



# Implementing literacy and numeracy support for students enrolled in VET courses

*Sarah Howe TasTAFE Oct. 2013*

## *Who are we? (And who am I?)*

- TAFE L&N teachers
- TAFE VET teachers or other TAFE staff
- University
- Adult and Community education
- Research
- Others?
- Where are we from?
  - TAS
  - WA (anyone from CAVSS team?)
  - NT
  - SA
  - ACT
  - Qld
  - Vic
  - NSW
  - Overseas?
- Feel free to jump in with questions/comments/discussions as we go – this can be quite a free-form discussion if we want

# *Models of Literacy and Numeracy support in VET*

## **'DEFICIT MODEL'**

- Students access L&N support based on a lack, or identified need. Based on 'fixing' a problem
- Usually through initial assessment

## **'VOCATIONAL SOCIALISATION MODEL'**

- Need is based on the L&N requirements of the industry or vocation
- No initial assessments – all students are expected to require 'induction' to industry specific L&N requirements to some extent
- (Black & Yasukawa, 2011)

# *Models of Literacy and Numeracy support in Tasmania*

- ‘Embedded’ L&N using the **Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVSS)**
- One-to-one tutoring, small study groups (Individual Learning Plan)
- Combination in-class with study group (also, the unscheduled ‘drop-ins’)
- ‘Bridging’ courses e.g. ICHAPS , Return To Study
- Cert. I courses (North only), run by Foundations teams, ‘side-by-side’ (2 days VET, 1 day contextualised L&N)
- Trade contextualised L&N courses e.g. car detailing, Access to Trades
- Front-end loading (e.g. EN)
- Stand-alone L&N classes
- PD for VET teachers (e.g. LLN unit from TAE – this is becoming

- Does anyone have any models they would like to share?

# What is CAVSS?

- “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 at the same place at the same time.” (Teacher’s Handbook, p.iv)
- “the vocational and CAVSS lecturers collaborate in planning the vocational course delivery and identify the aspects of the VET course and its delivery which are likely to need literacy support” (Business Rules Course Accreditation document, p.57)
- It’s about not singling people out
- Not being seen as ‘remedial’
- It’s a normal part of the course – just another teacher

# Team teaching in CAVSS – what does it mean?

- “Team-teaching involves the CAVSS lecturer and the VET lecturer taking turns to teach the whole group. Both lecturers are responsible for teaching all the students, and neither teacher is relegated to working with the ‘ones who aren’t keeping up’.” (Getting Started, p19)
- In reality it means different things in different contexts – note the language used in the official documents; ‘lecturer’
- Construction and other trade numeracy vs. Construction/trade practical applications and literacy
- Teaching Assistant literacy and numeracy

# When CAVSS works

- Building a good **relationship** between L&N and VET teachers
- Plenty time for joint planning
- **Relationship** between L&N teacher and VET students
- Clear understanding of how to use each teacher's expertise to deliver certain aspects of the course – a certain amount of equality
- CAVSS teacher is/feels part of the VET team (location, breaks etc.)
- When introduced to students during induction process as normal part of the course

# When CAVSS doesn't work

- CAVSS seems to be held up as 'best practice', but....
- Bad relationships
- Poor communication – limited understanding of the model, and roles
- When CAVSS / team teaching is forced on VET teacher
- When there are students that really do have major gaps in the L&N skills required – yes, back to the 'deficit model'
- Misunderstandings or different perceptions of what you are there for – e.g. when the VET teacher announces you are there to help people having literacy problems
- Literacy as a social practice vs. 'nuts and bolts' (grammar, spelling)



# Flexibility and alternatives

- CAVSS is generally our first preference
- Sometimes a creative approach is needed – it's about the intention and CAVSS philosophy
- Sometimes other options need to be implemented

# Summary

- What is MY L&N support philosophy?
- Do what it takes to help the students
- What is helping students? Help them 'pass' by spoon-feeding/ doing everything for them? Helping them get a job? Helping them learn for themselves?
- Do what it takes to help the VET teacher
- Do what it takes to help me too!

# Questions? Comments?

# CAVSS rules for discussion

According to the CAVSS Business Rules and other documentation;

- At least 90% of CAVSS delivery **MUST** be team-teaching. Other 10% must still be face-to-face
- “It is not acceptable to look for opportunities to ‘extend’ students’ skills” (Getting Started, p15)
- “CAVSS is **not** to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of students, **nor** to raise awareness of how important literacy is in the workplace, **nor** is it to convince VET training staff how important literacy is in the training environment” (Getting Started, p16)
- It is a requirement of registration to deliver CAVSS that training providers access Professional Development in CAVSS as recommended and delivered by the WA Department of Training (Getting Started, p18)

# CAVSS rules for discussion

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Both lecturers are responsible for teaching all the students, and neither teacher is relegated to working with the ‘ones who aren’t keeping up’.” (Getting Started, p19)

“CAVSS won’t work if the literacy/numeracy or VET lecturers have not been able to freely choose whether or not to be involved in a course that required team-teaching, and it won’t work if the CAVSS lecturer does not have the right skills, attitudes and qualifications to be of use to the VET students.” (Getting Started, p21)

“Any RTO delivering initial and/or end of course assessments for CAVSS would be in breach of the Accreditation requirements”. (Getting Started, p23)

# CAVSS rules for discussion

- 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”. (Teacher’s Handbook, p34)
- “If you do decide to explain CAVSS to students, you should probably avoid references to literacy or numeracy” (p22 Getting Started)

# CAVSS rules for discussion

- The CAVSS may not be delivered using any of the teaching options listed below
- withdrawing students from scheduled vocational training sessions
- scheduling separate tutorial sessions to deliver the course
- ‘in-class withdrawal’ team-teaching arrangements where one lecturer is relegated to providing ‘in-class’ remedial support to individual students identified as needing the most literacy support, while the rest of the group continue with the regular training activities
- non-face-to-face delivery modes. CAVSS is not suitable for delivery as text-based, distance or online delivery.

(Business Rules Course Accreditation document, p.57)

# References

- Black, S. & Yasukawa, K. (2011). Working Together: Integrated Language, Literacy and Numeracy Support in Vocational Education and Training.

<http://www.rilc.uts.edu.au/projects/working-together.html>