	$465.92	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$127,061.29	$380,982.91	$685,995.76	$891,265.35	$1,148,056.05	$1,386,144.80
Health	$93.18	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$25,412.26	$76,196.58	$137,199.15	$178,253.07	$229,611.21	$277,228.96
Marginal Excess Tax Burden	$559.10	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$152,473.55	$457,179.49	$823,194.92	$1,069,518.42	$1,377,667.26	$1,663,373.75
TOTAL BENEFITS		**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$6,022,705.12**	**$18,058,589.82**	**$32,516,199.21**	**$42,245,977.62**	**$54,417,856.84**	**$65,703,263.28**

Table 82. Training awards ambassadors

COSTS											
Period		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
YEAR	**Description**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Number of Schools		**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**
Set Up Costs/Employee	**$6,333.33**	**$152,000.00**	**$180,020.00**	**$174,776.70**	**$169,686.12**	**$164,743.80**	**$159,945.44**	**$155,286.83**	**$150,763.92**	**$146,372.73**	**$142,109.45**
Set Up Cost		$152,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Staff -Program Manager	1 * 20% Clerk 9/10 (Program Manager) Eddie	$0.00	$28,716.00	$27,879.61	$27,067.58	$26,279.21	$25,513.79	$24,770.67	$24,049.20	$23,348.74	$22,668.68
Staff -Coordinator	1 * 50% Clerk 7/8	$0.00	$63,120.00	$61,281.55	$59,496.65	$57,763.74	$56,081.30	$54,447.87	$52,862.01	$51,322.34	$49,827.51
Staff-Content Manager	1 * 100% Clerk 5/6	$0.00	$88,184.00	$85,615.53	$83,121.88	$80,700.85	$78,350.34	$76,068.29	$73,852.71	$71,701.66	$69,613.26
Operating Costs		**$10,700.00**	**$292,158.08**	**$136,496.20**	**$131,086.56**	**$125,916.81**	**$120,975.22**	**$116,250.70**	**$111,732.73**	**$107,411.33**	**$103,277.05**
Ambassador training cost		$0.00	$10,000.00	$9,708.74	$9,425.96	$9,151.42	$8,884.87	$8,626.09	$8,374.84	$8,130.92	$7,894.09

Promotional videos		$0.00	$150,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Ambassadors salaries		$0.00	$24,000.00	$23,300.97	$22,622.30	$21,963.40	$21,323.69	$20,702.61	$20,099.62	$19,514.20	$18,945.82
Communication expenditures		$0.00	$14,358.00	$13,939.81	$13,533.79	$13,139.60	$12,756.90	$12,385.34	$12,024.60	$11,674.37	$11,334.34
Travel Cost		$0.00	$20,000.00	$19,417.48	$18,851.92	$18,302.83	$17,769.74	$17,252.18	$16,749.69	$16,261.83	$15,788.18
Ambassador webinar		$0.00	$20,000.00	$19,417.48	$18,851.92	$18,302.83	$17,769.74	$17,252.18	$16,749.69	$16,261.83	$15,788.18
Establishing the Media Hubs and recording four podcasts/livestream episodes	$291.67	$700.00	$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ten 10 min videos proposed by the Minister	$416.67	$10,000.00	$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Communication-Employee Cost-	$1,200.00	$0.00	$28,800.00	27146.76	25588.43	24119.55	22734.99	21429.90	20199.74	19040.19	17947.21
Communication-Operating Cost	$1,041.67	$0.00	$25,000.08	23564.97	22212.25	20937.17	19735.29	18602.41	17534.55	16528.00	15579.22
Subtotal -A		**$162,700.00**	**$472,178.08**	**$311,272.90**	**$300,772.68**	**$290,660.61**	**$280,920.66**	**$271,537.53**	**$262,496.64**	**$253,784.06**	**$245,386.50**
Costs to Stakeholders											

#of student Stage 4		7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210	7210
# of Students Stage 5		6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805	6805
# of Students Stage 6		5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525	5525
# Careers Advisers	1 per school	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
# Teachers	2 per school	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
Costs to Stakeholders											
In-kind contribution (STAKEHOLDERS)		**$412,418.80**	**$412,418.80**	**$400,406.60**	**$388,744.27**	**$377,421.62**	**$366,428.76**	**$355,756.08**	**$345,394.25**	**$335,334.23**	**$325,567.21**
Careers Advisers	5hours	$8,136.00	$8,136.00	$7,899.03	$7,668.96	$7,445.59	$7,228.73	$7,018.19	$6,813.77	$6,615.31	$6,422.63
Parents	1 hour	$390,790.00	$390,790.00	$379,407.77	$368,357.06	$357,628.21	$347,211.85	$337,098.89	$327,280.47	$317,748.03	$308,493.23
Teachers	5 hours	$13,492.80	$13,492.80	$13,099.81	$12,718.26	$12,347.82	$11,988.18	$11,639.01	$11,300.01	$10,970.88	$10,651.34
Student Stage 4 (Year 7 &8)	10 hours	$702,975.00	$702,975.00	$682,500.00	$662,621.36	$643,321.71	$624,584.18	$606,392.41	$588,730.50	$571,583.01	$0.00
Student Stage 5 (Year 9 &10)	10 hours	$663,487.50	$663,487.50	$644,162.62	$625,400.60	$607,185.05	$589,500.05	$572,330.15	$555,660.34	$539,476.05	$0.00

Student Stage 6 (Year 11 &12)	10 hours	$538,638.75	$538,638.75	$522,950.24	$507,718.68	$492,930.76	$478,573.55	$464,634.52	$451,101.47	$437,962.60	$0.00
School Administration	10% Clerk Grade 9/10	$0.00	$14,632.06	$14,205.88	$13,792.12	$13,390.41	$13,000.40	$12,621.74	$12,254.12	$11,897.20	$11,550.68
In-kind contribution (DoE)		**$0.00**	**$121,517.45**	**$117,978.11**	**$114,541.85**	**$111,205.68**	**$107,966.68**	**$104,822.02**	**$101,768.95**	**$98,804.81**	**$95,927.00**
Employer Cost - Project Officer (Training Awards)	20% Clerk Grade 7/8	$0.00	$23,176.19	$22,501.15	$21,845.78	$21,209.50	$20,591.74	$19,991.98	$19,409.69	$18,844.36	$18,295.50
Employer Cost - Manager Strategic Comms Support	15% Clerk Grade 11/12	$0.00	$26,277.26	$25,511.90	$24,768.83	$24,047.41	$23,347.00	$22,666.99	$22,006.79	$21,365.81	$20,743.51
Employer Cost - Senior Project Officer (Training Awards)	Support to communicaitons/central support) 30% Clerk Grade 7/8	$0.00	$43,073.96	$41,819.38	$40,601.34	$39,418.78	$38,270.66	$37,155.98	$36,073.76	$35,023.07	$34,002.98
Employee Costs - Partnerships	2 x 10% Clerk 9/10 RIEP Officer in each Cluster	$0.00	$14,357.99	$13,939.79	$13,533.78	$13,139.59	$12,756.89	$12,385.33	$12,024.59	$11,674.36	$11,334.33
Employee Costs - Partnerships	10% Clerk Grade 9/10 Fiona	$0.00	$14,632.06	$14,205.88	$13,792.12	$13,390.41	$13,000.40	$12,621.74	$12,254.12	$11,897.20	$11,550.68
Subtotal -B		**$412,418.80**	**$533,936.25**	**$518,384.71**	**$503,286.13**	**$488,627.31**	**$474,395.44**	**$460,578.10**	**$447,163.20**	**$434,139.03**	**$421,494.21**

PV TOTAL COSTS		**$575,118.80**	**$1,006,114.33**	**$829,657.61**	**$804,058.80**	**$779,287.91**	**$755,316.10**	**$732,115.63**	**$709,659.85**	**$687,923.10**	**$666,880.71**
BENEFITS		**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
# of students enrolled in YR 12		0	2555.3	2968.9	3340	3465	3645	3565			
Tax Revenue Framework				**Year 1 Training**	**Year 2 Training**	**Completion 1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
# Students Completed VET;35% enrolled; 85 completes		0	0	0	0	894.355	1039.115	1169	1212.75	1275.75	$1,247.75
Pilot attributes to 85% of a (one) successful VET GRADUATE; embedded						126.19	146.62	164.95	171.12	180.01	176.06
Benefit (Social and Fiscal Revenue)	**Annual**		**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Gross Income	$13,325.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,231,094.24	$2,583,934.93	$4,315,556.70	$6,044,816.26	$7,786,444.16	$9,401,230.04
TAX	$5,404.66	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$499,324.94	$1,048,029.55	$1,750,365.65	$2,451,743.66	$3,158,138.19	$3,813,086.31
Welfare	$2,236.41	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$206,617.22	$433,667.40	$724,289.24	$1,014,514.62	$1,306,815.80	$1,577,828.82

Crime	$465.92	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$43,045.25	$90,347.38	$150,893.59	$211,357.21	$272,253.29	$328,714.34
Health	$93.18	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$8,609.05	$18,069.48	$30,178.72	$42,271.44	$54,450.66	$65,742.87
Marginal Excess Tax Burden	$559.10	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$51,654.30	$108,416.85	$181,072.31	$253,628.65	$326,703.95	$394,457.20
PV TOTAL BENEFITS		**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**		**$2,040,345.00**	**$4,282,465.59**	**###########**	**$10,018,331.84**	**$12,904,806.05**	**$ 15,581,059.58**

Table 83. Tertiary apprenticeship pathway with the MBA

COSTS											
Period		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
YEAR	**Description**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Number of Schools		**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**
Set Up Costs /Maintenance Cost		**$4,878.96**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**
Create minimal promotional material and website content about MBA pathway for all students, parents, careers advisors, construction employers.	$108.73	$2,609.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Develop 1 short video on the MBA pathway and promote.	$42.48	$1,019.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Engage with Careers Advisors Association	$52.08	$1,249.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Operating Costs		**$17,000.00**	**$70,800.24**	**$68,737.94**	**$66,735.87**	**$64,792.10**	**$62,904.95**	**$61,072.77**	**$59,293.95**	**$57,566.94**	**$55,890.24**
Videos to promote pathways-	$500.00	$0.00	$12,000.00	11650.49	11311.15	10981.70	10661.84	10351.31	10049.81	9757.10	9472.91

Translation of parent fact into languages relevant to the demographics	$208.34	$0.00	$5,000.16	4854.37	4712.98	4575.71	4442.44	4313.04	4187.42	4065.46	3947.05
Establishing the Media Hubs and recording four podcasts/livestream episodes	$291.67	$7,000.00	$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ten 10 min videos proposed by the Minister	$416.67	$10,000.00	$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Communication-Employee Cost-	$1,200.00	$0.00	$28,800.00	27961.17	27146.76	26356.08	25588.43	24843.13	24119.55	23417.04	22734.99
Communication-Operating Cost	$1,041.67	$0.00	$25,000.08	24271.92	23564.97	22878.61	22212.25	21565.29	20937.17	20327.35	19735.29
Subtotal -A (Direct Costs)		**$21,878.96**	**$70,800.24**	**$68,737.94**	**$66,735.87**	**$64,792.10**	**$62,904.95**	**$61,072.77**	**$59,293.95**	**$57,566.94**	**$55,890.24**
Costs to Stakeholders											
# of Students YR 11		2969	3340	3465	3645	3565	3565	3565	3565	3565	3565
# of Students YR 12		2555	2969	3340	3465	3645	3645	3645	3645	3645	3645
# Careers Advisers		24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
# Teachers		24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24

Costs to Stakeholders											
In-kind contribution (STAKEHOLDERS)		**$857,425.47**	**$890,827.06**	**$892,888.06**	**$923,045.67**	**$941,647.84**	**$938,694.22**	**$935,826.63**	**$933,042.56**	**$930,339.58**	**$927,715.33**
Careers Advisers	10 hours-@$67.80	$16,272.00	$16,272.00	15798.06	15337.92	14891.19	14457.46	14036.37	13627.54	13230.63	12845.27
Parents	2 hour-@$20.00	$220,968.00	$126,180.00	$272,200.00	$284,400.00	$288,400.00	$288,400.00	$288,400.00	$288,400.00	$288,400.00	$288,400.00
Teachers	10 hours-@$56.22	$13,492.80	$6,746.40	$6,549.90	$6,359.13	$6,173.91	$5,994.09	$5,819.50	$5,650.00	$5,485.44	$5,325.67
School Administration	10% Clerk Grade 9/10	$35,116.94	$87,792.36	$85,235.30	$82,752.72	$80,342.44	$78,002.37	$75,730.46	$73,524.72	$71,383.22	$69,304.10
# of Students YR 11	10hours-@9.38	$278,482.82	$313,292.00	$130,006.80	$136,760.40	$133,758.80	$133,758.80	$133,758.80	$133,758.80	$133,758.80	$133,758.80
# of Students YR 12	10hours-@$11.47	$293,092.91	$340,544.30	$383,098.00	$397,435.50	$418,081.50	$418,081.50	$418,081.50	$418,081.50	$418,081.50	$418,081.50
In-kind services (DoE)		**$0.00**	**$67,956.00**	**$65,976.70**	**$64,055.05**	**$62,189.37**	**$60,378.03**	**$58,619.44**	**$56,912.08**	**$55,254.45**	**$53,645.09**
HETP staff working on the project	CL11/12 - 0.1 FTE CL9/10 - 0.4 FTE CL3/4 - 0.1 FTE	$0.00	$67,956.00	$65,976.70	$64,055.05	$62,189.37	$60,378.03	$58,619.44	$56,912.08	$55,254.45	$53,645.09

C&E Design team	Fact sheet redesign										
TSNSW comms	Potential use of video equipment, advice and/or services										
EPPP comms	Advice, website services										
Subtotal -B		**$892,542.41**	**$329,564.00**	**$145,804.86**	**$152,098.32**	**$148,649.99**	**$148,216.26**	**$147,795.17**	**$147,386.34**	**$146,989.43**	**$146,604.07**
PV TOTAL COSTS		**$914,421.37**	**$400,364.24**	**$214,542.80**	**$218,834.19**	**$213,442.09**	**$211,121.22**	**$208,867.94**	**$206,680.30**	**$204,556.37**	**$202,494.30**
BENEFITS		**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Short-Run	**Short-Run**										
# of students enrolled in YR 12		0	2555.3	2968.9	3340	3465	3645	3565	3645	3565	3645
Tax Revenue Framework				**Year 1 Training**	**Year 2 Training**	**Completion**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
# Students Completed VET (35% to VET & 85% completed);5% enrolled in building & construction		0	0	0	0	44.71775	51.95575	58.45	60.6375	63.7875	62.3875

Pilot attributes to 65% of a (one) successful VET GRADUATE						24.71	28.71	32.29	33.50	35.24	34.47
Benefit (Social and Fiscal Revenue and Saving)	**Annual**		**2020-2021**	**2021-2022**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**
Gross Income	$13,325.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$241,027.49	$915,639.59	$1,545,894.11	$2,142,032.69	$2,759,193.54	$3,331,406.82
TAX	$5,404.66	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$97,759.40	$371,378.30	$627,006.00	$868,796.48	$1,119,113.46	$1,351,199.97
Welfare	$2,236.41	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$40,452.17	$153,673.78	$259,450.76	$359,501.99	$463,081.43	$559,117.23
Crime	$465.92	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$8,427.53	$32,015.37	$54,052.24	$74,896.25	$96,475.30	$116,482.76
Health	$93.18	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,685.51	$6,403.07	$10,810.45	$14,979.25	$19,295.06	$23,296.55
Marginal Excess Tax Burden	$559.10	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$10,113.04	$38,418.44	$64,862.69	$89,875.50	$115,770.36	$139,779.31
PV TOTAL BENEFITS		**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$399,465.14**	**$1,517,528.56**	**$2,562,076.25**	**$3,550,082.15**	**$4,572,929.15**	**$5,521,282.63**

Table 84. Sensitivity analysis: Case study School A

Case 1: EDGE workshops		Description	2 YEAR PERIOD	10 YEAR PERIOD				
Assumptions			**Cost/Student**	**Cost/ Student**	**PVB**	**PVC**	**NPV**	**BC Ratio**
Number of Students	39	Direct PV	$990.59	$509.25	$2,856,905.52	$236,175.58	$2,620,729.94	12.0965
Set-Up Costs	$16,085.00	Total PV	$1,194.64	$672.86				
Number of Students	39	Direct PV	$3,526.23	$790.99	$2,856,905.52	$335,065.58	$2,521,839.94	8.5264
Set-Up Costs	$114,975.00	Total PV	$3,730.28	$954.60				
Number of Students*	385	Direct PV	$3,526.23	$89.01	$19,370,130.19	$335,065.58	$19,035,064.61	57.81
Set Up Costs	$114,975.00	Total PV	$3,730.28	$107.43				

Table 85. Sensitivity analysis: Case study School B

Case 2: TAFE YES +		Description	2 YEAR PERIOD	10 YEAR PERIOD				
Assumptions			**Cost/Student**	**Cost/ Student**	**PVB**	**PVC**	**NPV**	**BC Ratio**
Number of Students	74	Direct PV	$2,649.63	$2,283.73	$4,192,277.63	$1,557,882.76	$2,634,394.87	2.691
Set-Up Costs	$6,625.00	Total PV	$2,711.84	$2,339.16				
Number of Students	50	Direct PV	$3,046.17	$2,599.98	$2,832,620.02	$1,206,908.95	$1,625,711.07	2.347
Set-Up Costs	$6,625.00	Total PV	$3,138.24	$2,682.02				
Number of Students*	74	Direct PV	$2,918.21	$2,313.57	$4,192,277.63	$1,577,757.76	$2,614,519.87	2.6571
Set Up Costs	$26,500.00	Total PV	$2,980.42	$2,369.01				

Table 86. Sensitivity analysis: Case study School C

Case 3: Increasing update of SBATs		Description	2 YEAR PERIOD	10 YEAR PERIOD				
Assumptions			**Cost/Student**	**Cost/ Student**	**PVB**	**PVC**	**NPV**	**BC Ratio**
Number of Students	9	Direct PV	$2,645.75	$3,755.60	$640,904.22	$384,197.26	$256,706.95	1.668164452
Set-Up Costs	$14,842.75	Total PV	$3,273.04	$4,743.18				
Number of Students*	25	Direct PV	$1,400.69	$1,455.52	$1,356,260.16	$398,878.86	$957,381.29	3.400180563
Set-Up Costs	$14,842.75	Total PV	$1,732.79	$1,908.51				
Number of Students**	40	Direct PV	$971.91	$924.63	$2,026,906.35	$412,642.86	$1,614,263.49	4.912011167
Set Up Costs	$14,842.75	Total PV	$1,202.34	$1,254.23				

**40 in 2021 ; 28% TAFE enrolment; 78% completed

*25 in the second year; 35% TAFE enrollment;85% completed

Table 87. Sensitivity analysis: Case study School D

Case 4: New Model of Careers Ed.		Description	2 YEAR PERIOD	10 YEAR PERIOD				
Assumptions			**Cost/Student**	**Cost/ Student**	**PVB**	**PVC**	**NPV**	**BC Ratio**
Number of Students	30	Direct PV	$827.78	$1,534.45	$1,468,517.86	$879,072.54	$589,445.32	1.6705
Set-Up Costs	$22,895.83	Total PV	$4,937.54	$3,255.82				
Number of Students	80	Direct PV	$310.42	$575.42	$3,916,047.62	$669,306.86	$3,246,740.76	5.8509
Set-Up Costs	$22,895.83	Total PV	$539.24	$929.59				
Number of Students*	80		$310.42	$575.42	$3,916,047.62	$676,654.86	$3,239,392.76	5.7874
Set Up Costs	higher in kind contribution		$585.17	$939.80				

Table 88. Sensitivity analysis: Case study School E

Case 5: Increasing SBATs		Description	2 YEAR PERIOD	10 YEAR PERIOD				
Assumptions			**Cost/Student**	**Cost/ Student**	**PVB**	**PVC**	**NPV**	**BC Ratio**
Number of Students*	30	Direct PV	$793.73	$1,126.68	$2,136,347.39	$405,875.56	$1,730,471.82	5.263552633
Set-Up Costs	$14,842.75	Total PV	$1,022.06	$1,503.24				
Number of Students**	30	Direct PV	$793.73	$1,126.68	$3,421,535.11	$405,875.56	$3,015,659.55	8.430010149
Set-Up Costs	$14,842.75	Total PV	$1,022.06	$1,503.24				
Number of Students***	50	Direct PV	$476.24	$676.01	$5,702,558.52	$426,521.56	$5,276,036.96	13.36991848
Set Up Costs	$14,842.75	Total PV	$636.17	$947.83				

* 30 from 2020 onwards; 35% TAFE enrolment; 85% completed
** 30 from 2020 onwards; 50% TAFE enrolment; 90% completed
** 50 from 2020 onwards; 50% TAFE enrolment; 90% completed

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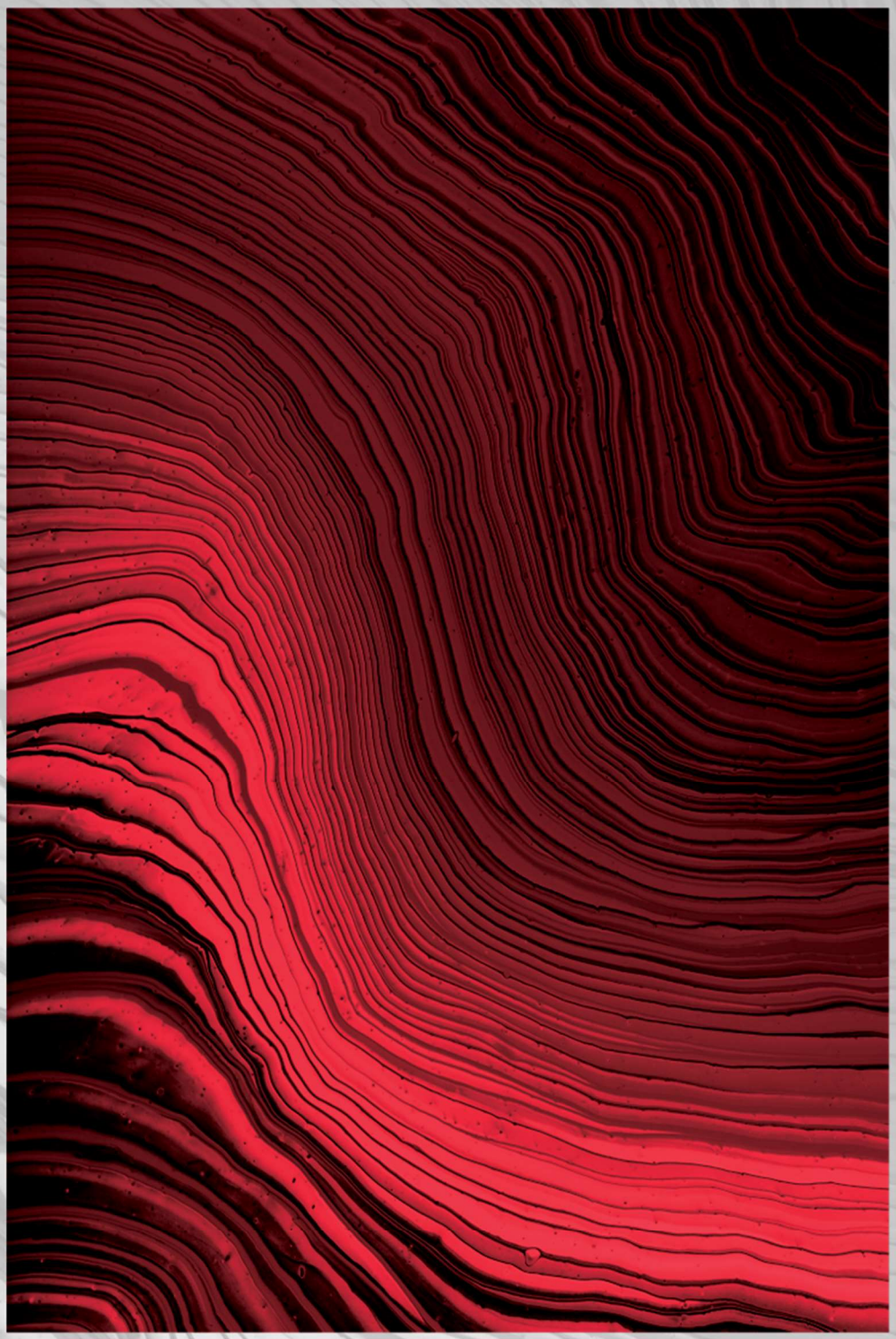

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