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The Impacts of International Students on Pedagogical Practices in Vocational Education and Training

The Australian vocational education and training (VET) sector currently ranks second behind the higher education sector in terms of international students’ commencements and enrolments (AEI, 2013). However, there has been a critical lack of theoretical and empirical research on how teaching and learning practices in VET may be affected by the needs of international students while extensive research has been devoted to these issues in higher education. The aim of this paper is to compensate for this shortfall in existing knowledge. The paper summarises the main ideas of my forthcoming book published by ACER Press that focuses on the core aspects of teaching in response to the growth of international students in vocational education and to global skills mobility. The book draws on an empirical study funded by the Australian Research Council that captures the voices and practices of 150 teachers and students from New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. At the same time, it is well grounded in theories about VET teaching and learning, international education and international pedagogy. The research reveals that effective approaches to teaching international students in VET recognise and harness teaching and learning situations by which not only international students but also domestic students can enrich their ‘international’ knowledge, skills and attributes. Many of these approaches focus on developing learners’ ability to look at the broader issues in an intercultural context, capitalise on their prior experiences and adapt vocational skills to different national contexts and to the demand of global skills mobility.

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Target audience: Audience from the vocational and university sectors
International program directors
Researchers
Teachers

Sector relevance: University; All Sectors; Vocational Education

Key interest: Global Challenges and Future Trends