



Government of Western Australia
Department of Training
and Workforce Development

*Course in Applied
Vocational Study Skills*

CEVAS

Teacher's Handbook

For further information

For information about the Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVSS), and products and professional development support services mentioned in this handbook, contact the Senior Literacy Officer at the Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development on 08 6551 5511.

The Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVSS) Teacher's Handbook has been developed by the Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development.

The handbook was developed and written by Susan Bates.

Published by the Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development, 2011.

©Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development 2011.

Copyright in this document is owned by the State of Western Australia. No parts may be reproduced by any process except with the express written permission of the Attorney General for the State of Western Australia or a person acting under his or her authority or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act.

Table of Contents

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| | ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | ii |
| | INTRODUCTION | iv |
| CHAPTER 1: | A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO LITERACY IN VET | 1 |
| | 1 A different way of thinking about literacy support in VET | 2 |
| | 2 Implementing change in the VET training culture | 6 |
| | 3 Examining some of the perspectives that are reflected in the CAVSS model | 8 |
| CHAPTER 2: | THE STRUCTURE OF CAVSS | 13 |
| | 1 Main references for teachers delivering CAVSS | 14 |
| | 2 The CAVSS Model: a learner-centred model | 15 |
| | 3 A summary of the structure and features of Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills | 17 |
| | 4 What CAVSS is not | 20 |
| | 5 A summary of some of the differences between CAVSS and bridging literacy courses, and implications for teachers | 21 |
| | 6 Frequently-Asked Questions | 24 |
| CHAPTER 3: | BEING A SUCCESSFUL CAVSS TEACHER | 31 |
| | Part 1: Qualifications and Training | 34 |
| | 1 Content knowledge and strategies that CAVSS teachers need to have at their fingertips | 35 |
| | 2 Interpreting the CAVSS Accreditation requirements for teachers | 36 |
| | 3 Background to the issue of qualifications for literacy teachers | 37 |
| | Part 2: Skills | 39 |
| | 1 The skills that CAVSS teachers need | 39 |
| | 2 Identifying the literacy and numeracy skills demanded by the VET course content and teaching and assessment activities | 39 |
| | 3 Doing CAVSS: Examples of how literacy and numeracy skills are taught in application to VET training activities | 41 |
| | Part 3: Knowledge | 49 |
| | 1 Two sets of knowledge | 50 |
| | 2 Knowing the VET industry course | 50 |
| | 3 Knowing the academic industry | 52 |
| | Part 4: Attitudes | 61 |
| | 1 Reframing teacherly attitudes and behaviours | 61 |
| | 2 Attitudes that are at odds with the concept and aim of CAVSS | 68 |
| CHAPTER 4: | TEAM-TEACHING IN CAVSS | 75 |
| | 1 The CAVSS team-teaching model | 76 |
| | 2 The reservations that VET lecturers may have about team-teaching | 79 |
| | 3 Steps for setting up a CAVSS team-teaching relationship | 79 |
| | 4 Some difficult situations | 87 |
| | 5 Advice from the experts | 89 |
| | BIBLIOGRAPHY | 90 |

Acknowledgements

This handbook has been developed to capture the accumulated knowledge, strategies and professional insights of literacy and vocational lecturers who have been involved in implementing the Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVSS) since 2000. The contributions of the following individuals and groups are acknowledged with thanks:

Anthea Taylor
Carla Jenkins
Cheryl Wiltshire
Colin Knight
Edward Campbell
Enzo Multari
Frank Warren
George Snow
Gordon Bates
Jo Camilleri
John Martin
Ken Cooper
Lynn Galton-Fenzi
Margaret McHugh
Mel Bishop
Michael Korn
Lina Zampichelli
Peter Christiansen
Scott Kay
Steve Dean

The vocational lecturers, literacy lecturers, students and management staff involved in the CAVSS pilots in 2000, and in delivering CAVSS since then.

Introduction

STARS

Introduction

CAVSS is a literacy teaching methodology rather than a course. The methodology is team teaching and this is defined as a vocational lecturer and a literacy lecturer teaching the same group of students in the same place at the same time. The following account gives a picture of CAVSS in action.

Industry training skills and CAVSS in action

One CAVSS teacher provided this description of how he uses the VET lecturer's teaching activities, even the aspects that look unplanned and informal, as a basis for identifying and teaching literacy and numeracy skills on the spot.

'Recently I was working with one of the Plastering lecturers and some Pre-Apprenticeship students. These Pre-Apprenticeship students need quite a lot of support, including a lot of basic maths. The VET lecturer and I had planned to do some work on how to go about setting out and calculating a quote.

We started by taking turns to talk about aspects of organising information for a quote, getting ideas from the students about the factors that needed to be incorporated. Then the VET lecturer went into a story. He started telling the students some horror stories about the process of quoting. He was impressing on them how important it was to be careful and accurate in quotes and how, if you weren't, the mistake would cost you money. He told them about how he had lost a considerable amount of money quoting from a plan for a plastering job, because although the plan gave him the perimeter of each room, it did not identify that the walls had been built taller than usual. He had given a firm quote for the job, it had been accepted, and he lost money because the job ended up costing him significantly more than he had quoted.

As the VET lecturer told the story, in a lot of detail, I got busy on the whiteboard, drawing up a list of factors, setting up the calculations that had to be done in each case. He kept on story telling, and the students were really interested in what was going on. The students are always interested in hearing the real stuff about aspects of the industry. When he had finished the story, I went through the processes I had written up on the board, and went over some of the key factors to keep in mind with the class. Then we asked the students to break into groups, and they went outside to work on their quotes while we moved around from one group to the next discussing some of the details, and checking over maths processes.

As the students came back in, the VET lecturer suggested, in the "is it OK with you?" way that we suggest things to each other, that we get the students to present their final quotes first, without any costing information, and see what the reactions were. I agreed, and it was on for young and old. The students took the competitive aspect of the exercise very seriously. They demanded to know how others had come up with very different costings, and queried where other groups had omitted essential equipment, or

made incorrect calculations, and even worked out how much money would have been lost because of the errors. Each group had to justify their costings, and there was a lot of discussion about the psychology of quotes, and how the lowest quote was not always the one that got the job. They got experience in "selling" themselves and their industry skills and knowledge, and some very useful practice in applying their spoken language skills in a very industry-specific way.

It was a great lesson. The VET lecturer and I were both on a bit of a high afterwards. The students had been very focussed on the issues that the VET lecturer had been warning them about, as well as the organisational and mathematical processes that I had been covering. It had been interesting, informative, fun and very, very relevant.'

This handbook is designed to assist teachers delivering the Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVSS). The handbook provides an overview of the CAVSS course and explains the concepts behind it. It also includes discussion of a range of practical issues that teachers have faced in implementing and delivering CAVSS since January 2000. This handbook should be used by teachers in conjunction with the CAVSS Accreditation requirements, and the *CAVSS Business Rules*.

No single set of instructions

CAVSS is a framework for teaching literacy and numeracy skills in direct application to VET training activities. That means that CAVSS teachers always teach according to the content and training activities of the VET course. CAVSS is delivered in a team-teaching mode, which means that CAVSS teachers always teach in direct relation to the teaching methods and strategies used by the VET lecturer/s they work with, and according to the expectations and learning needs of the VET students. CAVSS teachers are likely to find that what they teach and how they teach it, is different every time they deliver CAVSS.

For that reason, there is no single set of steps or instructions that literacy teachers might use to implement and deliver CAVSS. Instead, literacy teachers need to be guided by the purpose of CAVSS, the concepts and principles that underpin aspects of the model, and experiences, suggestions, strategies and words of warning from CAVSS teachers who have already found solutions to the problems associated with delivering such a customised course. This handbook is a collection of that knowledge and information, and teachers using this handbook will find ideas and advice for implementing and delivering CAVSS throughout the document.

Introduction

Selecting in and selecting out

CAVSS was established in Western Australia in 2000. Research findings from the pilot programs and on-going discussion shows very clearly that the professional knowledge and skills and personal attitudes of the literacy lecturer are crucial to the success of the team-teaching model and the literacy support being delivered.

Not all literacy teachers would enjoy, or be successful, delivering CAVSS. It is important that literacy teachers have the opportunity to make informed decisions about whether or not they would be suited to delivering CAVSS, and have real choices in whether or not they undertake to deliver CAVSS. Literacy teachers who undertake to deliver CAVSS must have timely access to appropriate professional development training, regardless of their employment status.

This handbook is very candid and forthright about the attitudes and approaches that are essential for literacy teachers to develop both a team-teaching relationship with a VET lecturer, and the VET students' trust. In that sense, this handbook provides an opportunity for you to make that informed choice about whether or not CAVSS is for you. Literacy teachers are invited to use the contents of this handbook to critically reflect on aspects of teaching practices in the adult literacy field, and on their own professional perspectives and personal attitudes, as a basis for adapting their skills and strategies to the needs of a new (CAVSS) client group, or for recognising that their skills and attitudes may be more suited to delivering other literacy courses.

One experienced CAVSS teacher recommends that teachers take careful notice of their initial response to hearing about CAVSS.

'If teachers' first thought is "It's about time that something was done to improve the literacy standards of those VET students, and the lecturers!" then they should probably forget about CAVSS right then and there. If their first thought is "Ooh, I don't like the sound of that", or "that doesn't sound right", then they may want to find out a bit more about CAVSS, but should take notice of whether that response stays with them, even as a niggling voice. But if their first response is something like "This sounds interesting", or "Yeah, the VET students would do well with that sort of support", or "Wow, that sounds like it might be fun, a chance to do something a bit different, a bit real", then they might just be the sort of teacher who will love delivering CAVSS.'

A note about terminology

In this document, the term 'literacy' generally refers to reading, writing, oracy, numeracy and maths. The terms 'lecturer' and 'teacher' are used interchangeably and, unless specifically noted, refer to teachers/lecturers working in the VET sector. The term 'VET lecturer' refers to trainers delivering vocational/industry courses and Training Package qualifications.

Acronyms used in this document include the following:

| | |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CAVSS | Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills |
| VET | Vocational Education and Training |
| DTWD | Department of Training and Workforce Development (WA) |
| CGEA | Certificates of General Education for Adults |
| AQF | Australian Qualifications Framework |
| AVETMISS | Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard |

chapter **1**

***A Different Approach
to Literacy in VET***

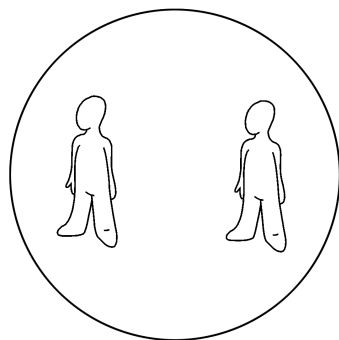
1 A different way of thinking about literacy support in VET

The Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVSS) takes a different approach to the issue of literacy for VET students.

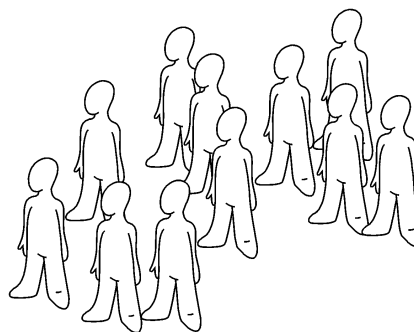
The traditional approach to thinking about literacy support in VET

Traditionally, literacy and/or numeracy support for VET students is thought of as remedial support for the 'students who have literacy or numeracy problems.' If you ask lecturers how many students in their VET courses have literacy problems, they might say that anywhere from one to three students in each group have problems. This is the number of students whose literacy skills are limited to the point that it is obvious to everyone, including the lecturers and other students, that without help, they would not be likely to pass the course.

The traditional approach to thinking about literacy in VET



VET students with literacy problems



The rest of the group

The traditional approach to addressing the problem

Traditionally, a range of strategies is used to provide literacy or numeracy support to the students who have literacy problems. Students may be withdrawn from practical or workshop sessions for remedial sessions with a literacy or numeracy specialist; they may be advised to attend out-of-hours 'tutorials' for remediation; and/or they may be advised to enrol in a literacy bridging course (such as the CGEA) on a part-time basis.

These strategies have been used for many years, and continue to be tried, even though there is broad agreement among training providers that they are generally unsuccessful. The reason that these strategies do not actually assist students is that they are unacceptable to students, for some very practical and educationally valid reasons.

Some reasons for students' dissatisfaction with traditional strategies

Some of the reasons that students are not usually satisfied with some common traditional approaches to providing literacy support are listed below.

Being withdrawn from workshop or practical training sessions

- Being singled out as needing literacy support makes students vulnerable to the reaction of peers and some lecturers, and can have a very negative effect on their confidence and motivation to complete the course.
- For many students, including those with limited literacy skills, practical training sessions are an opportunity to develop and demonstrate competencies on equal terms with their peers.

Attending extra tutorial sessions

- It is very difficult to ensure that remedial support offered in isolation from the VET course is wholly relevant to the industry training. Not all remedial teachers have acquired a good working knowledge of industry competencies, training and assessment tasks, and how literacy and numeracy skills are applied to those tasks. Remedial teachers are not always willing or able to adapt teaching and learning materials and activities to match the student's individual training needs.
- VET students have family, employment and community responsibilities which do not necessarily allow for increased attendance requirements.
- Generally students who have the greatest need for literacy support are the most sensitive about any kind of 'remediation'.

Enrolling in bridging courses

- VET students are not necessarily able to increase attendance commitments, or meet the cost of extra enrolments.
- Literacy bridging courses have prescribed learning outcomes which reflect academic, rather than non-academic industry language and literacy practices.
- Literacy teachers' ability and willingness to customise bridging courses to specific VET training is variable.

Accessing literacy support from a volunteer tutor

- In WA, volunteer literacy tutors have minimal training, none of which addresses teaching literacy or numeracy in application to specific industry training activities.

Students' attitudes towards getting help with literacy

Most students will accept all the help they can get when it comes to getting through their VET course. Most students will go along with traditional support strategies, pay extra fees, spend extra time and some even put up with the embarrassment of being singled out, until it becomes very clear that the 'support' is not actually assisting them with their course work. Then, most students reject the 'support'.

Chapter 1:
A Different Approach to Literacy in VET

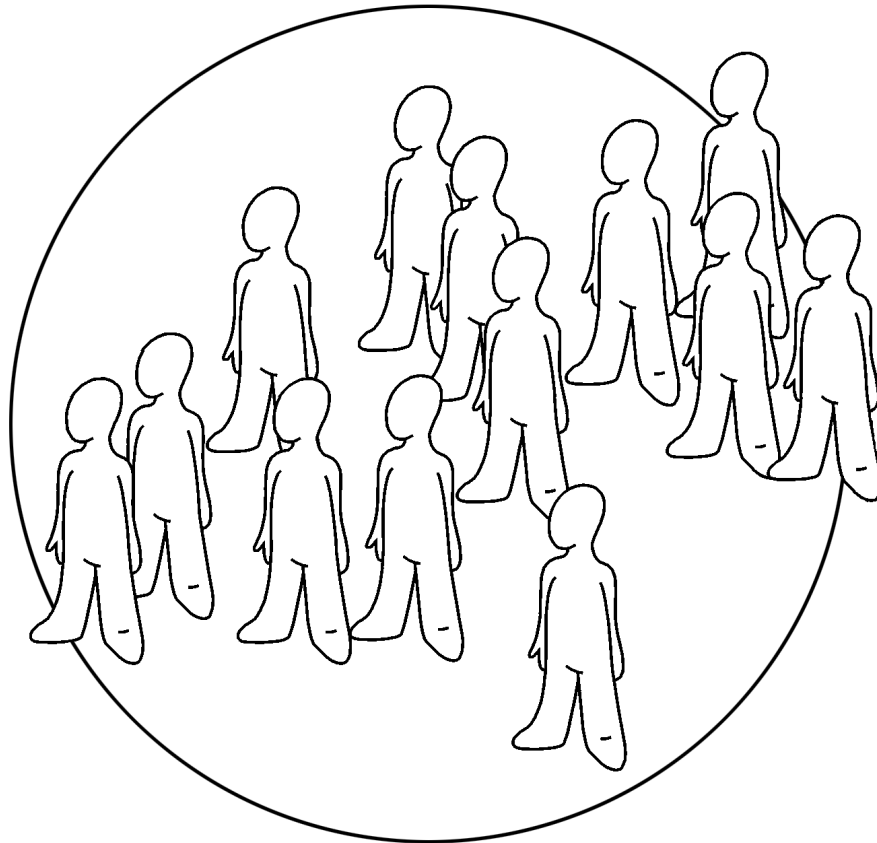
Some lecturers (both VET and literacy) still talk about the need to make remedial sessions compulsory, as if that will solve the problem. Despite little evidence that these strategies improve training outcomes, and despite students' continued rejection of them, some lecturers continue to ignore the problems associated with teaching students literacy skills in isolation from the application of those skills to their learning goals.

The CAVSS perspective: support for the literacy problems that training creates for everyone

The CAVSS perspective involves thinking about literacy from a different point of departure. Rather than focussing initially on the literacy skills of the student, the CAVSS approach begins with considering the literacy and numeracy demands that the particular VET course makes on all the students undertaking the course. These demands are associated with:

- being able to recognise where skills learned (or partially learned) at school, are those required by the VET activity
- applying literacy and numeracy skills learned at school to the VET activity
- the teaching and learning activities and materials used by the VET lecturer
- the types of assessment procedures used, including the increasing use of written evidence for assessment purposes
- workbooks and other 'self-paced' learning materials,
- increasing use by training providers of 'independent' learning strategies, that is where students use paper or electronic texts to read (and/or write, or do maths) to learn
- overcoming lack of confidence in using literacy and numeracy skills
- new terminology and language practices associated with the industry culture
- differences between the 'generic' skills taught at school, and the industry requirements (for example, the issue of schools teaching measurement using centimetres, where industry usually requires that students use millimetres).

Almost every student will have some problem with at least some of the literacy demands described above. This perspective reflects the findings of the Australian Bureau of Statistics that approximately 80% of Australians will not have all of the literacy/numeracy skills that they need through their lifetime (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007). It is reasonable to assume that TAFE students will at least reflect this statistic.



The CAVSS perspective: The students who will have difficulties with at least some of the literacy problems that are created by the VET training course

2 Implementing change in the VET training culture

The 'take them away and send them back when they are cured' approach

Despite the fact that most VET training stakeholders - managers, literacy and vocational lecturers - know about the problems that VET students face because of the literacy demands of the training, many still imagine that the only way to address the problem is the remediation approach. As described above, this approach usually means taking students away from the industry training environment and providing 'remediation' (or the 'take them away and send them back when they are cured' approach).

This approach reflects the idea that the students' problems are to do with their lack of literacy skills and knowledge rather than their abilities to apply literacy skills and knowledge to VET training activities. This approach also ignores everything that is well known about the effectiveness of teaching skills in the context of their application.

For example, when it comes to learning computing skills, the only effective way to develop skills is to be taught those skills while you are using an actual computer, and be able to test out and practise what you learn on the computer as you undertake tasks on that machine. There would be little point in taking someone away from the computer and teaching them lists of commands for the computer, and then expecting them to choose and apply those commands later on, in a real computing activity. Similarly, when people learn to drive they need access to real vehicle controls, and the opportunity to be able to practise and hone ability to brake, steer and change gears in response to the movement of the car and the traffic and road conditions. If someone needs computing or driving skills, they need a skilled teacher to teach them those skills while they are actually computing or driving.

Literacy is a set of skills, in many ways like any other set of skills, and is most effectively taught in the context of its application. Think about the most recent writing skills you have developed. You may have had to learn how to write job applications in a new format, or write a tender for a funding grant. It is very likely that the only reason you undertook to develop those new skills and knowledge was because you needed to apply for a job or funds. It is also likely that you developed those skills by enlisting help from people who had those skills and were prepared to offer advice before and during the writing process, and/or by using already existing examples of those documents, working directly between the examples and your own document. The process of undertaking the task and completing it was simultaneously the process, and the context, for acquiring the new skills.

Being an agent of change

By definition, the CAVSS teacher's role in implementing and delivering CAVSS involves employing a very different approach to providing literacy support in VET. By definition, CAVSS teachers are agents of change.

CAVSS represents a significant shift from the concepts, theories, assumptions and practices that have been traditionally used to support VET students. In delivering CAVSS you are, in effect, challenging all of these. In your role as a CAVSS teacher, you will find yourself being called upon to talk through these issues, and to help people understand the reasons for adopting the team-teaching approach rather than using traditional alternatives. When you begin to collaborate to deliver CAVSS, you will need to be able to explain the reasons for choosing team-teaching rather than the alternative methods such as withdrawing students for literacy support. You are likely to have plenty of opportunities to do this, as you come up against people's interest and curiosity, and established practices. You will need to have a strong understanding of how and why CAVSS is different, and be able to talk about those differences with people in a range of positions. The CAVSS Accreditation document provides you with a rationale and a reference point.

The role of a CAVSS teacher is not to convert, but in implementing the course you are likely to be promoting a more informed and current understanding of adult literacy and basic education issues among VET and literacy managers and lecturers.

3 Examining some of the perspectives that are reflected in the CAVSS model

The following tables examine some of the perspective differences between CAVSS and traditional approaches, and may be a useful resource in talking issues through with others.

Defining the issue of literacy support in VET

| Traditional | CAVSS |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Schools do not seem to be teaching students basic skills anymore. Each year, more and more of my students struggle as the course goes on, and the maths gets harder.</p> <p>Literacy is a big problem for a few VET students. There are usually one or two students, every year, who can hardly read and write or whose maths is hopeless.</p> <p>I know that most of my students hate doing anything to do with formal literacy processes because they see it as irrelevant and find it difficult.</p> | <p>Increasingly VET students have to use independent learning strategies which demand complex literacy, numeracy and study skills. Some of the teaching, learning and assessment methods create extra barriers for students, no matter how good their industry skills are.</p> <p>Some students leave school with real gaps in their basic, foundation level literacy and numeracy skills, and despite the level of high school they completed, many students have trouble applying the formal skills they learned at school to industry tasks.</p> <p>Literacy will impact on the performance and outcomes of a large proportion of VET students.</p> |

Defining the impact of literacy in VET

Traditional

A small number of students fail, or drop out, because they cannot keep up with the rest of the group.

CAVSS

A large proportion of the VET students have less obvious problems in applying formal skills to their VET training, which nevertheless have the potential to cause the student to:

- struggle with aspects of the course
- have limited confidence in their skills
- resort to disruptive, defensive behaviour in the training environment
- be less competitive in employment, and/or
- be limited in their workplace skills and achievements.

Literacy has a significant impact on the effectiveness of VET delivery.

Defining the solution to providing literacy support in VET

Traditional

Prospective students should be assessed before they start to see if they have all the skills they will need to complete the course. Those who do not pass the test should not be enrolled until they have acquired the skills, or they should be referred for remedial support.

If VET students have problems with literacy or numeracy, they should:

- do a bridging course before undertaking VET studies
- be withdrawn from VET training sessions for specialist support
- attend extra tutorial sessions to focus on basic skills
- have access to a literacy teacher in a learning centre.

Literacy support is not the business of VET trainers. Students should be sent away from the VET course to get the help they need from a literacy teacher, even if that support is not always as relevant as we would like.

CAVSS

Testing literacy and numeracy skills is not as easy as it sounds, because there are many factors which can impact on the validity of the tests. These factors include students' performances under test conditions, testing in isolation from the application to specific industry activities, and the degree to which the tests reflect specific industry activities.

Test results can be used to cull students at intake, which offers one kind of strategy for improving training outcomes, but has significant implications for social justice, and the loss to industry of potential employees, who with a little bit of relevant support could succeed in their field.

VET students do not need a full bridging course of literacy, and bridging courses do not provide opportunities to apply skills to industry activities.

Students have always resisted missing out on VET sessions, and having to spend extra time in scheduled remedial sessions. These strategies single out students as 'dumb', and often the teaching they receive through these strategies - or by attending a learning centre - is not directly related to their VET training. What students need is a chance to learn how to apply formal skills to real, practical industry tasks.

To be effective and meaningful, literacy support for VET students should be delivered as an integral part of the VET training - related directly to VET activities, and involving VET lecturers.

CAVSS is for every student in a group

In one of the pilots conducted in a regional TAFE, the VET lecturer involved was new to the CAVSS model and was still thinking in terms of literacy support as being for the one or two students who had significant literacy or numeracy problems. He was happy to have the CAVSS lecturer work with students in the VET learning environment, and assumed that the CAVSS teacher would be focussing mainly on just one student. This student was well known at the college for his confidence, intelligence and industry skills, and also for his problems with literacy. In fact when the CAVSS lecturer first introduced himself to the group, as someone who was there to help them get through the difficult bits of their VET course, including help with literacy and numeracy, this particular student had made an announcement that he could hardly read at all and would definitely be needing the CAVSS lecturer's assistance!

During one of the first lessons, the CAVSS teacher took up position next to the student who could hardly read, to work through a written handout of quite complicated technical information. While the other students read through their copies, the CAVSS teacher started quietly reading the document to the student, stopping to discuss the meaning of some of the technical terms, and to ask questions to check for understanding. Part way through he looked up to see that every one of the other students in the group had turned their chairs towards him. They were all leaning forward, and intent on catching his explanations, and following in their own documents as he read aloud. The students themselves had decided that CAVSS was for everyone in the group.

Students are very receptive to support that will help them succeed in their studies, especially when it is relevant to the learning and assessment activities they are required to undertake to successfully complete their course.

chapter **2**

***The Structure
of CAVSS***

CAVSS
C
A
V
S
S

Chapter 2:
The Structure of CAVSS

CAVSS is a curriculum framework that prescribes a teaching methodology rather than a set of competencies to be taught. It is a framework for how to teach rather than what to teach.

1 Main references for teachers delivering CAVSS

There are three main references for CAVSS. CAVSS teachers need to be very familiar with all three, and have immediate access to all three.

Application for Course Accreditation

This document contains the basic rules for any provider delivering CAVSS in Australia. It includes Copyright, Licensing and AVETMISS information for CAVSS as well as:

- the background to the development of the course
- the outcomes and structure of CAVSS
- the delivery and resourcing requirements for CAVSS, including details about the prescribed team-teaching model, teachers' qualifications and resources
- course structure and module details.

NB. The CAVSS Application for Course Accreditation has been published within the *CAVSS Business Rules*.

CAVSS Business Rules

The *CAVSS Business Rules* contain rules for the administration and delivery of CAVSS by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in Western Australia using public funds to deliver the course. RTOs in other states will also need to comply with these rules unless exemptions are granted by DTWD.

The *CAVSS Business Rules* serve two main purposes.

- The rules are designed to assist teachers and managers to make sure that the literacy support being delivered as CAVSS complies with the requirements for the model.
- Because CAVSS is different from standard courses, DTWD has developed and approved some alternative methods for providers to account for their expenditure of funds to deliver the course. The procedures are explained in the business rules and will assist RTOs to meet audit requirements.

The CAVSS Teacher's Handbook

The *CAVSS Teacher's Handbook* is the document you are presently reading. It includes advice, information, explanations, strategies, case studies, hints and tips for CAVSS teachers, and for people managing or coordinating the delivery of the course.

This document has been developed in collaboration with members of the CAVSS Professional Development Advisory Group, which includes literacy and vocational lecturers who have found solutions and developed effective strategies for introducing and delivering CAVSS. The contents of this document reflect their experiences, accumulated knowledge and advice.

2 The CAVSS Model: a Learner-centred model

The idea of using team-teaching to integrate literacy support within VET has been around for a long time. CAVSS was developed to provide a delivery model which ensured the application of good practice in student-centred learning, and which despite some non-standard features necessary to maintain those elements of good practice, could be funded through the usual mechanisms, and which would meet the requirements of a series of funding, auditing and quality protocols.

Chapter 2:
The Structure of CAVSS

The systems and educational functions that the CAVSS model was designed to meet and provide

a curriculum framework which could be accredited



to create a means to access public funds for delivering effective literacy support to a client group that had previously not had reliable access to suitable literacy support



and that would not add any extra cost or time, or assessment burdens on VET students



and that could be applied to any VET qualification at any AQF level,



that would be manageable within RTO's enrolment processes



and which would comply with national AVETMIS Standard,



and which would meet DTWD's requirements for financial accountability,



and could be funded variably and efficiently, in little chunks or slightly bigger chunks, depending on the needs of each group, to make the most efficient use of literacy funds,



and would enable teachers to apply their own professional skills and knowledge



and which would always be delivered in conjunction with the VET content to ensure maximum relevance,



which made literacy support a normal thing in VET, rather than something associated with being stupid or hopeless,



and reflected what is well-understood about the effectiveness of teaching and learning literacy in association with application to real-life activities



and which embodied good practice principles in student-centred learning



and which actually had the capacity to improve VET outcomes,



because VET students liked it.

A CAVSS Principle

The CAVSS model works as a whole system, but may not work if any aspects of the model are missing or replaced.

CAVSS will improve VET outcomes and will meet the WA Department of Training and Workforce Development's accountability requirements if the model is delivered according to the CAVSS Accreditation requirements and the CAVSS Business Rules, by teachers who have been selected because they have the recommended skills and attitudes.

3 A summary of the structure and features of Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills

The aim of CAVSS

The aim of CAVSS is to improve and enhance VET training outcomes for all students enrolled in a particular VET course or Training Package qualification.

The CAVSS delivery model

CAVSS is delivered using a particular team-teaching methodology. A CAVSS teacher spends up to four hours per week teaching in the VET classroom/workshop alongside the VET lecturer.

Each lecturer takes turns teaching the whole group. Students are not singled out according to their need for literacy support, and neither lecturer is relegated to just teaching the students with the weakest literacy skills. The VET lecturer teaches vocational competencies as usual, and the CAVSS lecturer teaches all the students to select and apply literacy and numeracy skills as necessary for their successful completion of the VET competency. For example, if the students are learning how to draw up plans for a building project, the CAVSS teacher might focus on measurement skills and basic geometry.

As a result, students have access to an extra teacher with specialist literacy and numeracy teaching skills, for a few hours every week, to help them apply theoretical skills and knowledge directly to the VET training and assessment activities they are working on. Discussing, revising and learning literacy and numeracy skills relevant to the VET training becomes a normal, unremarkable activity for every student.

The prescribed team-teaching model ensures that the literacy support is fully integrated – that is directly related to the VET content and activities. The CAVSS lecturer teaches according to the VET content and training activities, on the advice of, and alongside, the VET lecturer. Planning for CAVSS delivery is a collaborative undertaking.

Chapter 2:
The Structure of CAVSS

Why the model works

CAVSS works because the course itself is a framework of good practices in adult learning. The team-teaching methodology makes sure that literacy and numeracy support delivered is totally relevant, and directly related to, VET training activities. Students are given help to select and apply literacy and numeracy skills to complete the industry task, as they are actually undertaking that task.

It works because it is well accepted by the students. No student need do extra work, be withdrawn from class, miss out on practical sessions, take on extra hours of study or do any extra exams or assignments. The literacy and numeracy skills they need to learn are taught when they need them, as they need them, and in the context of applying those skills to actual industry tasks.

CAVSS works because the team-teaching model makes literacy and numeracy support a normal, unremarkable part of VET delivery. This means that students are not self-conscious about needing to revise maths or literacy skills.

CAVSS will not meet all of the literacy or numeracy needs of every student in every VET course, or in every situation. However, applied according to the Accreditation requirements, by a suitably skilled CAVSS teacher, it will improve course outcomes in mainstream VET delivery. Of course, the student-centred learning principles on which CAVSS is based are applicable to a wide range of students and client groups.

The role of the CAVSS teacher

The CAVSS teacher's central role is to teach students the literacy and numeracy skills they need to pass the VET module. To do this, the CAVSS teacher:

- identifies the literacy and numeracy skills demanded by the VET course, and then
- teaches students those skills, while they are in the actual process of doing the VET training activities that require those skills.

CAVSS is a curriculum that prescribes a way of teaching, rather than what to teach. The CAVSS teacher is free to teach students how to apply a wide range of literacy and numeracy-based skills, as long as those skills are directly relevant to the VET course content and the teaching and learning activities used by the VET lecturer.

The CAVSS modules

There are 10 CAVSS modules, of 10 or 20 hours each. The modules are:

- Applied English Oracy
- Applied Writing Techniques: Study
- Applied Writing Techniques: Workplace
- Applied Reading Techniques: Study
- Applied Reading Techniques: Workplace
- Applied Mathematics: Fractions, Decimals and Percentages
- Applied Mathematics: Using Formulae
- Applied Mathematics: Measurement
- Applied Mathematics: Spatial Skills
- Applied Mathematics: Computation

These modules include a range of literacy and numeracy skills representing some of the literacy and numeracy underpinning skills required in VET training courses across a wide range of industries and AQF levels. Unlike most accredited curricula, the module content is not intended to prescribe what should be taught or assessed. The modules provide parameters, and a guide, for the types of skills that VET students may need to revise and apply, depending on the VET course they are undertaking.

Enrolments

CAVSS involves across-the-board enrolments. That means that for any group of students who have access to CAVSS, every student in the group will be enrolled in the same, and same number of, CAVSS modules. Students can be enrolled in from one to eight CAVSS modules, according to advice from the VET lecturer, and the literacy skills demanded by the VET content and teaching methodology.

Students are eligible to be enrolled in CAVSS if they are already enrolled in a mainstream VET course.

Fees

Students may not be charged any fees for CAVSS.

Assessments

CAVSS is non-assessable. There are no initial, or end-of-course assessments for CAVSS.

4 What CAVSS is not

CAVSS is not a solution to every literacy problem in VET.

The course has been developed to improve training outcomes in 'mainstream' VET delivery. Where students experience systematic disadvantage as do Indigenous students, or students with disabilities, or where students have a non-English speaking background, the few hours of support that CAVSS provides is unlikely to be enough to address those students' needs. Where CAVSS does not provide enough hours per week to adequately address students' support needs, providers could consider enrolling students in a course such as the Course In Underpinning Skills for Industry Qualifications in addition to or instead of CAVSS.

CAVSS will not meet the support needs of every student.

Sometimes a student will demonstrate very limited reading, writing and/or maths skills. CAVSS will contribute to support for this student, but where skills are severely limited, extra support should be sought. Providers should consider ways to create strong links between extra remedial support for individual students, and the VET course, to maximise the effectiveness of that extra support. Providers should also take care to ensure that whatever strategies they use to provide extra literacy support to individual students must not single out or otherwise penalise, the students involved.

CAVSS is not aimed at developing the literacy, or teaching, skills of VET lecturers.

Some literacy teachers have assumed that CAVSS is a surreptitious approach to 'improving' literacy and language 'standards' in VET delivery. This is **definitely** not the case. It is certainly the case that any teachers involved in team-teaching have opportunities to gather new ideas and strategies from each other to add to their professional repertoire. CAVSS and VET lecturers have both commented on the value of 'cross-fertilisation' of skills, and having a CAVSS teacher working in the VET team is likely to increase the general awareness of, and interest in, issues to do with literacy. But when it comes to delivering CAVSS, the onus for acquiring new skills and knowledge, particularly to do with literacy and language practices, is only on the CAVSS teacher. VET lecturers already have the vocational (including literacy and language) skills demanded by the industry they teach. The challenge for CAVSS lecturers is to become fluent in the particular literacy and language practices demanded by that industry, as quickly as possible.

5 A summary of some of the differences between CAVSS and bridging literacy courses, and implications for teachers

CAVSS is not just the CGEA delivered in a VET training environment. CAVSS is a literacy curriculum, but because it is an **applied** literacy curriculum, there are some important differences between CAVSS and bridging literacy courses such as the Certificates in General Education for Adults (CGEA).

Teachers with CGEA (or other bridging literacy delivery) experience will need to be clear that students who are enrolled in CAVSS have not enrolled in a literacy course. CAVSS students are VET students, who have chosen to undertake a VET qualification. The college's decision to supplement their VET course with a few hours of CAVSS support each week does not turn them into 'literacy' students. They are still bricklaying or tourism or horticulture students. Summarised below are some of the main differences between CAVSS and the CGEA in terms of the VET client group.

| | Certificates of General Education for Adults (CGEA) | The Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVSS) |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Client group | Adults and young adults seeking a general education qualification | Adults and young adults who have enrolled in a VET course, and who are not seeking a general education qualification |
| Client group's immediate goal | To improve basic education skills and achieve an education qualification | To achieve a specific VET qualification |
| Client group's long term aim | Further study, training or employment | Employment in a specific industry area. Many VET students are already employed in their chosen field. |
| Literacy and language practices taught | Literacy and language practices related to the academic industry | A wide range of different literacy and language practices, generally related to specific industry language and literacy practices rather than the academic industry |
| Enrolment procedures | Students enrol on an individual basis, in the modules of their choice. | VET and CAVSS lecturers review the course concepts, training and assessment procedures and previous delivery, to determine the number of hours of CAVSS support required for the group. Students in the group are all enrolled in the same (number of) modules, to access required CAVSS Teaching Hours. |
| Initial assessments | Students are given initial literacy/numeracy assessments to determine placement levels in the course. | Placement reflects industry qualifications, not literacy skills. There are no initial, or post course assessments of students, other than the VET course assessments. |
| Learning outcomes / competencies | Learning outcomes are determined by the curriculum and interpreted by the literacy teacher. | VET units of competence are determined by the VET Qualification and interpreted by the VET lecturer. Learning outcomes for CAVSS are defined by, and incorporated within, the VET units of competence and the training activities used by the VET lecturer. |
| Teaching contexts | Teachers use students' individual interests or goals to customise training activities to motivate individual students. | Teachers use the VET competencies, and the training and assessment procedures defined by the VET lecturer, as a context for teaching the application of literacy skills. CAVSS and VET lecturers teach students how to select, adapt and apply a range of literacy and numeracy skills to actual industry training activities. |

| | Certificates of General Education for Adults (CGEA) | The Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVSS) |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Teachers' primary role and responsibility | <i>To interpret the curriculum outcomes and assessment processes, and to prepare and provide a suitable range of learning activities for the students' use.</i> | <i>To use a range of teaching strategies, rather than pre-prepared materials, and to teach wholly within the parameters set by the VET lecturer, and in response to the training and assessment activities that students are undertaking in their VET course.</i> |
| Teaching to a range of students' skills | <i>Teachers observe the progress of individual students, and provide extra support and attention where needed, in a discreet manner.</i> | <i>Teachers observe the progress of individual students, and provide extra support and attention where needed, in a discreet manner.</i> |
| Delivery mode | <i>There is no prescribed delivery mode, and practitioners decide which are the most suitable or convenient.</i> | <i>No less than 90% of CAVSS teaching hours must be delivered in the prescribed team-teaching mode.</i> |
| Non-face-to-face delivery | <i>There are options for non-face-to-face delivery modes.</i> | <i>There is no provision for the delivery of CAVSS in a non-face-to-face mode.</i> |
| Skills Recognition | <i>Students' skills are assessed and competence recorded as they are demonstrated throughout the course.</i> | <i>CAVSS is a non-assessable course.</i> |
| Recording results | <i>Students' course results are recorded on academic records.</i> | <i>CAVSS is not included on students' results.</i> |
| A successful outcome | <i>Students develop all of the literacy skills they need to undertake further training, or complete the course to gain entry into further education or training.</i> | <i>Students pass their VET course.</i> |

6 Frequently-Asked Questions

- *How flexible is CAVSS?*

CAVSS is very flexible in some ways, and very prescriptive in others.

CAVSS is flexible in that:

- students may be enrolled in any number of modules from 1 - 8
- delivery may be applied to any VET course or Training Package qualification at any AQF level
- students are eligible for re-enrolment in CAVSS
- CAVSS may be delivered in conjunction with theoretical and practical elements of the vocational course (i.e. in the classroom or the workshop or on site).

CAVSS is not flexible in that:

- to be eligible for CAVSS, students must be enrolled in a vocational course
- only suitably qualified and experienced literacy and/or numeracy teachers may be employed to teach CAVSS, as defined in the Accreditation requirements
- the course must be delivered in a face-to-face mode
- 90% of the delivery must be team teaching as defined in the Accreditation document.

- *How do you use the contents of the CAVSS modules?*

As described before, the learning outcomes listed in the CAVSS modules do not serve the same purpose as they do in most curricula. They were included in CAVSS because accreditation required it. They do provide a guide (and parameters) to the type of competencies that might be taught under CAVSS. They might be a starting point to thinking about what you teach, or a starting point for talking about the literacy demands of the course to the VET lecturer you are working with. They are not specific to any particular industry or any particular AQF level.

One experienced and successful CAVSS lecturer responded to this question by describing how he had read carefully through the module contents when he started delivering CAVSS two years ago, and had got a clear message that it was about whatever literacy and numeracy skills were applicable to industry training tasks. He had not looked at them since, and used the VET lecturer's knowledge and advice, and his own observation of the students' performances and response to literacy and numeracy-based tasks, as a basis for deciding what to teach.

- *Why enrol all of the students in CAVSS when not all of them will have literacy or numeracy problems?*

There are several reasons for requiring across-the-board enrolments in CAVSS. Indeed, this requirement is central to the effectiveness of the course.

- CAVSS is not about addressing the literacy needs of individual students. It is about recognising that VET training puts some literacy demands on all students that do not reflect the literacy demands made by the actual job (e.g. self-paced packages, exams, written assignments, study timetables etc). Every student faces these demands, and so every student is given CAVSS support to meet those demands.
- Students enrolling in any course of study bring a wide range of relevant skills and knowledge. When a group of students undertake an automotive course, for example, some will have been watching their fathers work on the family car for years and already have many skills, and others will not. They all enrol in the same course, and it is up to the VET lecturer to ensure that each student achieves every learning outcome, regardless of their individual skills at the start of the course. One way of conceiving of CAVSS is to think of it as just another module that each student does, and from which each student learns what they need to supplement any knowledge they may already have. Students will make more or less use of the CAVSS lecturer's support, according to their needs, but that support is available for every student.
- Under the prescribed team-teaching model for CAVSS, students are not singled out for support. Instead, the CAVSS and VET lecturers take turns to teach the whole group. Every student is taught by the CAVSS lecturer, and this is reflected in the across-the-board enrolment requirement.
- One of the main principles of the CAVSS model is that students should not be singled out according to their literacy skills. Across-the-board enrolments reflect this principle. This principle underpins the normalisation of CAVSS, where getting help from the CAVSS lecturer is made a normal, unremarkable part of VET delivery, for all students.

Remember, there are no enrolment fees chargeable for CAVSS and no reference to CAVSS on students' results. That means that delivered according to the accredited model, CAVSS has no negative repercussions for any student. But it is not compulsory that every student enrol in CAVSS. If an individual student objects to being enrolled in CAVSS, then don't enrol them, and deliver CAVSS as planned, to the whole group. In that situation, you should review the way that information about CAVSS was presented in the first place.

A CAVSS Principle

Students must not be singled out for CAVSS.

Chapter 2:
The Structure of CAVSS

- *Although CAVSS is non-assessable, is it OK to undertake initial and/or end of course assessments in literacy/numeracy as a control process to measure the usefulness of the delivery?*

Definitely not. Any RTO delivering initial and/or end of course assessments for CAVSS would be in breach of the Accreditation requirements.

By definition, students enrolled in CAVSS modules have enrolled in a VET course or training qualification. These students must not have extra assessment or other study burdens placed on them because of the RTO's decision to deliver CAVSS support.

If CAVSS is delivered in the prescribed way by an appropriately skilled lecturer the improvements in students' skills development and performance, motivation and confidence become obvious. If there is no observable improvement, it is likely that CAVSS is either not being delivered according to the prescribed model, or not by people with the right skills and attitudes.

- *What is the best way to introduce CAVSS to students?*

You should talk to the VET lecturer about how to introduce CAVSS to students and who should do it. Any introduction should be low-key and matter-of-fact.

You (and/or the VET lecturer) could describe CAVSS as a free, extra service, where for a few hours a week there is an extra lecturer in the room to help students to make sure they are on the right track with their work, assignments or exams. It is probably best not to mention literacy at that point, but if you must, remember to describe literacy in terms of the way that many students appreciate a bit of help in working through self-paced training materials, or how both the VET and CAVSS lecturers will be helping everyone to knock the rust off the maths skills they will need for the course.

Remember, VET students who have the opportunity to access CAVSS will not be receiving one-to-one, or individual support from the CAVSS teacher. They will not pay any extra fees, or do any extra work, or spend any extra time at college. From students' perspective, the impact of CAVSS is that for a few hours a week, teacher/student ratios are halved.

One Literacy Program Manager suggested that the strategy for CAVSS enrolment should be don't ask - just enrol. It is true that students are not given explanations or justifications for every module that they enrol in, even when those enrolments incur fees. Although it seems to contradict good practice in customer service, the nature of the shame attached to any suggestion of needing literacy and numeracy support is such that mentioning that support before the course starts will create anxiety for at least some of the students. It is less threatening to commence CAVSS delivery in a very matter-of-fact way, as if it is a normal part of VET delivery.

For example, the VET lecturer might introduce the CAVSS lecturer as follows:

‘This is George Smith. He is going to spend the morning with this class today, and hopefully he will be able to give us all a hand preparing for tomorrow’s test a bit later on.’

If George is friendly, and proves useful to the students, they will be pleased to hear that he will continue to be available each Tuesday morning through the course.

- *I've been asked to teach CAVSS. Why do I need to know all about enrolments and introductions to students? Shouldn't the VET lecturer already have all of those procedures sorted out? Isn't it my job to just turn up and deliver the course?*

CAVSS makes very different demands on literacy teachers than established bridging courses do. CAVSS teachers can't just ‘turn up and deliver the course’ for two important reasons.

First, CAVSS continues to be an agent of change. Literacy teachers who agree to deliver CAVSS are, by definition, involved in breaking new ground, and establishing a new way of thinking about literacy support in VET. You will need to know how the course works, how to enrol students and record attendance because it is likely that no one else will. You will need to be able to talk about the CAVSS team-teaching model because you will find that many people, including literacy teachers, have heard about CAVSS but still assume that it is OK to deliver ‘CAVSS’ in a one-to-one withdrawal mode, or in extra lunchtime tutorial sessions for the students struggling the most.

Second, there is no course for you to deliver until you talk to the VET lecturer and begin to find out about the VET course, and the literacy/numeracy demands it makes on the students. Finding out about the VET course, its content and the training and assessment activities involved is how you find out what you are going to teach. Collaboration with the VET lecturer cannot begin too early. The sooner you and the VET lecturer start talking about the course, and planning for its delivery, the sooner you can start learning all that you need to know to be of use to the lecturer and the students. The effectiveness of CAVSS rests on the collaborative working relationship between you and the VET lecturer.

- *What resources do I use to teach CAVSS?*

The resources you need to deliver CAVSS exist in the VET lecturer’s knowledge of the course content, industry concepts and likely student needs, and your own teaching skills and experience. What you teach when you deliver CAVSS depends on what the students have to learn, and the teaching and assessment activities and materials used by the VET lecturer, rather than the CAVSS curriculum.

Chapter 2:
The Structure of CAVSS

The team-teaching relationship that you develop with the VET lecturer is therefore an essential element of delivering CAVSS. You need to be able to teach to make the connections between the students and their range of literacy and numeracy skills, and the literacy and numeracy demands made by the training course. Your role is to:

- identify the literacy and numeracy skills that students need to apply, to what they have to do, read, talk about and write about, and what maths they have to use, to pass their VET course
- teach students those skills, while they are in the process of doing the VET training activities that require those skills.

That is not to say that CAVSS teachers do not prepare for lessons. There is a lot of preparation involved in CAVSS, but the preparation is done in collaboration with the VET lecturer, and includes learning about the industry concepts, the course content, the VET lecturer's expectations of students' performance and so on.

Using pre-prepared teaching materials and assessment tools has the potential to undermine the way that CAVSS works by interrupting the direct relationship between what students do and what CAVSS teachers teach. Teachers who depend on having pre-prepared teaching and learning exercises run the risk of teaching what they assume students will need to know instead of teaching in response to what the students are actually doing in the VET course. This will undermine the CAVSS teacher's credibility with the VET lecturer and students, and limit opportunities for the CAVSS teacher to learn more from the training being delivered around them.

- *Why is team-teaching the only delivery mode allowable for CAVSS? Surely there is a place for one-to-one tuition, or small group tutorials?*

There is nothing to stop training providers offering one-to-one tuition and small group tutorials to VET students, but they may not do this as part of CAVSS delivery. Providers who generate teaching hours by enrolments in CAVSS are required to deliver CAVSS according to the CAVSS Accreditation requirements and the *CAVSS Business Rules*. A minimum of 90% of CAVSS teaching hours must be delivered in a team-teaching mode, defined as a VET and a literacy teacher teaching the same group of students, in the same place, at the same time. Where a CAVSS teacher is delivering four hours of literacy support to a student group, all but 24 minutes (10%) of those four hours must be delivered in the prescribed team-teaching mode.

The team-teaching delivery mode is central to how and why a few hours of CAVSS can make a significant difference to training outcomes:

- Team-teaching is a way to ensure that the literacy support being delivered is absolutely relevant to the industry training activities that the students are engaged in at the time.
- Team-teaching avoids ineffective educational practices such as running a three-week bridging course to improve students' maths skills, and expecting them to recall and apply those skills ten weeks later.

- Team-teaching helps to avoid the situation where literacy teachers develop teaching and learning materials in isolation from the VET teaching and learning materials and activities. Despite good intentions, and hard work, the result of this is that students are required to complete literacy and numeracy learning activities, extra to their VET training activities, rather than be taught the skills they need while they are actually undertaking those VET training activities.
- Team-teaching makes literacy and numeracy support a normal, unremarkable part of VET delivery, so that students do not need to draw attention to themselves, or their lack of skills, in accessing help.
- Team-teaching provides an opportunity for every student's skills, knowledge and performance to be enhanced.
- The CAVSS model of team-teaching has the potential to create an intensive learning environment where, for a few hours a week, the student-teacher ratio is halved, and the group learning dynamic that emerges has long-lasting motivational effects.

The CAVSS Dynamic

VET lecturers involved in CAVSS have described how, with the right literacy lecturer, a few hours of CAVSS can noticeably improve students' motivation, skills and confidence in the training environment. One of those lecturers explained his belief that the students respond positively to CAVSS because they recognise and appreciate that not just one, but two, lecturers are working together just to make sure that they pass their course.

One CAVSS lecturer gave another explanation for the effectiveness of the team-teaching model. He said that team-teaching has the capacity to create a dynamic in a classroom, among a group of students, where for a few hours there is intense focus on successfully completing some VET tasks. He said that it doesn't happen every time, but when it does happen it has a lasting motivational effect on everyone in the room.

He described it as a dynamic that emerges when the whole group, including both lecturers, are focussed on a training task such as drawing up a plan, or passing an Occupational Health and Safety test, and intent on 'unpacking the literacy or numeracy skills being used and applied to the industry task, and wrestling those skills to the ground.' He said it tends to build during the session and reaches the stage where the discussions and conversations all become focussed on making the literacy and numeracy processes, and the processes for applying those skills, explicit. He believes that the intense focus of the whole group on solving the industry problem (including the literacy aspects of it) takes pressure off students who might otherwise feel self-conscious about contributing to groupwork related to literacy processes. He has observed that the experience seems to help create a more cohesive, collaborative dynamic in the group, and that the students seemed to really enjoy and benefit from those sessions. He said that the essential ingredients were genuine energy and enthusiasm displayed by the two lecturers and that it was crucial that CAVSS teachers have, or develop, a genuine interest in and admiration for the industry craft.

chapter **3**

***Being a Successful
CAVSS Teacher***

CAVSS
C
A
V
S
S

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

CAVSS has highlighted the best and the worst of literacy teachers' practices in VET. Some teachers have felt their way with patience, empathy and respect, thoughtfully adapted and customised their own practices and developed strategies to fit in, and be of real use to VET students. Others have had a devastating effect on VET lecturers and students, blundering into VET classrooms, insensitive to the students' needs and feelings, arrogantly assuming that their role was to 'raise the standards' of literacy in VET.

Most literacy teachers are genuinely interested in students' welfare and success. But for many teachers, fitting into the VET classroom, and being of real use to the students, will mean first having to analyse and critique their own assumptions about their role, and the importance of what they do, and the values and beliefs that underpin their ideas about teaching literacy. In a very real sense, being a successful CAVSS teacher involves completely reframing your professional skills and experiences, and engaging in what might seem to some teachers to be the opposite of professional behaviour.

Being a successful CAVSS teacher requires a complex combination of skills, knowledge and attitudes. This chapter focusses on the factors which have emerged as common to, and been identified by, the teachers who have been most successful in delivering CAVSS so far. It is divided into four parts, CAVSS teachers' qualifications, skills, knowledge and attitudes, in an attempt to tease out and examine all of those factors. In reality, each of these factors is inextricably linked with the others and underpins the capacity of teachers to understand how literacy functions as social practice, and to use that knowledge to create teaching strategies that respond directly to students' learning needs.

Overall, this chapter invites literacy teachers to make an objective analysis of their professional skills, and professional and personal perspectives, in relation to the very specific needs and goals of a new client group. This analysis involves thinking about what literacy teachers can do to best understand the learning needs and goals of VET students, and what those students will value, or reject, from a CAVSS teacher.

Experienced teachers of adult literacy will already be familiar with the reality that for many adults re-entering formal education, the negative legacies of their previous schooling, and how those legacies are acknowledged and addressed in the adult literacy class, are crucial factors in their success. Those teachers will understand that for many adult literacy students, coming back to formal education takes a lot of courage, because of the power of those legacies.

For many VET students, the issue is the same. Many VET students are pleased to have left school and schoolteachers behind, and to look forward to where their interest and talents will take them. Some teachers may find it difficult, confronting perhaps, to examine some of the issues that make some students feel this way. For literacy teachers who want to deliver CAVSS, your capacity to confront and acknowledge those issues will be exactly what will make it possible for VET students (and VET lecturers) to accept you, trust you, and make the most of the skills and knowledge that you can contribute to the VET training environment.

The secrets to being a successful CAVSS teacher, according to experienced CAVSS teachers

'Being honest and open in acknowledging that you have a lot to learn about industry concepts and language and literacy practices from the VET lecturer and the students.'

'Being responsive to how students and the VET lecturer respond to what you do in their classroom. If they do not respond positively to the way you teach, or what you are teaching, stop and consider where you have overstepped the mark, undervalued them, or shifted back to an academic, rather than an industry, approach.'

'Remembering that you are in another lecturer's classroom, not your own. To fit in you've got to stop talking, listen and learn, and be very aware of showing some professional respect to the lecturer who is in charge, and don't forget that it isn't you!'

Part 1: Qualifications and Training

'But the students don't do any literacy in the Bricklaying Pre-App course!' (A teacher without specific literacy teaching qualifications employed to deliver CAVSS to students working from self-paced workbooks and other industry texts.)

Unlike most literacy courses, CAVSS does not include a framework of competencies that literacy lecturers can use as a guide for what to teach. Delivering CAVSS means having the specialist content knowledge relating to the teaching and learning of basic literacy and numeracy:

- to be able to work out what to teach from the VET course content, the VET lecturer's advice and by observing how the students respond to their training activities, and
- to teach those skills and processes as the students are doing those training activities.

The quote above illustrates the difficulties that teachers face when they have not had opportunities to gain specialist content knowledge necessary to deliver CAVSS. The Bricklaying Pre-Apprenticeship students referred to in the quote were not required to do comprehension tests or write essays in their course. But they were required to do a significant amount of reading and writing. They were having to apply a range of literacy skills, and needed a teacher to help them pass their course by teaching them some applicable reading and writing skills while they were actually having to do the reading and writing. The teacher in the example above was a qualified teacher but evidently lacked the specialist content knowledge needed to be of any use to the students.

CAVSS teachers have between one and four hours a week to provide intensive literacy support, directly related to the students' training activities, to improve overall outcomes. The CAVSS teacher has to have the skills and knowledge to be of **immediate** practical assistance to vocational students and their lecturers. Achieving this is difficult enough for teachers who have studied the development and application of literacy acquisition processes. It is next to impossible for teachers without that training.

Teachers who do not have appropriate qualifications and skills in teaching foundation level literacy are at best a distraction in the VET training environment. At worst they contribute to students' frustration by not recognising when the students need specific literacy skills support, and/or by imposing literacy teaching activities which do not directly relate to the students' industry training needs.

1 Content knowledge and strategies that CAVSS teachers need to have at their fingertips

CAVSS teachers need to have learned, and be able to recognise where to apply, specific strategies and processes for:

- teaching students to read, write and do maths at basic and more advanced levels, including explicitly teaching and revising literacy and numeracy processes
- observing students' performances and making on-the-spot diagnoses of which aspect of the process needs teaching
- identifying which literacy and numeracy activities will make greater literacy demands on students' skills
- using a range of student-centred contexts for teaching basic, transferable literacy skills
- teaching explicit strategies for selecting, transferring and applying literacy processes to a range of industry and training activities
- identifying and un-teaching inappropriate processes, where students have picked up the wrong idea, and not been corrected
- incorporating alternative processes and explanations into instruction to ensure that students with a range of different learning styles are catered for
- actively promoting peer and group learning activities to make the most effective use of the team-teaching sessions.

That means, before they start delivering CAVSS, literacy teachers must have expert professional knowledge of what literacy and numeracy skills students need to learn, and expert knowledge of how to teach it. They must be able to produce and apply that expert knowledge and skills:

- in non-academic, adult, VET (i.e. industry) training contexts
- in direct application to the actual VET training activities that the students are undertaking
- to reflect specific concepts and language related to the particular industry culture
- in a training environment where students (and lecturers) will be sensitive to behaviours or attitudes that are 'schoolteacher-ish'.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

Intuition or well-practised teaching skills and expert knowledge?

One CAVSS lecturer described how she found it really easy to pinpoint students' skills gaps. She said that it usually only took a few minutes to work out which part of the process students were missing, and to teach them what they needed to know. She said it happened so automatically, and quickly, that it felt almost like intuition. It was suggested to her that what seemed like intuition may have been the professional knowledge and skills accumulated over thirty years of experience in teaching children and adults to read, write and do maths and she agreed. This teacher has an extensive repertoire of skills and strategies at hand the whole time she is in the VET classroom delivering CAVSS, able to be applied as appropriate. The strategies she uses to teach literacy have become embedded in her practice and in much of her interaction with students.

2 Interpreting the CAVSS Accreditation requirements for teachers

Requirements for teachers delivering CAVSS are listed in the CAVSS Accreditation requirements, Section 12b.

The CAVSS Accreditation requirements are quite clear. In all but exceptional cases, teachers employed to deliver CAVSS must have relevant teaching qualifications. The qualifications most likely to provide opportunities for teachers to develop the professional knowledge and skills necessary to deliver CAVSS are either a Degree or Diploma in Primary Teaching.

When there is no possibility of engaging teachers with these qualifications, providers should employ teachers who, through a combination of their other teaching qualifications, and their professional development training and work experience, have acquired the specialist content knowledge that a Primary Teaching qualification provides.

Providers should also note the other experiential and skills criteria listed for the selection of CAVSS teachers. These criteria are required **in addition to, not as an alternative to**, relevant teaching qualifications and specialist content knowledge. In exceptional circumstances (remote or isolated areas, for example, where there is no possibility of employing teachers who meet the criteria listed) providers may decide to employ people to deliver CAVSS who do not have formal teaching qualifications, but whose specialist content knowledge and experience and perspectives would produce CAVSS outcomes. In these cases, providers should document the ways in which these personnel meet the prescribed criteria.

The CAVSS experience shows very clearly that employing a teacher to deliver CAVSS who is not appropriately skilled can be a traumatic experience for all concerned. Providers should remember that no CAVSS is much better than bad CAVSS.

3 Background to the issue of qualifications for literacy teachers

Adult literacy and basic education is a relatively new professional field, and has been something of a poor cousin to other educational and training specialisations in terms of formal recognition of the specialist skills and content knowledge that teachers need to effectively teach literacy to adults.

Adults without adequate literacy skills are generally not the most vocal or empowered consumers of training and education services. The fact that much of the early delivery of adult literacy education was done by (generally unqualified) volunteers reflected, and maintained, the idea that anyone who could 'read and write' could teach adult literacy.

There are some widespread misconceptions and myths, to do with an assumed relationship between the acquisition of literacy skills and intelligence. These have contributed to lingering beliefs held by many people (including some literacy teachers) that adult literacy students will 'never learn' and that therefore there is little point in being serious about teaching them. There is a related misconception that literacy skills are not actually taught, but just manifest in some (intelligent) people but not in others. One explanation for this notion is that literacy and numeracy skills are not taught well in Australian schools, and that many children have not had access to teachers who teach explicit processes for reading, writing and numeracy through primary and secondary school (Freebody et al 1995, Cumming et al 1998).

In recent years in Western Australia, a significant number of teachers have moved into employment in the VET sector, delivering literacy courses. Some of those teachers have a primary teaching qualification and teaching experience, where they have been educated in the content knowledge and teaching strategies suitable for teaching foundation level literacy and numeracy skills. But a significant number of those teachers moving into the field only have secondary school teaching backgrounds, and therefore neither the content knowledge nor the strategies to teach applied literacy or numeracy. And while most have access to professional development training in the use of the curriculum framework, that does not provide them with the content knowledge and strategies to teach explicit literacy and numeracy processes at basic and intermediate levels.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

A summary of how notions about adult literacy provision have changed over time



Anyone who can read and write can teach adult literacy.



Anyone who is a trained teacher can teach adult literacy.



Effective adult literacy delivery demands that teachers have specialised content knowledge and skills.



For adult literacy to be effective, teachers must have acquired the appropriate, specialised content knowledge and skills. They must also have a sound understanding of how to incorporate modern theoretical perspectives, such as literacy as social practice, into their teaching practice.

Part 2: Skills

1 The skills that CAVSS teachers need

As part of the research into the CAVSS pilots, a number of VET and CAVSS lecturers who had successfully implemented the course according to the accredited model were asked to describe what skills and characteristics literacy teachers would need to successfully deliver CAVSS. The most common responses were that CAVSS teachers needed to be able to:

- fit in with the VET environment and participate as part of the VET team
- quickly identify and teach what students need, including the ability to teach foundation level skills to young adults, in a practical industry context
- introduce CAVSS in a way that makes it acceptable to the students
- understand, relate to and value the students and their goals and interests
- meet the students' demand for industry relevance and avoid school-type exercises
- adopt a more directly responsive, less prescriptive, approach to teaching
- be skilled observers
- be comfortable about learning from students and VET lecturers
- be flexible enough to work in a range of environments and with a range of lecturers and teaching styles
- have excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- be interested in, and willing to learn about, the industry area, issues, culture, terminology etc
- be non-judgmental and not make students or VET lecturers feel stupid
- be willing and ready to advocate for students.

2 Identifying the literacy and numeracy skills demanded by the VET course content and teaching and assessment activities

Listed below are steps which outline a process for identifying the literacy and numeracy demands that a VET course makes on students, including those relating to teaching and assessment activities.

Please note that these steps describe a series of activities for researching, including the VET lecturer as a primary source of information. These steps **are not** suggested as strategies for approaching, or communicating with the VET lecturer, particularly in terms of negotiating the ways in which the two of you might establish team-teaching arrangements.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

Ask the VET lecturer which literacy and numeracy skills demanded by the course cause the most problems for students.



Ask the VET lecturer about the practical industry activities the students will be required to perform. It is important to find out the details of what students will be doing, any equipment or handbooks they will be using, and what sort of problems they are likely to experience with the task.



Identify all of the literacy and numeracy tasks that students will be required to undertake to perform the practical industry task. Will they need to measure, calculate, estimate, judge, record, read, make notes, refer to handbooks etc.



Ask the VET lecturer about the training and/or assessment materials they will be giving students to use, either as part of the application to the industry task, or to teach and/or assess theoretical skills and knowledge. This often means paper or computer-based materials.



Analyse these materials, in collaboration with the VET lecturer, to identify where students will be using literacy and/or numeracy processes to work with the teaching and assessment materials. These materials will often involve a range of reading skills, even when the subject matter is more practical or hands on.



Talk to the VET lecturer about the literacy and numeracy skills that you have identified that students will need. The VET lecturers will already be aware of many or all of the literacy skills that students find difficult at this stage of the VET course, and be able to discuss with you which of those skills are the most crucial, or which will be addressed throughout the course.



Talk to the VET lecturer about the lessons s/he has planned, and discuss which literacy and numeracy skills that students will need to use and apply to the VET activities for each lesson. Talk together to plan how each of you will address these skills using the CAVSS team-teaching model.

3 Doing CAVSS: Examples of how literacy and numeracy skills are taught in application to VET training activities

CAVSS teachers must be able to identify and teach the processes for literacy and numeracy skills demanded by training and assessment activities, including those:

- demanded by the training materials and assessment strategies used
- needing to be applied to perform the industry task.

The following examples illustrate ways in which literacy and numeracy skills are taught (and learned) seamlessly, in direct application to the VET training or assessment activity, as the actual process of doing the VET activity. These examples also describe some of the team-teaching interaction between VET and CAVSS lecturers.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

Example 1: Geometry theory in application to tiling

VET training/assessment activity

The VET lecturer wanted the students to have some practical opportunities to apply geometrical theory (finding the areas of geometric shapes) to practical industry problems as part of a tiling course.

Literacy/numeracy demands

Training and assessment materials and activities

Students needed to discuss and negotiate a series of instructions about the tasks and work in groups.

Application to VET task

The students needed to read floor plans and select and apply a series of mathematical formulas to calculate areas, building materials and costs. Other skills included estimation and measurement. They also needed to record their results.

Outline of CAVSS delivery

The VET and CAVSS lecturers designed a set of simulated industry activities where students had to calculate areas for tiling that included a significant number of triangular shapes.

The VET lecturer introduced the topic, and described a number of situations where calculating areas required formulas for determining the areas of triangles. The CAVSS lecturer revised the relevant formulas with the whole group, demonstrating how to calculate the areas of triangular shapes.

The two lecturers and the students went out into the open plan area next to their room and the students split into groups to work in separate areas of the room. As the VET and CAVSS lecturers circulated around the groups, the two lecturers checked that students were using accurate techniques for measuring and reading measurements and discussing those techniques. Where necessary they had students demonstrate those techniques.

The lecturers also discussed processes with each group of students, pointing out how the floor plan could be divided into square and triangular areas, and showing students how to draw up a plan to record measurements.

When the groups came back into the classroom, they continued to work on their tasks, and the two lecturers moved individually from group to group, checking the calculations that students were using.

Finally, the students presented their solutions to the rest of the class, and where there was uncertainty or dispute about the outcomes, the VET and CAVSS lecturers modelled processes for analysing the outcomes, making comparisons with initial estimates, and checking calculations.

Both lecturers judged the lesson to be effective, and students were interested and motivated.

Example 2: Research and analysis processes in application to building

VET training/assessment activity

Building industry students were required to answer a specific question about Australian Standards, which involved using the Australian Standards reference documents, the students' own industry knowledge and experience and their Building Industry handbook.

Literacy/numeracy demands

Training and assessment materials and activities

The students had to read the questions, and write answers to the questions, and discuss their answers with the group. This discussion included analysis and critique of other students' answers.

Application to VET task

The students needed to be able to use contents and indexes and alphabetical and numerical order to find specific standards. They then had to apply their own knowledge of technical industry terms, processes and materials, to locate specific information in the Building Industry handbook and apply the standards to that information.

Outline of CAVSS delivery

The VET lecturer introduced the task, including a discussion of the legal necessity of meeting legislated building standards.

The CAVSS teacher talked to the group about a process for synthesising information from the three sources (the building text, the standards and their own knowledge) and briefly revised strategies for using the contents page and index. This revision included using alphabetical order and discussing numbering conventions.

Both lecturers then moved around the room, observing how the students were working on the task. The VET and CAVSS lecturers each interrupted the group a couple of times to suggest some strategies to the students, including tips for locating standards information, and some suggestions of which building materials were relevant to the standards information.

The VET lecturer then asked students to report to the group, and to explain how they had interpreted the standards, and applied their own trade knowledge to the task. Students were invited to comment on whether or not other students' responses would have satisfied standards requirements, and discuss possible safety and legal implications.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

Example 3: Writing processes in application to demolition

VET training/assessment activity

Students undertaking a plastering course had to undertake a series of literacy and numeracy-based activities to do with demolition. The module included everything to do with the demolition of a building or part of a building, from the initial request for permission through to drawing up and submitting demolition plans.

Literacy/numeracy demands

Training and assessment materials and activities

For this module, students used the actual forms and documents that would be used in a real VET task.

Training activities included working in groups.

Application to VET task

This module took students through all of the document-based processes involved in the various stages of demolition. It included completing forms, writing letters of application, reading plans, using safety and building standards references, drawing up schedules, checklists, recording information including safety and legislative requirements.

Outline of CAVSS delivery

The VET and CAVSS lecturers collected examples of a range of documents, including forms, plans and guidelines and industry standards, associated with the process of demolishing a structure. Over several sessions, the students undertook the process of applying for and planning a demolition job, using a section of the college as the simulated demolition site. The VET and CAVSS lecturers shared the teaching role, with the VET lecturer focussing on industry requirements and issues, and the CAVSS teacher offering advice, strategies and tips to students on how to develop a series of documents as required at each stage of the demolition job. Students worked in pairs and in small groups to develop the documents, and evaluated each other's work.

Example 4: Estimation and fractions in application to engineering

VET training/assessment activity

Students undertaking a Certificate 1 in Engineering were required to cut a circular metal plate into $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{6}$, and $\frac{1}{12}$ sections.

Literacy/numeracy demands

Training and assessment materials and activities

Students needed to discuss the task, and the maths processes involved in completing it. This included using specific mathematical terminology, making notes and recording outcomes.

Application to VET task

The students needed to be able to find the centre of the disc, mark lines and right angles, measure degrees, bisect lines and angles and identify perpendicular lines.

Outline of CAVSS delivery

This lesson was delivered in two stages: in the classroom, and then in the workshop. In the first stage, the VET lecturer reviewed techniques that students had learned in their tech drawing classroom, and the CAVSS lecturer revised the process for drawing angles and lines, including tips for maintaining accuracy. The VET and CAVSS lecturers worked with the students to revise and discuss the geometry of circles and triangles.

The second stage of the lesson was delivered in the workshop. The VET lecturer talked to the students about the tools they would be using, reminding students of the safety issues involved. The students were divided into two groups, and each group was given a metal disc to work on. The two lecturers then moved between groups, assisting students to draw up and cut angles as required.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

Example 5: Reading skills in application to agriculture

VET training/assessment activity

Students in a Certificate 2 Agriculture course were required to undertake an on-line Occupational Health and Safety test.

Literacy/numeracy demands

Training and assessment materials and activities

The students had to read the document, read the test questions, and answer from the choices provided. The on-line test was designed to be taken as a 'closed book exam'.

Application to VET task

Passing the safety test was a VET course requirement.

Outline of CAVSS delivery

In planning the lesson, the VET and CAVSS lecturers had identified significant problems with the test as it had been designed. The on-line model assumed that students would have the reading and comprehension skills required to work their way through a ten-page document of dense text that included a lot of industry terminology. The test also assumed that students would know how to undertake multiple-choice tests, and that the marking key was correct. The lecturers found that none of these assumptions were accurate.

In order to more accurately validate students' knowledge and understanding of the safety issues involved, the VET and CAVSS lecturers modified the delivery of the assessment to take account of students' need for literacy support. They decided that an open-book approach was acceptable, and gave the students time to read the material. The CAVSS teacher offered suggestions to the students on how to use headings, and scan for information, and went over the test with the students, inviting students to read and discuss their responses to questions, especially where there were doubts or disagreements. In some cases, the group agreed that the questions were ambiguous, or that the information to answer the question had not been provided in the text. This process involved engaging the students in a critical analysis of the text, and aspects of how the test had been designed. Alternative answers were allowed depending on group consensus.

The approach taken by the VET and CAVSS teachers changed this task from one in which many students would have failed because of problems with the test, to one where the students were fully engaged with the subject matter and able to demonstrate a greater depth of understanding of safety issues than the original test allowed for.

Teaching reading skills to VET students under the CAVSS model

A CAVSS teacher was team-teaching with two VET lecturers and two groups of students, involved in learning how to safely operate an Elevated Work Platform (EWP) (in this case, a scissor lift.) The students started class at 7 am, and were immediately handed a collection of technical and safety information. It was several pages of dense text, with a lot of industry terminology, and included a test which students would need to undertake, and pass, after reading the document. This was a substantial task. The VET lecturers were very familiar with the information, and the equipment, and the CAVSS lecturer's contribution to the class was, as they worked through the document, to demonstrate and teach students some literacy techniques, which would make the written material more interesting, able to be understood, and meaningful in relation to the actual piece of machinery they were all standing next to.

The CAVSS lecturer used a range of strategies to break up, and treat the document so that it would be meaningful and memorable to the students. He did invite volunteers to read sections out loud, emphasising that no one would be put on the spot and asked to read. (By the end of the session, every student had volunteered to read some of the document out loud, which indicates nothing about skills development, but was a significant outcome in terms of confidence and trust.) He used a range of strategies for turning the exercise into a fully participatory one, where all of the lecturers told stories (many apocryphal) about safety issues, students and lecturers interacted to identify parts of the equipment and practise maintenance procedures, and the whole group were involved in critically examining the complexity of the document.

The lecturers were all pleased with the outcome. Everyone managed to get through a difficult and potentially boring piece of text, with contributions from everyone, a few laughs, some gory stories, hands-on activities for everyone and a very sound understanding of the technical and safety issues involved in operating EWPs. Furthermore, every student passed the test. Many students would have picked up some useful literacy strategies, and an extensive range of industry language practices, and the CAVSS lecturer learned a lot about that aspect of the industry. These outcomes are a bonus, but not actually what CAVSS is for. The purpose of CAVSS is to improve VET training outcomes. In this case, CAVSS support resulted in every student fully understanding what they were reading, taking meaning from it and remembering (i.e. learning) what they needed to be able to safely operate an EWP. And they passed the written test to prove it.

In the example above, the CAVSS teacher worked within the VET training content, materials and activities. That was the starting point for the CAVSS teacher, and strictly within that context, he contributed his own knowledge and strategies for teaching students to 'do' literacy. The VET lecturers had planned a lesson with VET outcomes,

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

not literacy outcomes. But literacy was the skill being demanded by the learning materials, and required by the test. A less skilled, less insightful literacy teacher might have (worst case scenario) talked to the VET lecturer, got a copy of the document, picked out the industry terminology as s/he recognised it, and turned it into a find-a-word puzzle, and a worksheet with a cloze exercise, and learned very little. Students would have benefitted very little, and enjoyed even less. VET lecturers and students would have seen it as a waste of time. And an opportunity would have been missed to connect a written text to an actual workplace competency with important implications for the future safety of those students in the reality of a dangerous workplace.

The challenge for CAVSS lecturers is to recognise the many opportunities that there are to teach and support students' literacy skills in VET, and being able to teach literacy skills at the same time as those skills are being used by students to learn and demonstrate industry competencies. Many literacy and numeracy teachers have the skills to do this, but it does require quite a different perspective from the usual approach to teaching literacy, and an interest in applying professional skills and knowledge in a new context.

This section has focussed on the professional skills and strategies that literacy teachers use to teach literacy and numeracy processes to VET students. The next section, *Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher: Knowledge*, steps away from the practical aspects of teaching literacy in VET, to focus in some depth on some underlying issues for CAVSS teachers.

Part 3: Knowledge

Teaching the industry culture

'Delivering CAVSS has made me a lot more aware of the differences between industry training and school teaching, and how these differences could get in the way of CAVSS and VET lecturers working together.

Industry training is very different from delivering the CGEA, or teaching in schools. VET lecturers do not just teach students industry knowledge and industry skills. They spend a lot of time teaching students aspects of the industry culture, everything from technical terms, and industry slang, to the technical and industrial histories of the industry. They teach students about the realities of the industry, what kind of behaviours are acceptable and what you will get the sack for. All these things contribute to a student's ability to interact in a way that is suitable for the industry culture. It makes sense. They want students to be able to fit in with the expectations of other people in the industry so students can get work, and be successful.

When you have been professionally trained as a teacher, and are only used to an academic approach to teaching, it's easy to miss recognising when different, but very effective, types of teaching are taking place. When a VET lecturer starts telling stories to the students about experiences in the industry, it is not just a bit of a break from instruction. When VET lecturers tell those stories, they are teaching the students about industry culture at a number of different levels. They are integrating industry culture training with industry skills training.

For example, references to money, and the financial implications of making mistakes is a common theme among the VET lecturers I work with. This is something that might seem odd to literacy teachers who have not realised that VET students generally have very specific goals. Some literacy lecturers may not realise that VET students are totally focussed on working in the industry. For many VET students, particularly those in trades, the most likely type of employment they will go into after completing their apprenticeships or traineeships is self-employment. The issue of managing money, and learning the realities of small business management, as well as the theory, is crucial. The point of "learning a trade" is to do business and make money. VET is training and education applied to employment goals. For students, understanding how to operate competitively is essential for their financial future. This idea might be quite unfamiliar to some literacy teachers. Some teachers might even regard those references as impolite, crass, and even unprofessional.

I learn a lot teaching CAVSS, from the lecturers and the students. The experience continues to make me more aware of how different industry cultures operate, and the role that language, what we say and how we say it, plays. What seems so normal that I

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

don't even see it any more, stands out like a sore thumb in a different cultural environment.

As one of the VET lecturers I teach with explained, many VET students have had enough of schools. They were the often the students who did not excel at "academic" subjects, and whose skills and talents were not generally valued by schools and schoolteachers. He described how many students become very uncomfortable having to sit at desks and do anything that seems like schoolwork. But they are very keen to learn industry skills in ways that reflect industry activities. CAVSS works well in that way. It means that you can teach students the "academic" literacy and numeracy processes and skills that they need to use, but because it happens while students are measuring ingredients for a plaster mix, or calculating the costs of a building job, they recognise that these particular "schoolwork" skills are relevant, and are able to apply them to industry contexts. When the students are in the workshop doing practical activities, standing around huge pieces of stone that they will be working for example, and the talk turns to maths, and measuring and calculating volume, the students are right onto it. They're not going glassy-eyed and turning off at the thought of maths because they know that there is a real need for knowing how to use those maths processes, and they make no bones about wanting to know how to do it. And the fact that CAVSS happens in an industry training environment helps to create a boundary for any literacy or numeracy teacher who might otherwise start talking and teaching a "foreign" (academic) culture.'
(Experienced CAVSS lecturer)

1 Two sets of knowledge

There are two sets of knowledge that CAVSS teachers need to have. One is knowledge about the industry course that they will be delivering CAVSS within. The other is what they need to know about the academic industry, and the complex ways in which academic language and literacy skills are an important issue in VET delivery.

This section examines the knowledge that CAVSS teachers need as a background to the following section, *Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher: Attitudes*, which provides advice on how literacy teachers might reframe, or adapt their teaching to be fully effective delivering CAVSS. The information and advice in these two sections underpins the guidelines in *Chapter 4: Team-Teaching* for establishing and maintaining the CAVSS team-teaching relationship.

2 Knowing the VET industry course

We all know something about what hairdressers and chefs do. We might know it from our own experiences as a consumer of services, and we will also probably be aware of the ways in which people from different industry cultures are talked about in the general community: whether or not you should trust a car salesman, or how much money

plumbers earn. In a sense, we probably already know something about the industry from the perspective of someone outside of that industry - an outsider's knowledge.

To deliver CAVSS, we need to acquire an insider's knowledge of the industry. This includes getting to know all about the training for the industry, articulation pathways for students, the actual industry competencies students need to achieve and their goals and aspirations. We also need to get to know about the culture, language, expectations, creativity, job prospects, technological developments, how people get jobs, lose jobs, what is admired and valued and sought after in the industry and what is not, opportunities for specialisation, self-employment, unionisation, safety issues and the history of the industry itself.

This might sound daunting, but delivering CAVSS is actually a really effective way to learn about all of the industry issues listed above, and to learn it at the same time as you are helping VET students achieve their training goals.

How do CAVSS teachers acquire knowledge about the VET industry?

CAVSS teachers do not need to learn all about the VET industry **before** they start delivering CAVSS, but they do need to start learning **as soon as** they start delivering CAVSS. VET lecturers teach, model and reflect the culture of the industry all the time and VET students are in the process of acquiring knowledge about the industry culture at the same time as they are learning industry competencies. Therefore the VET lecturers and students are the most knowledgeable, and convenient, sources of industry information for the CAVSS teacher. As well, the CAVSS model for teaching in application to the VET training activities means that you can learn the industry terminology and concepts at the same time as you are teaching CAVSS.

'You definitely do have to learn fast about the industry, everything that you can find out about it, to be any real use to the students. You really notice the difference, teaching CAVSS at the Pre-Apprenticeship level, because at that level, the students are learning the basic language and concepts of the industry, and you need to learn those as well. Getting thrown in with third year apprentices presents a bit more of a challenge, they speak a whole different language. Even so, as long as you show a genuine interest in what they are doing, the students are really happy to teach you about what they know, at any course level. Teaching someone else is a great learning strategy for them, and a chance to show off their knowledge and skills, and it will create a fantastic rapport between you and the students.' (Experienced CAVSS teacher)

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

As the teacher quoted above describes, being a CAVSS teacher provides all the opportunities you will need to learn about the industry, but you do have to be aware of the need to do it. As well, being a learner positions you very differently in the students' (and the VET lecturers') eyes, and makes it much easier for you to fit in rather than appear to be taking over the VET training in any way. Literacy teachers who have been successful in delivering CAVSS have identified the process of being a learner as a crucial, central strategy for providing non-threatening, non-intrusive support in a VET classroom. This issue is examined in greater detail in *Chapter 4, Team-teaching in CAVSS*.

3 Knowing the academic industry

The other set of knowledge is to do with knowledge about your own industry, the academic industry. We are likely to be every bit as knowledgeable about the academic industry as the nursery operator is about the horticultural industry and the welfare worker is about the community services industry. But it is also likely that you will only have the insider's view of the academic industry, and we may be quite unaware that the perceptions and expectations of people who work in other, non-academic industries may be quite different.

When it comes to delivering CAVSS, it is important to know about how people in non-academic industries (including VET students and VET lecturers) have experienced the school system, and schoolteachers. That is not to say that people in non-academic industries all have the same opinion about all schoolteachers, but it is important to be aware of what industry clients (that is VET students and lecturers) might be anticipating from a teacher.

Academic institutions are industrial sites, just as factories or shops are industrial sites. They are places where people work, business is done, and products and services are produced. As in all industries, certain activities, skills and experiences are valued more than others. Certain ways of looking at situations, thinking and talking are valued and promoted while others ways are not. The academic industry has its own industrial culture, where particular skills, practices and perspectives are valued and rewarded over others.

One of the differences between educational institutions and some other industries is that in our society, everyone comes into contact with the educational industry, and most people have years of intense interaction with that system from the time they are five or six years old. In a sense, everyone in our society undergoes a process of socialisation within schools, and within the culture of academia.

One of the other differences between educational institutions and some other industries is that ideologies (sets of beliefs) exist which position education (and by association, teachers) as something separate from, and in something of an authoritative position to, the rank and file of other industries. Most people will recognise these beliefs, and they have an impact on everyone involved in the VET sector, particularly where industry training meets education, such as the delivery of CAVSS. This issue is examined in more detail below.

The academic industry has its own specific industrial culture

The academic industry has its own industrial culture, including a specific set of language and literacy practices that are taught within the industry and used as a means of teaching other skills. As in all industries, these practices both reflect, and are the site of, the industry's value system, as well as its process for identifying who is an insider, and who is an outsider. Put simply, just as in any industry, the language and literacy practices of the academic industry operate as a password to get into that industry, as a language shared by insiders, and as an expression of the individual and community activities and skills valued in that industry.

The language and literacy practices valued and recognised within the academic industry are not universally applicable

Academic literacy and language practices are not generic, or universally applicable. Academic language and literacy practices reflect the culture of the academic industry, (including educational institutions) but generally do not reflect the cultures (values, beliefs, activities) of other industries.

In reality, literacy and language practices vary widely according to the social contexts that those practices are used in. The communication conventions you would use if you were a foreman on a building site would be completely different from those you would use if you were working as a volunteer, doorknocking to collect money for charity.

One complicating factor is that everyone goes through school, and during that process, comes in contact with literacy and language practices related to the academic industry, and has their skills and competencies judged in relation to those practices. The other complicating factor is that academic literacy and language practices are so closely associated with the process of learning that they are almost automatically employed whenever training is delivered. People learning how to grow plants, be social workers, sell cars or develop computer programs are all required to use academic literacy practices as a means of learning and being assessed.

The result of these complicating factors is that most people involved in education and/or training, including literacy teachers, tend to stop recognising the cultural specificity of academic literacy and language practices and assume that those practices fit all industrial contexts, that is, that they are universally applicable. It is as if some teachers, including many literacy teachers, find academic practices so familiar that they fail to recognise them as having been imported into non-academic industry training environments.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

Sometimes people involved in education and/or training, including vocational and literacy lecturers, are so accustomed to seeing academic language and literacy practices embedded in a wide range of industry training, that they fail to recognise when those practices are quite irrelevant and unrelated to, or even at odds with, the language and literacy practices of the industry language.

Differences between academic and other industry literacy and language cultures

Teachers are at something of a disadvantage when it comes to being able to identify non-academic literacy and language practices. That might be because in schools, academic language and literacy practices are valued and recognised to the exclusion of other literacy and language cultures, as if those other language and literacy cultures did not exist.

For CAVSS teachers, one of their most essential skills is to be able to learn and then teach the language and literacy (and communication) practices of a range of non-academic industries.

For some teachers, the first step will be to be able to actually hear and see non-academic language and literacy practices for what they are (legitimate practices reflecting other industry cultures), instead of disregarding them or attempting to 'correct' them, as if they were just substandard versions of the sorts of language practices that English teachers teach and value. The next step will be to value, learn, and adopt those practices yourself.

These practices will include every aspect of your interaction with the students and the VET lecturer, including verbal, written, body language and your expectations about their responses. Being willing to learn about and adopt industry language practices, and to learn about the industry culture, values, crafts, technologies, history and industrial issues, is a way of demonstrating your willingness to leave behind the authority that academic industry language and literacy skills give to teachers. VET students and lecturers will be sensitive to, and looking for, signs that you can make this shift and value the same practices that they value.

Ways in which literacy and language practices operate in schools

Schools teach and value academic literacy and language practices, and give out a strong message that any other language and literacy practices are inferior or incorrect applications of academic practices. This is a very strong message for all children who go through school.

The students whose socio-economic backgrounds (that is, whose parents' jobs, social status, values and aspirations) are aligned with those of the people who work in the academic industry (and therefore the values and beliefs inherent in academic language and literacy practices) are more likely to learn that their ways of using language are proper, correct and of a 'higher standard' than other ways.

Through the same processes, students whose parents are not professionals, or work in unskilled jobs, or are poor, Indigenous, non-Anglo, non-White and/or uneducated are more likely to learn the lesson that their language and literacy practices (and the values and beliefs inherent in them, that is ways of talking and ways of being) are inferior, inadequate, substandard and of less, or little, value.

For many teachers, their education has offered few opportunities to find out about the ways in which non-academic language and literacy practices reflect a wide range of values, beliefs, community relationships and worldviews. Indeed, teacher training in Australia has been slow to provide teachers with an understanding of the ways that literacy and language practices operate in schools to reproduce unequal access to resources in our society (Freebody et al 1995).

If you are interested in reading about literacy as social practice and language and ideology, the bibliography included in the handbook lists some relevant references.

For many students, schools are not fair, safe, nurturing places

Literacy teachers who understand the ways that literacy and language practices operate in our society will recognise why these issues are of crucial importance to CAVSS teachers. Put simply, teachers operate within a system which applies a finite set of criteria for deciding who is clever, worthwhile and valuable - who, quite literally, makes the grade. VET students (and VET lecturers) are likely to be over-representative of those whose talents, skills and potential have not been fully recognised and valued within that system. Teachers operate within a system in which those students are deemed failures, at least to some degree.

Some schoolteachers challenge the system from within. Experienced adult literacy teachers will be familiar with the experiences of students whose motivation to persevere with education is due to 'the one teacher who made all the difference' to them, making them feel valued and worthwhile in the face of otherwise negative messages from within the system. But for many students, including many students who do not go to university, but go on to vocational education and training, school was, at best, an exercise in surviving with some motivation and self-confidence left intact.

Many people in the community have had negative experiences at school and therefore continue to have negative attitudes towards schoolteachers. Many students, including many VET students, are glad to have left schoolteachers, and everything they represent, in the past.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

The differences between what academic literacy and language practices mean to teachers, and what those practices mean to people who are not teachers

As described above, there are sets of beliefs, or ideologies, associated with academic language and literacy practices being assumed to be of higher value and worth than other literacy and language practices. These ideologies are associated with another complex, rarely articulated but widely assumed notion that there is a close association between literacy skills and intelligence. These beliefs are deeply embedded through our education system, and held (tight) by many teachers. Of course, it has been well established that no such association exists. But the combination of these ideologies helps to explain the powerful impact of the education process in our society, both on those who are deemed successful and those who are not.

The literacy and language practices that are modelled, valued and taught at school (academic language practices) mean a lot to the teachers (especially English teachers) who teach them. Indeed, some teachers feel deeply that their value to the community is their expert knowledge of 'correct' English literacy and language practices, and that an important aspect of their role as teachers is to make sure that the students they teach produce and value academic language practices over other, less valued practices. It is generally the case that teachers feel quite confident and satisfied about their literacy skills, unaware or unconvinced that the language and literacy practices of other industries, or other people, are legitimate, rich and valuable.

For everyone else, that is all of those people who go through school and do not go straight into university and do not work in the academic industry, academic language practices are also important. But they are important for very different reasons. The fact that academic language practices are valued at school, and other language practices are not valued, means that language practices become a basis for discrimination.

People who experience being judged and found wanting against the narrow range of academic language practices through school may carry two conflicting assumptions about their language and literacy practices.

On one hand, people in the world outside of schools use the language practices of the world outside of schools, that is, the whole gamut of language practices that reflect the myriad cultural differences in our society. These include the wide range of language and literacy practices that might include aspects of running a small business, belonging to a sporting club, helping children through school, managing legal and financial affairs and having hobbies and interests. Most people in our society operate with the language practices that are consistent with their working and personal lives and they have no reason to doubt those skills.

On the other hand, people do not easily forget the experience of being deemed a failure, not as smart, not as valuable, not as worthwhile, as others. Some people respond to that injustice by devaluing the very language practices that were used by teachers as the basis for devaluing them. People in the world outside of schools, confident in their own skills and intelligence, are often unimpressed by efforts to produce 'superior' language practices, and quick to recognise when 'academic' language is used to exclude anyone who is not in the academic 'in-group'.

Many people develop a healthy suspicion of, and disrespect for, the language practices that teachers promoted as 'standards' that they somehow would never be good enough to reach. Yet despite this, the lessons that children learn at school, when their language and literacy practices were deemed substandard, are tenacious. When the topic of literacy, or maths, tables, spelling or handwriting, comes up, or when they come face to face with a literacy teacher, it is not uncommon for intelligent, skilled, clever, resourceful, confident, successful adults to feel 'put in their place' all over again, by the strength of the message that they were given at school about not being good enough.

'It is like no matter where I am, or what achievements and successes I've had in my life, as soon as the subject of literacy comes up, there I am in Miss Little's classroom again, being told again, in no uncertain terms, how hopeless I am because I never, ever pass my spelling test.' (VET lecturer, in describing one of the reasons that he was hesitant about revisiting a schoolteacher on his students.)

VET students (and lecturers) will be anticipating, and watching for, schoolteacherly behaviour

So in many ways people outside the world of schools continue to be susceptible to the impact of academic language and literacy processes which were used to devalue their skills and talents. The problem for teachers is that they too still carry around the lessons that school taught them.

At a recent workshop, a group of literacy lecturers were asked to rate their literacy skills between one and ten. They all rated their skills as somewhere between seven and nine and a half. And yet the CAVSS lecturers who have been most successful in establishing team-teaching relationships and improving students' completion rates all describe having to work hard to learn a whole new set of language and literacy practices.

These responses suggest that for some teachers, satisfaction with their language and literacy practices may work against their capacity to recognise, learn and adopt new and different practices, and to teach those new practices. And indeed for some teachers, the idea of even acknowledging the legitimacy of non-academic language practices will feel like treason, or at least like they are being unprofessional in not working to maintain language and literacy 'standards' (as per the ideologies that position academic language practices as a benchmark).

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

When it comes to literacy and language practices, VET students and lecturers (and many other people) carry a complex legacy with them from their experiences through school. Teachers usually carry a very different, but equally powerful, legacy from their school experiences, and left unaddressed and unmanaged, these legacies will create a significant barrier between a CAVSS teacher and the VET students and lecturers. Given that CAVSS is delivered to VET students in the VET classroom or workshop, with the purpose of supporting the VET industry goals, it is up to the literacy teachers to do the adapting, to make sure that that barrier does not develop.

To be successful in delivering CAVSS, therefore, literacy teachers generally need to make some significant shifts in what they teach and how they teach. In some cases, these changes will make teachers feel like they are not doing their job properly. In many ways, to be a successful CAVSS teacher, and to be accepted and utilised in a VET learning environment, you will need to reframe many of the practices and expectations that have been professionally valuable and useful up until now. Put simply, CAVSS teachers must be able to stop acting like schoolteachers to be able to truly fit into, and be accepted in, the VET learning environment.

Is there a role for literacy teachers in the VET learning environment?

Literacy teachers can make a significant contribution to the achievements of VET students. Literacy teachers can not only minimise the barriers that literacy demands create for VET students, but in doing so, contribute to students' confidence, motivation and overall performance during the course. CAVSS has the potential to help students get more from their training, and to enhance their capacity for safety, productivity and individual achievement in their chosen fields.

As discussed in the first chapter of this handbook, students who enrol in VET courses have a range of literacy and numeracy demands made on them that:

- reflect the importation of academic language and literacy practices into non-academic industry training environments as technologies for teaching and assessing competencies. These include workbooks and other 'self-paced' learning materials, text-based teaching, learning and assessment activities and the increasing use of written evidence for assessment purposes. Many of these practices are irrelevant to non-academic industry workplaces; and/or
- require students to identify the literacy and numeracy processes taught by schools within an academic learning context, and select and apply those processes within a different industry training culture. Many VET competencies involve complex literacy and numeracy skills, including, for example, reading and applying standards and other legislated information, plans, diagrams and instructions, applying a wide range of maths processes, and creating many types of written documents, including legal permits and safety records.

What CAVSS teachers have to offer VET students is their specialist knowledge of processes for learning and doing literacy and numeracy, including at foundation levels. When CAVSS teachers become fluent in the language and literacy practices, and concepts and values of the non-academic industry culture, they are then able to teach students the literacy and numeracy processes they need to know and use, using the industry language and industry concepts to teach those processes as the students are needing to apply them to industry training activities.

CAVSS teachers teach at the very connection between the elements of literacy and numeracy processes that students (begin to) learn about at school, and the application of those processes to an industry task. Once CAVSS teachers begin to speak the industry language (and understand industry concepts), they are able to:

- identify and extract literacy and numeracy processes from within the academic culture and learning contexts in which students first started to learn them
- reframe those processes using industry language and concepts. This 'translation' stage includes breaking the association with the complex issues discussed above that can get in the way of that learning at school, and
- show and teach students how those processes relate to, and are used in, the industry activities.

In that sense, CAVSS teachers demonstrate and teach students to 'translate' or make the connections, between the literacy and numeracy they learned at school, and the literacy and numeracy processes they need to select and use in their industry course. For example, some students enrol in a building trades course, never having been fully taught how to use metric measurements. They may have only a vague idea of how to use a measuring tape, never been taught strategies for reading measurements from a tape, or they may have been taught to measure using centimetres, rather than millimetres. For some students, this will be regarded by them as just more evidence that they are 'hopeless at maths'. Their CAVSS teacher has an opportunity to:

- identify the specific skills and knowledge that the students need to be taught or retaught, in this case, how to measure using millimetres and how to accurately read and record measurements
- teach it as the students are having to measure things
- identify ongoing opportunities to practise measuring that are totally relevant to the VET tasks
- begin to build students' confidence in their ability to understand and apply maths processes and to challenge and shift their perceptions that they cannot do maths.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

What has been your response to this section?

This section offers an explanation of why a significant number of VET students will not welcome the idea of having a schoolteacher back teaching them. It also describes the ways in which literacy teachers can make important contributions to assisting VET students to achieve their vocational goals.

What was your response to reading this section? Did you find yourself mentally defending yourself and other teachers?

Are you able to acknowledge that many students leave school being discouraged, hurt or even devastated by what happens at school?

Are you going to be able to find ways to acknowledge the students' responses as valid and therefore, to demonstrate that you will not be putting them through the same experiences?

Teaching is not an easy job. But the difficulty of the job, and the good intentions of people who do it, are not the issue. Teaching is a client service industry, and CAVSS is a particularly client-serviced (that is, student-centred) approach. Teachers who respond to their students' wariness with defensiveness are unlikely to overcome that wariness and be effective teaching CAVSS. CAVSS teachers need to be able to respect the validity of students' responses to anything that reminds them of having their skills undervalued by schoolteachers.

The next section, *Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher: Attitudes*, explores some of the ways that literacy teachers can refocus and adapt their teaching practices to encourage VET students to make full use of the support and assistance they can provide.

Part 4: Attitudes

The purpose of CAVSS is to remove the barriers that literacy and language creates for students in VET training, so that more students achieve their VET goals. Some literacy teachers have found that this approach uncovers some deeply held beliefs about the validity of those barriers, as discussed in the previous section.

Literacy teachers involved in successfully implementing and delivering CAVSS in WA agree that the CAVSS teachers' attitudes are just as crucial as their knowledge and skills. But, of course, attitudes are not a consequence of education or training or even experience necessarily, and are very difficult to measure as a basis for deciding whether or not a literacy teacher will be an effective, successful CAVSS teacher.

This section discusses the attitudes that seem to be shared and valued by successful CAVSS teachers, including some attitudes that are quite unteacherly. It also examines some of the attitudes and beliefs expressed by some literacy teachers and others, which reflect ideas about the role of teachers and education systems in our society. Some of these show a lack of understanding about the way that literacy and language practices function as social practice. Some of these attitudes, if held by teachers attempting to deliver CAVSS, have the capacity to render the course ineffective, or make literacy an even more significant barrier for VET students.

Again, you should take notice of your feelings in response to what is written in this section. If you have a negative response, then consider whether or not that response might include interest and might be the first stage to including some new perspectives or insights into your teaching. If you have consistently negative responses to the content of this section then you would probably find that you would not enjoy, nor be effective in, delivering CAVSS.

1 Reframing teacherly attitudes and behaviours

Delivering CAVSS demands a varied and complex range of skills from literacy practitioners, and challenges them to step a long way outside their usual comfort zones, including their usual sense of professional responsibility.

Being a learner just as much as a teacher

Being a CAVSS teacher means becoming a learner, and learning fast. CAVSS teachers must learn as much and as quickly as possible from the VET lecturer and from the students to be able to understand the industry activities being taught and to recognise the literacy and numeracy processes that students need to apply to those activities. It means learning new terminology and recognising and respecting new ways of communicating and interacting that reflect the industry culture. It means being comfortable about being the one who doesn't know and being willing to make mistakes and be wrong.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

Being a learner is more than just the most effective means of gathering the industry knowledge that you need to be of real use to the VET students you are teaching. Being a learner is an effective strategy for avoiding some of the pitfalls that exist in developing a sound team-teaching relationship with the VET lecturer. It is a way of relinquishing the authority associated with being a schoolteacher that, left unaddressed, is likely to create barriers between you and the VET students and lecturers. Being a learner is a real response to your situation in the VET learning environment, where you have specialist skills to offer, but genuinely need to learn about the industry culture to put those skills to the most use.

Some teachers find it difficult, uncomfortable, perhaps 'unprofessional', to feel like they haven't got all the answers. Teachers who find it a struggle to be uncertain or wrong in front of students or other lecturers, would find it very difficult to take full advantage of opportunities to learn in the VET training environment, particularly from the students themselves. To be effective, CAVSS teachers should actually find pleasure and enjoyment, and real interest, in learning about the industry culture. This includes finding pleasure and satisfaction in learning and teaching language and literacy practices that reflect non-academic industry cultures.

The issues of being a learner in relation to developing a collaborative, team-teaching arrangement is discussed in greater detail in the following chapter, *Team-teaching in CAVSS*.

Fitting in, and not taking over

Teaching literacy in an unfamiliar, industry context will be a challenge for literacy teachers who are used to being in control, and used to being the central source of information (that is, the expert) in the literacy classroom. To teach CAVSS, you must be able to fit into a non-academic learning environment where your credentials are not necessarily valued, and possibly considered a problem.

There are two main aspects to fitting in and not taking over. One is about relinquishing the sole managerial and professional authority that teachers always have in their own classrooms, and the other is about relinquishing many of the values, and all of the trappings of authority, that qualified, experienced teachers are used to.

Most literacy teachers are used to making a huge range of choices for other people (their students) everyday. More than most jobs, being a teacher involves having a great deal of authority in your classroom. For many teachers, part of the responsibility of delivering training is deciding what will be taught, and the way it will be taught.

Most teachers take this authority very seriously, and see it as the expression of their professional skills and responsibility to ensure that students learn what they need to learn in a safe, comfortable learning environment.

The challenge for CAVSS teachers is to feel comfortable in another teacher's classroom (or workshop) where that teacher has the professional responsibility and authority to make those choices, and you, as the CAVSS teacher, have to fit in with all of those choices. For many teachers, stepping back and taking the lead from another lecturer in a completely different training environment, where many things are done differently than they are in schools, will feel uncomfortable. Some teachers may feel like they are not pulling their weight, and some may feel frustrated at things not being done 'properly'. Managing that change involves redefining your role in the classroom, as the junior partner in a team-teaching relationship.

For CAVSS teachers, fitting in means being accepted by the VET students and lecturer, and hopefully, found to be an accessible and valuable resource. As described above, positioning yourself as a learner in the VET training environment is a way of gaining the knowledge you need, and also a meaningful and genuine way to demonstrate that you respect, admire and value the industry skills, talents and goals of the student. In a sense, fitting in reflects a literacy teacher's capacity to fully recognise and acknowledge the contributions that the industry makes to our society, and to genuinely move beyond the limitations of judging non-academic industry cultures and the activities of those industries as second-rate in comparison to academic pursuits.

Remembering that it is not the CAVSS teacher's role to teach everything that they think people might benefit from knowing

Many experienced teachers are used to teaching whatever they think that people might benefit from knowing. But central to the CAVSS teacher's role as a teacher is managing the inclination to teach everything to everybody. A CAVSS teacher needs to seriously consider the implications of extending their teaching beyond the purpose of helping VET students pass their course, especially for how that professional enthusiasm and eagerness to be helpful might impact on their acceptance by the VET lecturers and students.

It is not unknown for CAVSS teachers to assume that their role includes teaching the VET lecturer about literacy and numeracy, and even, perhaps about how to teach! With all good intentions, several CAVSS teachers have made some seriously clumsy blunders, assuming that their role as qualified teachers was to professionally develop the skills of the VET lecturer. (One literacy teacher approached the VET lecturer at the end of the first session together and offered to meet with him so she could give him a few tips for making his lessons more interesting. The VET lecturer refused to have a literacy teacher back in the room.)

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

CAVSS certainly does provide opportunities for the two lecturers involved to swap some new strategies for teaching, and to develop some new strategies together for team-teaching. But the swapping needs to happen in the context of lecturers taking notice of good ideas and new teaching strategies and putting them into use, not with one lecturer taking it upon themselves to improve the professional skills of the other. As well, and importantly, literacy teachers should not assume that their qualification and/or the VET lecturers lack of educational qualification means that they are a more skilled, insightful, dedicated or knowledgeable teacher.

For literacy teachers to assume that it is reasonable and acceptable to 'offer' advice, or feedback to the VET (or any other) lecturer they are team-teaching with, indicates very little understanding of the dynamics of a team-teaching relationship, especially where that relationship is made more complex by the addition of an academic trainer into an industry training environment. For some teachers, delivering CAVSS will challenge some aspects of their capacity for sensitivity, empathy and their interpersonal skills.

Teaching with a high level of responsiveness

CAVSS teachers need to teach responsively on two different levels. One level of responsiveness is to do with an attitude towards client-service (that is, student-centred) teaching. For some teachers, the idea of teaching being a client service industry will challenge their ideas about teaching as a profession and/or a vocation. The other level is to do with the process of teaching in response to the VET course content, training materials and activities, and the students' needs, as they become apparent.

CAVSS has highlighted the effectiveness of a teaching approach where the teacher uses the response from students as an ongoing source of feedback to use as a basis for continually improving teaching practices. This may seem too obvious to mention, but this approach does not appear to be used by all teachers. Some teachers, instead, dismiss or reject the evidence of students' responses, whenever those responses are not wholly positive, as evidence of the students' rebelliousness, lack of motivation, lack of intelligence or lack of gratitude.

CAVSS teachers are often going into a new and unfamiliar training environment, with a possibly new and unfamiliar client group, and seeking to adapt their teaching skills to meet the needs of that new client group. Teachers who have the capacity to take notice of their students' responses to teaching activities and strategies, both positive and negative, and who try new ways to maximise the relevance of what they teach, and to engage students' interest and motivation, will find it easier to meet the needs of VET students enrolled in CAVSS.

The other level of responsiveness is about being able to use, as your teaching resource materials, the VET competencies, the VET lecturers' teaching activities and materials, and the students' observed needs for literacy and numeracy support as they undertake industry training activities. Indeed, according to one CAVSS lecturer, it is not enough to just be able to teach 'on-the-spot', totally in response to what another lecturer has planned and prepared for. CAVSS lecturers need to actually enjoy the everyday challenge of testing their capacity to draw on their teaching knowledge and experience, and repertoire of skills and strategies, to observe what students need, and to come up with a dynamic, engaging way of teaching those skills right at the same time as the students are needing to learn/use them.

Not all CAVSS teaching is done 'on-the-spot'. CAVSS teachers generally do a lot of planning in collaboration with the VET lecturer. But even planned CAVSS lessons have an element of immediacy about them because they are delivered at the point of need; that is, as students need those literacy and numeracy skills to undertake the industry training activity, and in response to what the CAVSS and VET lecturers observe during that activity.

Some teachers feel very uncomfortable teaching 'by the seat of their pants', and some teachers regard it as unprofessional to not be fully prepared, and not meet every planned outcome, for every lesson. These approaches actually undermine the effectiveness of the CAVSS model. To successfully deliver CAVSS, teachers need to be able to teach under less predictable conditions, and to be professionally skilled and confident enough to teach with a high level of flexibility and responsiveness to the VET students and to the professional choices made by the VET lecturer. Teaching in response to the VET training environment is crucial to making sure that everything the CAVSS teacher delivers is relevant to what the students are doing. It is also a crucial part of fitting into another teacher's classroom, and to providing a support service, rather than taking over.

Being the gate-opener, not the gate keeper

A number of literacy teachers have been concerned with CAVSS in regards to the business of 'maintaining literacy standards'. A couple of literacy teachers described their approval at the idea of a course which would at last give them an opportunity to 'improve the standard of literacy being taught and used in vocational courses' as if they had been waiting for an opportunity to teach the VET lecturers and students all the things they didn't finish teaching them at high school, and that, apparently, the VET lecturers and students would somehow be agreeable to the idea. Some teachers delivering literacy in the VET sector have a very limited understanding of language and literacy as social practice, and apparently little awareness that language and literacy practices that are not already being taught and used in VET training environments are, by definition, not relevant to the culture of that environment.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

CAVSS teachers must be able to recognise the deep injustice of the gate-keeping role that some teachers adopt, where only students who use the proper and correct ways of writing and talking (and therefore, thinking and seeing and valuing) get to consider themselves as intelligent and successful. CAVSS teachers need to reframe their role as one where their goal is to make sure that **every** student gets through the gate. For a significant number of literacy teachers, this is a major shift. CAVSS lecturers primarily teach students to apply literacy and numeracy-based processes, to industry training tasks, and assessment activities. Teachers who feel uncomfortable about that approach should consider carefully whether or not their worldviews would be at odds with the aims of CAVSS.

Being an agent of change

CAVSS is not revolutionary in any sense. The model is simply a framework of well-established principles of good practice in literacy and adult basic education, and student-centred learning approaches. There is nothing new about the effectiveness of teaching to the point of need, using real-life, meaningful contexts for teaching literacy and numeracy skills, encouraging the use of a range of learning styles, encouraging and facilitating peer support in learning, and of teachers engaging in the learning process themselves. But the idea of literacy being an issue for every student, of literacy support being a normal, unremarkable part of the VET course and addressed inside the VET training environment, via a team-teaching arrangement, will be new for many practitioners.

CAVSS reflects the concept of literacy as social practice in that the model itself acknowledges that different industries have different language cultures, and that these differences can be used as a basis for discrimination. Traditional and more common approaches of withdrawing individual students for 'specialist' literacy support reflect the idea of literacy being associated with the individual deficit model. These theoretical differences have important implications for students in their willingness to access literacy support, and the degree to which that support eliminates the problem of having to 'translate' between academic and industry languages. CAVSS is proving to be significantly more acceptable to students, and significantly more effective in addressing the impact of literacy and numeracy skills gaps on students' outcomes.

CAVSS demands some significant changes in expectations and practices in RTOs. CAVSS requires collaboration between two sets of professionals (academic and non-academic industry trainers) between whom exist complex and powerful prejudices and ideologies.

CAVSS is still in the first stages of implementation in some centres. At this point CAVSS teachers will, by definition, be involved in promoting and implementing a new way of addressing an old problem, as well as actually delivering the literacy support.

This means CAVSS teachers take on two extra tasks.

One task is to persevere in ensuring that the prescribed CAVSS model is delivered. In some sites, attempts to deliver CAVSS have been watered down to become lunchtime tutorials for students who have been identified as needing help, delivered by the literacy specialist with no VET lecturer in sight. These attempts have proved as unacceptable to students as the traditional withdrawal model they so closely resemble. CAVSS teachers should be prepared to explain over and over why the principle of not singling students out for support, and the strategy of ensuring maximum relevance to students through the team-teaching methodology, are not optional, but indeed, what makes the model effective. CAVSS teachers have resources such as the *CAVSS Business Rules* (including the CAVSS Accreditation requirements) to assist in clarifying delivery requirements to other personnel.

The other task is to contribute to breaking down the prejudices and distrust that may have developed between academic and non-academic industry trainers in your workplace. CAVSS teachers have the opportunity to do this through what they say and what they do in the VET training environment, and the degree to which they can demonstrate that literacy teachers have the capacity to relinquish academic authority in a learning environment, to respect and adopt non-academic cultural practices, and to value and support the goals and aspirations of VET students. Obviously actions will speak louder than any words, and will open the ways for other VET and literacy lecturers to try CAVSS and assess its effectiveness.

Some CAVSS teachers have found that their enthusiasm for team-teaching with the VET lecturers has made them the object of some suspicion from other literacy teachers, almost as if they had 'changed sides.' The CAVSS teachers who have experienced this recommend maintaining regular contact with literacy colleagues and program managers (visiting the staffroom each week, taking part in social activities, etc), and keeping them informed and up to date about what you are doing. This is also a chance to identify other literacy teachers whose skills and attitudes might make them suitable candidates for delivering CAVSS and encourage them to consider expanding their teaching experience.

2 Attitudes that are at odds with the concept and aim of CAVSS

The following list of comments illustrates some of the attitudes that exist, as they have been expressed by literacy teachers, that are at odds with the perspective of literacy as social practice, and which would not support the effective delivery of CAVSS. The responses explore some of the perspectives inherent in those attitudes, in relation to delivering CAVSS.

- *Teachers can't be expected to change their practices and expectations according to individual students.*
- *Students are not as motivated or as respectful as they should be.*
- *TAFEs should not be accepting students who have rejected high school and are not willing to fit within the system.*

Teaching is a client-service industry. RTOs in the VET sector increasingly compete for students, and teachers' jobs depend on how competitive the organisation is in terms of offering a quality service to students.

The VET sector is not like school, where students are required by law to attend. Teachers in the VET sector who are unable to adapt their practices to meet the needs of students risk losing students to more responsive training organisations.

Students who are treated by teachers with acceptance and respect are generally respectful and accepting in return. Students who undertake VET studies having had their confidence and motivation damaged by earlier experiences, including school, need thoughtful, supportive and skilled teachers, not blame.

- *Teachers have a very difficult job and should be given support and backup, not criticism, by the community.*

Teachers do not have an easy job but, obviously, have no more immunity to criticism than any other service provider in our society. All consumers have a right to complain when the services they purchase, either through public or private funds, are not of a satisfactory standard.

It could be argued that teachers who teach literacy to post-school aged students, where students have already missed out on an effective teaching service the first time around, have an even greater social responsibility to offer a high quality teaching service.

- *Surely literacy teachers can be of some help to VET lecturers when it comes to helping them choose the best materials, handouts or exercises for students.*

Assuming that it is your role to offer advice to the VET lecturer on what or how they should teach is not a good way to convince that lecturer that you are prepared to fit in and not take over.

CAVSS teachers are there to help teach the VET students the literacy and numeracy processes they need to successfully complete the course. The CAVSS teacher's role does not include teaching the VET lecturers anything. Indeed, it is up to the CAVSS teacher to focus on what they need to learn from the VET lecturer and the students, about the industry course and the industry culture, including seeking advice from the VET lecturer about how and what you should be teaching the students.

VET lecturers have always taught literacy and numeracy. Many VET lecturers are highly skilled in teaching the literacy and numeracy processes involved in their industry courses, and very skilled in teaching their client group. Indeed, VET lecturers involved in CAVSS are likely to include many of those who already have a particular awareness of, and interest in meeting, students' needs for that support. Literacy teachers tempted to offer any advice to VET lecturers should stop and consider issues of professional and personal respect, whether or not they necessarily have anything to offer other than an extra pair of very skilled hands, and to consider how easily such a gesture might resemble criticism, or even intrusion.

After team-teaching relationships have become well established, VET lecturers might seek your advice about selecting or preparing materials. If this happens, CAVSS teachers should see this as another opportunity to exchange and combine knowledge with the VET lecturer, and another opportunity to avoid assuming any kind of professional authority.

- *I have some concerns about the morality of providing support to students who are already enrolled in a training course. Literacy is about helping people to get access to training.*
- *It's a shame that VET students are getting CAVSS support when there are so many young students waiting to get into literacy classes.*

Over the years there has been an increasing awareness that literacy skills are an issue for not just a few, but the majority of the adult population in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007). Similar surveys in other OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries produced similar results.

In the VET sector in WA, there are now curriculum options available for people to access literacy provision for general education purposes (the CGEA), and for specific VET training purposes (CAVSS).

Many of the VET students, including Pre-Apprenticeship students, face many of the same issues as young students enrolling in the CGEA. A number of students, including young students, who have identified their vocational training goals and are currently seeking literacy bridging course qualifications as a means of preparing for the literacy demands of a VET course will be able to go straight into a VET course with CAVSS support when CAVSS is more widely available.

- *This idea of helping VET students get through their course makes me feel a bit uncomfortable. I believe that people have to earn what they get in life. This seems a bit like cheating.*

Literacy and language practices are a basis for discrimination in schools. As a result, many students undertaking VET already have some literacy skills gaps. VET training not only requires students to learn and apply literacy and numeracy processes as industry competencies, but often requires students to undertake literacy and numeracy activities that are more complex, and not relevant to their industry. Therefore literacy demands create a barrier for VET students, regardless of their industry skills and aptitudes. Providing literacy support to all students to overcome these barriers is not an injustice.

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

Rather it is a way of addressing an injustice, and contributing to the skills and safety of the workforce, and adding to the value of the training dollar.

- *I was shocked to find out how lax the VET lecturer was accepting students' written assignments. The students were not using any referencing, and the VET lecturer had not been aware of how poor the students' research and essay skills were up until then.*

It is up to the VET lecturer to determine the requirements for students' written work, not the CAVSS teacher. The CAVSS teacher's role is to assist students to achieve the VET course requirements, including, for example, writing an assignment.

In this case, the CAVSS teacher's assumption that academic literacy practices were required in all workplaces resulted in students facing increased literacy-based barriers to completing their Certificate II Hospitality course. Using academic referencing conventions, for example, or writing essays, are relevant competencies for university students (that is, specific to the academic industry), but not necessarily required as Units of Competence for VET courses.

It is not acceptable to look for opportunities to 'extend' students' skills. It is not appropriate to try and foster students' desire to love language, or to demand the use of academic literacy conventions, unless those skills relate directly to the VET competencies, and what the VET lecturer expects of students. The literacy and numeracy delivered by the CAVSS teacher must not only begin with the literacy and numeracy skills demanded by the VET course, but it must end with those skills as well.

- *It makes me so sad that CAVSS doesn't give you enough time to properly teach the students about literacy. I would talk to them about how important it was to have good reading and writing skills, but the trouble was that there was no literacy in their course. I ended up focussing on helping them to make sure their journals were tidy and well-set out.*
- *It is educationally unsound to teach basic skills in such a narrow context.*

It is not uncommon to hear teachers complain, particularly where the VET system crosses over with general education, that the whole notion of competency-based learning focuses too heavily on skills acquisition, and does not allow teachers to provide a broader educational experience. Without entering the broader debate, teachers who are considering delivering CAVSS need to decide whether or not they will be comfortable teaching within the 'narrow' confines (or specific industry focus) of VET competencies. It requires a very different perspective than many literacy teachers are used to. It also requires teachers' acceptance that the literacy and language practices that they have expert knowledge of may be of limited use to the students.

- *Tensions exist between 'academic' and industry personnel.*

Tensions exist, in some VET training organisations, between the 'academic' and VET lecturers. Where it exists, this tension is expressed by literacy teachers (and some managers and others with teaching backgrounds) as a shared assumption that VET lecturers are not likely to be as skilled at teaching, or as committed to their students' achievements and welfare as lecturers of 'academic' subjects are.

At best, those assumptions might be expressions of professional rivalry, but at worst, might be perceived as an extension of the process of discrimination experienced by people who do not meet 'academic criteria' for success at school. In the light of the wariness that many VET lecturers have expressed about team-teaching with a literacy teacher, prospective CAVSS teachers may want to think about their own responses to those assumptions.

Clearly, neither 'academic' nor vocational lecturers have the monopoly when it comes to being skilled teachers, or being teachers who care about their students, or unskilled, uncaring teachers, for that matter.

One experienced CAVSS teacher offered the following. 'Literacy teachers definitely care about their students. But VET lecturers not only care about their students during their course, but they continue to care about what happens to them afterwards as well. VET lecturers take students on when they are straight out of school, still kids, and are often still in touch with those students, helping them with industry advice, still teaching them really, when that student has finished their apprenticeship, got their own business and is married with a couple of kids.'

Chapter 3:
Being a Successful CAVSS Teacher

Bringing teachers' skills and knowledge to a collaborative teaching arrangement

A VET lecturer with extensive and successful experience team-teaching with a CAVSS teacher was invited to talk to some prospective CAVSS teachers about the course and the team-teaching model. During the discussion, one of the literacy teachers suggested that CAVSS teachers were in a good position to advise VET lecturers on how to select the most appropriate teaching and assessment materials. She suggested that CAVSS teachers could go to the VET lecturer and say something like 'This document really isn't suitable for these students. Can you find something that is easier to read?'

The VET lecturer was asked to respond to her suggestion, and he answered very non-committally, saying 'Oh yes, you could do that.' When pressed several times about how a VET lecturer might really feel about having their teaching practices (i.e. selecting industry materials for teaching purposes) reviewed and critiqued by CAVSS lecturers without invitation, he said he thought that it 'might put some VET lecturers off.' When he was asked how he himself would feel if the teacher he was team-teaching with told him that the materials he was using were not suitable, he said he would 'actually be pretty cut up.'

One of the more experienced CAVSS teachers present at the session pointed out that reviewing and critiquing the VET lecturers' teaching strategies and materials is definitely not part of the CAVSS teachers' role. He said that as the team-teaching relationship developed and people got used to working collaboratively, working together to come up with ideas for teaching materials became part of team-teaching, but the direction of assistance was not from the CAVSS lecturer to the VET lecturer. 'When you deliver CAVSS, you spend a lot of your time asking questions and getting advice from the VET lecturer about how appropriate your own teaching strategies and materials are. You need to check with them, and take their advice about what you are doing in the classroom, not the other way around. It is the VET lecturer's classroom, and their course, and their students.'

It is quite unrealistic for literacy teachers to imagine that it is their place to tell a VET lecturer how to do any aspect of their job, and that includes developing and selecting materials. It is also unrealistic to think that a team-teaching relationship could survive that kind of intrusion. If VET lecturers do seek your advice about materials, then be aware that your response will give away your attitudes about their professional skills and knowledge in relation to yours. It will highlight the issue of respect.

The VET lecturer involved was very respectful of the other professionals (that is, the literacy teachers) he was talking to. He had to be pressed hard to respond critically to the suggestion that had been made, and would only do so in terms of his own personal, emotional reaction. He was not interested in being critical of the suggestion in terms of its appropriateness, or of the attitude of the teacher who made it.

Schoolteachers can become accustomed to being forthcoming and generous with feedback and advice. To maintain a team-teaching relationship, CAVSS teachers should practise restraint. The example above is worth following, that is, to keep in mind the likely, but less immediately obvious effects of critical advice, even when it is repeatedly sought. If you do decide that it is your legitimate role to give the advice, and that it will not affect the professional trust and respect that you and the VET lecturer have developed, then offer it in terms of your own responses, rather than as some kind of professional authority.

chapter **4**

***Team-teaching
in CAVSS***

CAVSS

Chapter 4:
Team-teaching in CAVSS

'The VET lecturers won't team-teach, so how can we deliver CAVSS?'
(A Literacy lecturer)

The answer is, of course, that if the VET lecturers won't team-teach then you simply can't deliver CAVSS. Trying to force someone to team-teach is likely to ensure that it never happens. But thinking about the reasons why VET lecturers might be wary about team-teaching is an essential activity for any literacy teacher who wants to establish a CAVSS team-teaching arrangement.

This chapter looks in detail at strategies for establishing and maintaining a CAVSS team-teaching relationship with a VET lecturer. It includes tips for setting up the arrangement, and some suggestions for solving problems that may arise. It has been pointed out that a team-teaching relationship is in some ways similar to a marriage. Both parties have to start off with similar expectations, and be prepared to put time and effort into maintaining mutual trust and respect. Communication is a vital element. And, as in marriages, no matter how much both parties want the relationship to last, sometimes things just don't work out. The similarities between marriage and the CAVSS delivery mode may end there.

Previous sections of this handbook have examined the skills, practices and attitudes that literacy teachers need, and perhaps need to change, to be accepted into the VET training environment, and effective in helping VET students with the literacy and numeracy processes involved in their course. This chapter looks at how teachers can bring those skills, practices and attitudes together to build effective team-teaching relationships with VET lecturers.

1 The CAVSS team-teaching model

The prescribed CAVSS team-teaching model is where, for the CAVSS session, the VET and CAVSS lecturers take turns to teach the whole group of students, and neither teacher is relegated to being there just to help the students who 'can't keep up.' The CAVSS team-teaching model has been described as a tag-teaching approach where each lecturer has their turn and then passes the instruction 'baton' back to the other lecturer.

The blue print for CAVSS team-teaching model

In practice, the blueprint for the CAVSS team-teaching model is as follows. The VET and literacy lecturers plan which VET competencies students will be working on and which aspects of the lesson each lecturer will focus on. The VET lecturer might start by telling the students about a particular task they need to undertake to achieve particular competencies. This could be taking place in a classroom or a workshop. While the VET lecturer is introducing the task, the CAVSS teacher might be looking through his/her materials, checking on some equipment, or doing some other task that involves preparation for his/her turn at instruction. After ten minutes or so the VET lecturer hands over to the CAVSS lecturer, who addresses the whole group of students, going

over some particular aspects of the industry task that involve the application of literacy and/or numeracy processes. This might include revising some processes, reminding students of similar literacy and numeracy processes they have applied in other activities, or teaching new processes. While the CAVSS lecturer is being the main instructor, the VET lecturer might be moving around the room, from student to student, or group to group, helping students, checking their work, and possibly interacting with the CAVSS lecturer and talking to the whole group of students as well.

According to how the two lecturers have divided the session, and decided to cover aspects of the tasks that the students are undertaking, the two lecturers might take several more turns each, with one being the main instructor, while the other lecturer moves around the rest of the group. Variations on this approach might include a more shared instruction where both lecturers address the whole group, and work with individual or smaller groups of students as needed, or where the CAVSS teacher and the VET lecturer share the role of providing individual and small group support to small groups of students undertaking more independent tasks in a workshop environment.

There are a range of variations possible on the CAVSS model, but three important principles to guide teachers in establishing those models for team-teaching.

- The first is to keep in mind that it is the VET lecturer's class, course, responsibility and choice.
- The second is that neither you nor the VET lecturer should see yourself, or be seen by the students, as the one who is there to help the students who can't keep up with the others. That is, the idea is to make the literacy support the same thing for every student, and not to single students (or a group of students) out as the ones who need 'remedial' support.
- The third principle is to remember that the prescribed CAVSS model for team-teaching is likely to take some time to reach given that it depends on the development of professional trust and mutual respect and a whole range of strategies for working collaboratively. Trying to speed up the process of developing that trust might actually prevent it from being established.

Indicators of a successful CAVSS team-teaching model

There are a number of signs that indicate that the CAVSS model is operating well, and that the two (VET and literacy) lecturers have achieved the level of communication and professional trust needed for the most effective literacy support. These signs generally indicate that both lecturers have reached a level of 'automatic' (in reality, mutually acceptable, well negotiated and well practised) strategies for interaction. They usually indicate that the two lecturers have achieved a state of being relaxed, comfortable and trusting in their public, professional interactions (that is, in front of the students) and able to focus more on building the team-teaching dynamic around the students and their activities.

Chapter 4:
Team-teaching in CAVSS

This level of teamwork might be characterised, for example, by a pattern of signals for communicating within the lesson, for signalling when changeovers should take place, for interrupting the other lecturer to make a point, or for solving problems that crop up, or needing to change tack on the spot. In short, the CAVSS team-teaching model, when it has been achieved, involves shared expectations about the levels of formality and informality, and flexibility and spontaneity that allow teachers to interact unselfconsciously, unguardedly, in front of the students, just as they would behave if they were teaching on their own.

Indeed some lecturers find that having another teacher to work with creates a total dynamic that takes the team of two lecturers much further in terms of creativity and energy, than the sum of the two parts. One CAVSS lecturer described how he and the VET lecturers often feel quite elated by the focus and energy that can be achieved in some CAVSS lessons, and when the interaction between lecturers is comfortable and trusting, and both lecturers are sparking off each other to take the students further and further into making literacy and numeracy processes really work for them in achieving the industry task they are working on.

The most important indicator that your implementation of the CAVSS team-teaching arrangement has been successful is when the other VET lecturers start demanding a CAVSS teacher. When the students are obviously benefiting from your support, and the team-teaching arrangements are working well, word spreads quickly, and no-one wants to miss out on the assistance that is available.

'You know you're doing something right when the demand grows around you and you can't keep up with requests to come into VET lecturers' classes and do some CAVSS.'
(A CAVSS teacher)

2 The reservations that VET lecturers may have about team-teaching

As discussed in the last chapter, VET lecturers' reservations about team-teaching CAVSS (see the quote above) might be summarised as follows:

- Will the CAVSS teacher know enough about industry competencies to be of any help to the students at all?
- Will the CAVSS teacher want to teach things that the students will reject as irrelevant?
- Will the CAVSS teacher want to teach things that will take time away from the time I have to teach industry competencies?
- How much choice will I retain about what is taught in my classroom, how it is taught and who teaches it?
- Will the CAVSS teacher be judging my teaching skills?
- Will the CAVSS teacher be judging my literacy and numeracy skills?
- Will the CAVSS teacher judge the students on the basis of academic skills rather than the students' industry skills?

These are all valid concerns. But it is very unlikely that any of these fears will be articulated. It is highly unlikely that a VET lecturer will say 'My students need help, and I would love to be able to get them some good specialist support. But how can I be sure that you won't look down your nose at me and my students just because we are less educated than you?' And regardless of your attitudes and knowledge, how could you respond to that question in a way that convincingly removed those doubts?

3 Steps for setting up a CAVSS team-teaching relationship

This handbook includes a wide range of information and advice, ideas, tips and suggestions based on the experiences of CAVSS teachers who have found ways to address the issues listed above, and to establish strong, effective team-teaching relationships with VET lecturers. These tips and strategies reflect the skills, knowledge and attitudes of those CAVSS teachers but, of course, there is no single recipe for establishing a team-teaching relationship. CAVSS teachers should incorporate the advice and information in this handbook, as a basis for finding their own ways to establish team-teaching relationships with each of the VET lecturers they work with.

The following section includes some very specific steps and strategies for CAVSS teachers setting out to establish the team-teaching relationships, both prior to delivering the course, and in the VET classroom or workshop. These strategies reflect important principles in achieving an effective CAVSS model, but you will need to find your own way to put them into place, reflecting your own personality and communication style, and your previous work with the VET lecturers and/or the VET students.

Chapter 4:
Team-teaching in CAVSS

Steps and strategies for establishing a team-teaching relationship in preparation for delivering CAVSS

This section includes hints and information for literacy teachers who have been assigned to deliver CAVSS and need to begin collaborating with VET lecturers to prepare for the CAVSS team-teaching delivery mode.

Presenting yourself to the VET lecturers

- Teachers who are assigned to deliver CAVSS may, or may not, already know the VET lecturer/s they will be working with. You may have worked in the same organisation for years, and crossed paths many times, or perhaps even collaborated previously to address literacy issues. In some smaller centres, the VET lecturers may be well known to you socially. On the other hand you may have never met them before.
- Keep in mind that the VET lecturers may, or may not, have had access to any clear specific information about what you are there to provide. They may not know that team-teaching is a requirement, and they may have assumed that you will be providing the traditional withdrawal model of support.
- Some tips for starting off are to leave yourself plenty of time, weeks if possible, to get to know the lecturer/s you will be working with, and to get plenty of time to talk through the CAVSS model, how it is different from the traditional approach, and obviously, to talk about the course and the students and the literacy aspects that the students struggle with.
- A pitfall to avoid is turning up to meet the VET lecturer/s, full of enthusiasm and energy, and begin to explain to them just what they will be doing during the CAVSS session. As much as you may want to, the very first meeting is the point at which you need to start demonstrating your 'fitting in, not taking over' attitude.
- You might want to take some CAVSS fliers (*Have You Heard About CAVSS Yet?*) and the *CAVSS Business Rules* and leave some information for the VET lecturers to look over. You could also arrange through the Department of Training and Workforce Development to have an experienced VET lecturer and an experienced CAVSS lecturer to visit your worksite and talk to you and the VET lecturer/s about aspects of the course. For many VET lecturers, the chance to talk through their concerns (perhaps in private) with another VET lecturer experienced in using the CAVSS model is very helpful in becoming certain about trying the model.

Becoming part of the VET team

- As you will already have read, being accepted as part of the VET team is an important factor in CAVSS team-teaching relationships. Again, this can take some time. Be patient, not pushy, keep communication happening, and show your interest in being part of the VET team by showing your interest in the VET students.
- If you can, having a desk and some storage space in the VET section is an important aspect of becoming one of the VET team. It will give you a chance to get to know the VET lecturer/s that you are working with, as well as the other lecturers in that section, and importantly for them to be able to get to know you. It also gives you a chance to soak up all sorts of information about the industry, its various sectors, products, histories and issues. It will also make it easier for you and the VET lecturers you are teaching with to arrange your preparation time, to collaborate in planning lessons, to talk over strategies and discuss the students' work. If it is impossible for you to negotiate your own space in the VET section, then you should spend as much of your preparation time there as possible, and get to know the rest of the VET team.
- It is really important that you show a genuine interest in what goes on in the VET section, and not give the impression of being someone who just turns up for the lesson and then hurries back to their 'real' colleagues. Keep in mind that the strength of your team-teaching relationship will reflect what the VET lecturers and students have recognised to be your level of commitment to them.
- Being an active learner, a student of the industry concepts and culture and crafts, will help you be accepted into the VET team. The VET lecturers will appreciate your interest in their skills and experiences, and in the industry goals and destinations of the students, and what they tell you will contribute to your knowledge of many facets of the industry, and contribute to your capacity to help the students.

Getting started learning about what you will be teaching

- The next step is to start finding out about the literacy and numeracy processes the students will be needing to learn and use, and about the industry activities that they will need to apply those processes to. This is not achieved overnight. Generally, you will be starting your own VET industry training at this point, and keep on acquiring more and more knowledge about the industry course, concepts and culture for as long as you deliver CAVSS.
- CAVSS is not a 'fly-by-night' approach to providing literacy support. Both CAVSS and VET lecturers make big personal commitments when they undertake to deliver CAVSS. The CAVSS teacher is committing themselves to a long-term learning process which includes some significant changes to teaching practices. The VET lecturer is also undertaking a long-term project in helping the literacy teacher acquire the industry skills and knowledge they need, and in undertaking a new approach to meeting the literacy and numeracy needs of their students. As well, it is likely that

Chapter 4:
Team-teaching in CAVSS

CAVSS lecturers will work with the same students more than once over those students' course of study, making a big difference to those students, and continuing their own learning process. That doesn't mean that once started you can never finish, or that if things don't work out in the team-teaching arrangement that there is no escape for either of you. It means that you should not be concerned if it takes a while to feel like you are starting to be able to be as much help to the students as you would want to be.

- The most valuable source of information about the VET course is the VET lecturer/s you will be working with. You could start by asking them about the students and the literacy and numeracy aspects of the course that they struggle with. Most VET lecturers will be very experienced in delivering the industry course and will already have a very clear idea about the literacy and numeracy demands that create barriers for students. This is a good point to start identifying what you will be teaching because talking about the students is a chance to keep your discussion in terms of not just what you will teach, but the delivery strategies that you and the VET lecturer will use.
- The other sources of information you need to be familiar with for CAVSS are the industry course content (that is, Units of Competence) and the actual teaching and assessment materials that the VET lecturer uses to deliver the industry course. Again the VET lecturer is your source for this information. The course content will give you some idea about the literacy and numeracy that students will need to be able to use, but you will need to find out from the VET lecturer how those literacy and numeracy processes are used in application to the industry training activities. Similarly, you will need to find out from the VET lecturer which training materials they are planning to use for each lesson being delivered with CAVSS, as a basis for your planning. In this preparatory stage, you and the VET lecturer should discuss arrangements for meeting each week (or regularly as appropriate), to discuss the specific industry competencies, and training materials and activities he/she is planning to use for the lesson/s that you will be team-teaching in.
- Try and be very specific in your planning, especially in the early stages of the team-teaching arrangement. Try to make arrangements for exactly which aspects of the lesson will be covered by the VET lecturer and by you. Even if these arrangements change during the lesson, both you and the VET lecturer will probably feel more confident about negotiating beforehand than trying to guess what each other wants to do during the actual lesson. In a sense, you and the VET lecturer will need to talk about how to plan, and find a level of preparation that suits you both, which may then change as you become more accustomed to teaching together. On the other hand, if you and the VET lecturer find when you start delivering the course and CAVSS, that you can change tack easily and comfortably through the lesson, negotiating on the spot according to the flow of the lesson and the students' work, then do it.

- This process of working collaboratively with the VET lecturer to identify what support students may need creates ongoing opportunities for you and the VET lecturer to get to know each other, and to get to know about each other's attitudes towards the students and to teaching in general. It is a chance for both of you to find common ground in your professional perspectives and experiences. It is a great chance for you to find out about the VET lecturer's attitudes to classroom management, levels of formality and the degree of flexibility with which they like to teach. It will be up to you to fit within these parameters, and certainly not to expect that they should change if you find that you have a very different approach to any of those issues.
- Keep in mind that when a VET lecturer agrees to deliver CAVSS (that is, if they have had a choice) that they are accepting a significant increase in their workload, especially in the first stages of working in collaboration with you. Be aware that even though the VET lecturer will be looking forward to the students having access to your help, team-teaching imposes a series of changes to their teaching and preparation practices, just as it does to yours.
- You will need to complete a CAVSS Delivery Agreement form. (See the *CAVSS Business Rules* for more information.) This form is for recording the basis of the decision to deliver CAVSS, that is, to document the specific literacy and numeracy demands that the CAVSS teacher is being employed to assist students to meet, in terms of VET content, training and assessment materials and students' skill gaps, where applicable. You will need to consult with the VET lecturer to complete this document, and it provides another opportunity to focus on aspects of your work with the students.
- You may find that your presence in the VET section increases the level of interest in, and discussion about literacy and numeracy issues, in general and in relation to VET students. Be prepared to talk about the CAVSS model, and why it requires team-teaching and the factors that make it more acceptable to the students, and therefore more effective than the traditional withdrawal approach to literacy support. Be prepared to discuss issues to do with literacy in general, and to be invited into in-depth discussions about some of the myths associated with literacy, including the whether there is a relationship between literacy and intelligence. That issue may not be articulated as such, but it is often at the heart of people's curiosity about why it is that some people don't seem to acquire all of the literacy and numeracy skills they needed during school. You may want to do some extra professional reading to help you talk about these issues and debunk some of the myths in ways that will allow you to demonstrate your recognition of the skills, talents and intelligence of the VET students.

Chapter 4:
Team-teaching in CAVSS

- You may also find that your presence in the VET section brings requests for all sorts of literacy and numeracy-related assistance, not necessarily directly related to the delivery of CAVSS. These are opportunities to demonstrate your commitment to the area, and your wide-ranging usefulness as one of the VET team, and importantly, a sign of your increasing (or achieved) acceptance. Without completely overloading yourself, be as obliging as you can. As long as the requests do not undermine the students' acceptance of you and CAVSS by associating you and your teaching to remedial support, being dumb, not being able to keep up etc, then do what you can. You may find yourself proofing students' (or lecturers') job applications, or being asked to critique some training materials, or rewriting them to be easier to read. Accept these jobs if you possibly can, because they mean that you, your skills and your contribution are being recognised and valued within the team. Keep in mind that CAVSS teaching hours may only be used for actually delivering CAVSS, so these are jobs for your teaching preparation or professional duties time. (See the *CAVSS Business Rules* for more information.)

Steps and strategies for establishing and strengthening the CAVSS team-teaching model in the VET classroom or workshop

This section includes strategies and tips for CAVSS teachers to use in the VET classroom or workshop, while they are delivering CAVSS, which will contribute to their team-teaching relationship with the VET lecturer.

- Before your first session with the students, discuss with the VET lecturer how you should be introduced to (or introduce yourself to) the students, if you have not already met them. The following suggestions might be useful, as long as the VET lecturer is happy with the approach. Put the focus on you being there to help them. Don't focus on literacy and numeracy but instead mention being able to help them with some of the tough bits of the course, including assignments or assessment, and any difficult maths or writing tasks. It sounds too obvious to mention, but don't, out of nervousness, be tempted to impress on the students how much they will need your help. Instead, you might want to tell them that you are not very knowledgeable about the industry itself, but you will be trying to learn as much as you can, as fast as you can, and would appreciate their help and the help of the VET lecturer in doing that. If you make a statement like that, acknowledging your lack of authority, but sounding positive and confident about being able to help them, you are likely to overcome any wariness or concerns the students may have about you. You will be, in a sense, stating your intent in terms of your status in the classroom as one of being a very useful, very obliging, co-learner.

- What you do in your first lessons with a VET class is up to the VET lecturer and his/her readiness to try the tag-teaching approach where you take it in turns to be the main instructor. It will also depend on how ready you feel in terms of being able to speak at least some of the industry language to take the class. Again, this should be talked through and agreed upon before the lesson. You might want to start off by limiting your instruction to revising some literacy or numeracy processes, or perhaps assisting students to work their way through some training materials in which the way the information is written, rather than the complexity of the industry concepts within it, make it difficult. One CAVSS lecturer spent his first lesson helping students work through a test where the wording of each question, rather than the content of the question, made it difficult for students. By the end of the lesson, the students were eager to get his assistance, beckoning him from one desk to another to check their answers (again, for clarity rather than industry content). This was a great result in terms of his acceptance by all the students and being seen as being there to assist all the students.
- One of the difficult aspects of team-teaching is feeling like you are being 'observed' by the other teacher, or that what you are saying to the students is being judged. It can take some time for you and the VET lecturer to become comfortable having another teacher in the room while they are instructing the students. Be aware of this, and watch for signals from the VET lecturer that you can use to position yourself more, or less visibly in the room. The VET lecturer's body language, not making eye contact, or not looking at you may well be a way of focussing on the students and not being distracted by your presence. Be sensitive to these signals and try to find ways to manage your physical presence at different times of the lesson. That might include knowing when to move around between the students, when to watch the VET lecturer and when to busy yourself with other activities, how to approach the VET lecturer during their part of the delivery, and how to find an unobtrusive place to sit still for some activities, etc.
- You and the VET lecturer will probably end up with a set of signals and patterns of interacting in front of the students, to suggest new ideas, or do some on-the-spot planning, or solve a problem that has arisen. This is a good sign in terms of developing your own communication system, and probably indicates increasing mutual confidence in the team-teaching model.
- Conflict between the VET lecturer and students can be difficult to handle when you are team-teaching. You will need to try and find a physical place in the classroom where you can step out of the dynamic and be seen to be neutral by the students. You should try to position yourself with the students rather than at the front (that is, the instructor's usual position) in the classroom, and perhaps busy yourself with some of the students while the conflict is taking place. You have plenty of opportunities to debrief with the VET lecturer later on rather than in front of the students, and it is

Chapter 4:
Team-teaching in CAVSS

important that the students understand that the conflict with the VET lecturer does not automatically mean conflict with you. This is a very difficult situation. In a sense, the team-teaching methodology is effective because of the intensity of support and assistance from not one but two lecturers working in unison. If students are faced with lecturers who appear to be united in conflict with one or more students, then that is a very powerful negative dynamic, likely to cause long-term damage to the students' acceptance of the team-teaching model.

- Being a learner is the single most important strategy for establishing and maintaining the CAVSS team-teaching model. Being a learner is a way of acquiring the knowledge about the industry language, concepts and culture that you need. It is also a way for you to legitimately distance yourself from being perceived as a 'literacy expert' or a 'schoolteacher' and to enter into a position of not being the expert, and quite genuinely needing the support of the VET students and lecturer. Being a learner is a means for you to acknowledge, by your interest, the legitimacy and value of industry concepts and activities, and to prove that you are not one of those teachers who only value 'academic' skills. And it is a way of positioning yourself as someone who is busy listening and taking notice for the purpose of learning, and therefore not watching in silent judgement. Your genuine focus on learning about the industry competencies is likely to make the VET lecturer more confident that you are aware that industry outcomes are the only ones being sought, and that you are not about to impose extra, non-industry activities or values. All of these factors will contribute to the development of a strong, mutually satisfying and effective team-teaching relationship.

'The secret to being a successful CAVSS teacher is to be a learner. And that means learning from the VET students and the VET lecturer. That doesn't mean pretending to be a learner, and it doesn't mean surreptitiously learning while you pretend that you already know everything. It means being a very active, deliberate, overt learner, asking questions, taking notice, listening and learning.' (An experienced CAVSS teacher)

- Again, keep in mind that it may take some time for you and the VET lecturer to establish the prescribed CAVSS team-teaching model. As one CAVSS teacher put it, 'I have a different team-teaching relationship with every lecturer I work with.' Some VET lecturers will take longer than others to get to the point of trusting you, and your industry knowledge. Some VET lecturers will take some time to get used to the idea that the traditional option of withdrawing students is not part of CAVSS delivery. Some might use you as a Trades Assistant, or a 'gopher' (go for this, go for that), and may take some time to recognise your capacity to help the students. As a rule, it is best to be patient and work with these slight variations on the model, looking for opportunities to use the prescribed model more and more frequently until it becomes established as what CAVSS is.
- Be very wary of allowing yourself to be associated just with the students who have the most limited skills, or who cannot keep up with the others. Some variations on the CAVSS model are to do with slowly and gently establishing professional trust between you and the VET lecturer, and are therefore unlikely to cause any problems. But be aware that variations that associate CAVSS with remedial support, or students who can't keep up with the others is likely to severely damage the effectiveness of the model. If students see you as someone who is there to help the 'dumb' ones, then they will not welcome your support. This is unlikely to happen if you are teaching the whole group, but could easily happen if you always seem to be focussing on the students having the most trouble with aspects of their course. This is something to talk over with the VET lecturer who might be unaware of the extent to which you and the literacy support you provide have become accepted as a normal part of the course by the students.

4 Some difficult situations

The following questions describe some tricky situations that you may find yourself in, and some suggestions for applying strategies to address them, and maintain the CAVSS model.

- *Two of the VET lecturers I have started teaching with bailed me up after the first few lessons, demanding to know what I thought of their teaching skills. How do I handle that?*

At least one aspect of what they were asking may well have been aimed at finding out if you had made a judgement about their skills, even though they were probably also very self-conscious and seeking assurance that they do know how to teach. Unless you actually made a judgement about their teaching skills, you will be unable to answer their questions, and that is what you need to tell them, that assessing their teaching skills is not your job and not what you do. You were much too busy taking in everything you need to know and focussing on the students to be focussing on their teaching. And that should be the truth.

Chapter 4:
Team-teaching in CAVSS

One CAVSS lecturer was repeatedly asked for such feedback by a VET lecturer. This VET lecturer seemed very nervous about having to teach in front of the CAVSS lecturer and seemed to genuinely want some feedback. The CAVSS lecturer said that he let the VET lecturer ask him a number of times over several CAVSS sessions before saying 'Look, when I'm teaching with you I'm too focussed on what I'm doing with the students to watch you and decide what I think about your teaching. What I have noticed is that the students look forward to coming into your classes, and seem really interested and motivated while they are in there, so you must be doing something right.'

The CAVSS lecturer involved had not been evaluating the VET lecturer's performance, but he had genuinely noticed how positive the students' responses were. So, reluctantly, he offered up what he noticed about those students' responses, which is very different from offering a judgement about the lecturer's practices, good or bad.

- *CAVSS is going well, and I have a good team-teaching relationship with several VET lecturers. Recently they asked me if I would set up a special tutorial group for some students who are having trouble passing their competencies. They've tried these tutorials before and the students never turn up more than once, but they want me to give it a go because they know I have a good rapport with the students. It won't be team-teaching, but it will be literacy and numeracy support. What should I do?*

You should think very carefully about why it is that you share a good rapport with the students, and how the students will react to you once you become known as the teacher who is there to help the 'dumbies', and the 'losers'.

As one VET lecturer described, students singled out because of their lack of skills, are likely to be 'shredded to the bone' by the others. CAVSS works because the literacy support is made a normal part of VET delivery and students are not singled out as needing help.

So as well as not meeting the CAVSS Accreditation requirements because it is not team-teaching, the strategy being suggested is very likely to undermine the acceptance and rapport that you have established with all of the VET students you work with.

Don't do it. Talk to the VET lecturers and describe the issues, and try to find an alternative approach to addressing the problem that will not jeopardise your acceptance by the students you deliver CAVSS to.

- *My manager wants me to promote CAVSS in my campus. I have gone and talked to some of the VET lecturers in another section, and they seem really interested in the approach but haven't actually invited me to start team-teaching with them yet.*

Keep in mind that no matter how enthusiastic and genuine you are about promoting CAVSS, as a literacy teacher you will have limited credibility among VET lecturers who have not had a chance to get to know you and see how well students respond to your support. If you do want to promote CAVSS, think about ways of getting the VET lecturers that you work with involved in the activity. You could, for example, organise

some informal, morning tea meetings where the VET lecturers you work with could go and talk to the other VET lecturers about CAVSS, and how it works.

- *I am one of four literacy teachers in my college who has heard about the CAVSS model and is really keen to get going with it. But the VET lecturers we have spoken to seem very reluctant to give it a go, even though they seem aware of the problems that some of their students have.*

CAVSS involves a significant shift in the traditional ways that training providers have thought about literacy as an issue for their students and their training outcomes. As well, the team-teaching model involved in CAVSS presents major change in delivery strategies for most lecturers. CAVSS has been most successful in training organisations where literacy and VET lecturers and other staff have been involved in an ongoing dialogue about literacy as an issue for VET students and possible strategies for addressing the issue. Sometimes this dialogue has involved just a couple of lecturers, and sometimes it has been the focus of Framing the Future and other professional development projects involving a larger group. It seems that that dialogue is an important first step in finding a starting point for delivering CAVSS. It takes just one VET lecturer and one literacy lecturer who are both willing to give team-teaching a try, to start CAVSS. If those lecturers can successfully establish the team-teaching model, it is very likely that others will want to try it out themselves.

The Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development can provide a range of promotional and training materials and products for providers interested in starting the dialogue about literacy in their organisation, or for getting started delivering CAVSS. See the beginning of this document for contact details.

5 Advice from the experts

The CAVSS Professional Development Advisory Group (CAVSS PDAG) is a committee made up of literacy and VET lecturers who have had successful experience in implementing CAVSS. They have found solutions to the challenges involved and have accumulated a body of knowledge and strategies for establishing the model.

If you have particular questions about implementing CAVSS, or have encountered a problem in some aspect of delivering the course or establishing the team-teaching model, and would like some practical advice and support, please contact the Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development to be put in contact with a CAVSS PDAG member. See the beginning of this document for contact details.

Bibliography

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007) *2006 Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, Summary Results*. Canberra: AGPS

Black, S. (2002) *Whose Economic Well-being?: A challenge to the dominant discourses on the relationship between literacy and numeracy skill and (un)employment*. Adult Literacy and Numeracy Australian Research Consortium:

<http://www.staff.vu.edu.au/alnarc/onlineforum/AL_pap_black.htm>

Cumming, J.J., Wyatt-Smith, C.M., Ryan, J. and Doig, S.M. (1998) *The Literacy-Curriculum Interface: The literacy demands of the curriculum in post-compulsory schooling (Final report)*. Canberra: Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

Fairclough, N. (1989) *Language and Power*. London: Longman.

Freebody, P., Ludwig, C. and Gunn, S. (1995) *Everyday Literacy Practices In and Out of Schools in Low Socio-Economic Urban Communities*. Canberra: Department of Employment, Education and Training.

Gee, J.P. (1990) *Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in discourses*. London: Falmer.

Gee, J.P. (1992) *The Social Mind: Language, ideology and social practice*. New York: Bergin and Garvey.

Gee, J.P., Hull, G. and Lankshear, C. (1996) *The New Work Order: Behind the language of the new capitalism*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Hodge, R. and Kress, G. (1993) *Language as Ideology*. London: Routledge.

Kress, G. (1985) *Linguistic Processes in Socio-Cultural Practice*. Deakin University: Deakin University Press.

Macrae, C. (1999) *Literacy and Community Education* The Scottish Executive:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/scotlit/paper1_.htm>

McGuirk, J. (2001) *Adult Literacy and Numeracy Practices 2001: A national snapshot*. Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs.