

**TERTIARY ADMISSION FOR SCHOOL-LEAVERS WITH
NON-CONVENTIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOLING**

**THE NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE ALTERNATIVE
ADMISSIONS PROCESS TO ENABLE 16 – 19 YEAR OLDS
TO OBTAIN A TER BASED ON NON-CONVENTIONAL
EVIDENCE**

Avril McClelland, John Topley

The report of a project conducted by the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre Ltd to look into the need in the Queensland setting to assess, for tertiary entrance purposes, the apparently increasingly varied profile of qualifications and experiences of young people, by creating and piloting for school-leavers and other young people a comprehensive assessment method based on alternative evidence used in conjunction with or in lieu of the TER.

The project was commissioned and funded under the Higher Education Innovation Program of the Australian Government.



Q T A C

Brisbane, March 2002

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Q T A C

26 March 2002

Mr Peter Shergold
GPO Box 9880
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Mr Shergold,

In 1999 the Higher Education Innovations Program commissioned the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre to conduct a project arising from the Government's long standing interest in encouraging access to tertiary study for school leavers with non-conventional secondary school backgrounds.

The project was conducted in a Queensland setting. It began with the intention of establishing a comprehensive process by which school leavers with non-conventional secondary schooling would be able to obtain a TER based on alternative evidence.

In the end, it concluded that the issue being addressed might well be dealt with by other means. Principally, these are by:

- promoting a view about normal timing and means for accessing tertiary study that reflects current practice, rather than the practices of some decades ago;
- removing arbitrary barriers that impinge on the assessment of alternative evidence presented by school leavers;
- acknowledging that the transition between school, tertiary study and the workplace is a protracted and often convoluted process for many adolescents;
- recognising the legitimacy of different forms of participation in work, training, and education as developmental routes for young adults;
- accepting that as school leavers mature, different routes, aspirations and types of evidence for demonstrating preparedness for tertiary study become available for consideration in the selection process;
- noting that entry to "prestige" tertiary courses is increasingly based on other tertiary study; and
- focussing resources on informing and supporting choices made by early adolescents about the different and changing routes to work and study.

The report's findings and recommendations mirror these conclusions.

I am pleased to present the report of the project.

Yours sincerely,

W H Arundell

Company Secretary

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INDEX

Chapter 1	RECOMMENDATIONS and OVERVIEW findings and recommendations outline course of the project changes to direction summary outcomes	p 1
Chapter 2	CONDUCTING THE PROJECT approach taken methods used acknowledgements of help and advice	p 16
Chapter 3	THE QUEENSLAND SETTING history of school-based assessment. OPs (TERs) tertiary admissions, school-leavers and others tertiary transition and participation setting for qualitative admissions assessment	p 22
Chapter 4	EVIDENCE FOR ADMISSION evidence now presented for alternative admission institutional examples school roles in recording evidence evidence available to school-leavers	p 38
Chapter 5	ADMISSION and ASSESSMENT – A POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE ADMISSIONS MODEL assessment and admission admissions judgments in institutions features of alternative admissions systems desirable features of a general process a model	p 73
Chapter 6	NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE ALTERNATIVE ADMISSIONS PROVISION existence of the target group? individual view of tertiary transition aspirations and engagement public policy – work, training, education outcomes and recommendations	p 102