

## Quick facts

- With a population of 234,023<sup>4</sup> in Vanuatu, skills development is vital for economic growth, as well as a way to alleviate poverty, empower young people and women, and enable social inclusion.
- APTC has assisted VIT to build the capacity of its management and staff and enhance the delivery of programs to meet industry requirements and provide pathways to higher-level qualifications.
- APTC and VIT share the VIT campus in Port Vila, which provides facilities for the joint delivery and development of education and training programs.
- The establishment of the Vanuatu Qualifications Authority (previously the Vanuatu National Training Council) has supported development of the TVET sector in the country.
- In 2013 APTC and VIT collaborated to develop a model for the implementation of a quality education and training delivery system for VIT that would make the best use of the available resources.

This collaboration included a quality coaching model and policies that enabled VIT to make a submission to VQA for RTP status in 2014.

- The APTC-VIT model for implementing a quality education and training delivery system resulted in the TVET Sector Strengthening Program (TVET SSP) - an Australian Aid Program supporting provincial TVET sector development - funding a full-time quality coach through the VQA to work with training providers across Vanuatu.
- A key aspect of the APTC-VIT partnership is the focus on offering pathways for students who are enrolled at the Certificate II levels at VIT to progress towards higher level certification.
- The Vanuatu government's Education Master Plan 2000-2010 specifically mentions the importance of partnerships in achieving the country's goals relating to education.

<sup>4</sup> Recorded in the 2009 census



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

# Sustainable Delivery



**APTC**  
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TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
CREATING SKILLS FOR LIFE

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# Strong partnerships promote a sustainable future

*A partnership between Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) and Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT) is effectively promoting Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the region, and is an important step towards strengthening the relationship between APTC and other regional TVET institutions.*

The role of TVET in developing the skills to improve productivity, employment opportunities and raise income levels is widely recognised. With a population of 234,023<sup>1</sup> in Vanuatu, skills development is vital for economic growth as well as a way to alleviate poverty, empower young people and women, and enable social inclusion.

Supporting skills development in the Pacific in response to labour market demands has strengthened the relationships between APTC and other educational and vocational institutions in the region.

One such relationship is between APTC and VIT who formed a partnership in 2007. Seen as an effective way to boost vocational education in Vanuatu, these two institutions are now sharing the VIT campus in Port Vila, which provides facilities for the joint delivery and development of programs to achieve effective educational and training pathways and standards.

According to Kathryn Gray, APTC Country Manager in Vanuatu, the relationship between APTC and VIT has had a positive impact on the VIT community. Kathryn manages the day-to-day operations of the campus, including delivery of programs, staffing, resourcing, finance, and training and business partnerships.

“The biggest challenge is for training providers to deliver quality training that meets industry and national standards and provides the best opportunity for their students to gain employment,” Kathryn says.

Kathryn also believes that while TVET is recognised as key to providing students with trade and work skills, higher-level qualifications are still an important objective. To this end, APTC provides a pathway for VIT students to pursue higher-level education qualifications.

“This also builds the capacity of training recipients to support development of their own communities, families and nations,” says Kathryn.

APTC is also assisting VIT to build the capacity of its management and staff to enhance the delivery of programs to meet industry requirements and provide pathways to higher-level qualifications.

VIT trainers now have the opportunity to participate in Australian-standard training at APTC, including the Australian Certificate III level in a range of industry areas as well as trainer development through the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Tama Olsen, Head of Department for the VIT Hospitality and Tourism School, completed both the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and Diploma in Management with APTC. He acknowledges that the higher-level of TVET education he has received through APTC has allowed him to raise the standard of his teaching role as a trainer and move into a managerial role.

“The two institutions have developed programs that complement the Educational Master Plan of this country,” says Tama.

“The partnership is exactly what the country has been aiming for to address the need of human resource development, particularly as the two institutions are now putting the Vanuatu TVET system into place.”

For Tama, the partnership has allowed him to progress from restaurant waiter to supervisor and restaurant trainer to a head of department. This is real evidence of the success of the pathway and capacity development approach implemented through the VIT-APTC partnership.

Kevin Tabi, who was previously employed as a tourism trainer at VIT, is now a qualified national tourism trainer for APTC after completing training as part of APTC’s tutor development program.

Kevin completed both the Certificate III in Tourism and the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. In his role he provides continuous coaching to VIT trainers as well as reviewing their delivery program. He has also supported the review of VIT’s current units of competencies to ensure that students have a clear pathway to continue studying with APTC at a Certificate III level or higher.

Julia King is also an APTC Certificate III Tourism graduate and former student of Kevin’s. She is currently the Sales and Marketing Manager at Evergreen Tours in Port Vila. Julia believes that industry-based training is very important and a benefit of the APTC style of training.

“The very important thing that made the training with APTC enjoyable was that it was designed for those already in the industry, so it allowed for students to approach both their studies and profession with an improved work ethic,” says Julia.

The TVET sector in Vanuatu is moving into a more mature place, according to Kathryn, with TVET now widely recognised as a respectable, reliable alternative to university education to provide much-needed work skills. The establishment of the Vanuatu Qualifications Authority (VQA) is also supporting TVET development in the country.

The VIT-APTC partnership also ensures that graduates attain the skills that meet industry and national standards, increasing their employability across various industries - both within Vanuatu and elsewhere in the region.

<sup>1</sup> Republic of Vanuatu, Education Master Plan 2000-2010



Kevin Tabi with Certificate III Tourism students during a familiarisation in May, 2014



Kathryn Gray - APTC Campus Manager, Vanuatu with Kalbeo Kalpat – VIT Principal

## Recognition as a registered training provider

In 2013 VIT approached APTC to assist them in achieving registered training provider (RTP) status from the Vanuatu Qualifications Authority (VQA). VIT recognised that this status was important to meet the needs of their students and ensure delivery of a quality education and training system.

As a result, APTC and VIT collaborated to develop a model for the implementation of a quality education and training system that would make the best use of the available resources.

This collaboration included a quality coaching model and policies that enabled VIT to make a submission to VQA for RTP status in 2014.

Kathryn Gray, APTC Country Manager in Vanuatu, states that VIT required this long term approach to ensure sustainability of the system.

Although VQA is yet to provide a final decision, there has been broad recognition of the success of the model to support training providers to build their own quality systems. VIT is looking to employ a quality manager who will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the system.

The model was well received by the Vanuatu Ministry of Education and resulted in the TVET Sector Strengthening Program (TVET SSP) - an Australian Government program supporting provincial TVET development - funding a full-time quality coach through the VQA to work with training providers across Vanuatu. The program is now underway and incorporates quality system and policy development training and coaching for a range of training providers.

According to a strategic review of phase 2 of the TVET SSP, it was suggested that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) could maximise value and long-term sustainability through TVET SSP, by offering APTC’s training partners (which included VIT at the time) the opportunity to participate in a “confidential, voluntary and non-competitive benchmarking exercise with a small number of comparable Australian RTOs (registered training organisations) or New Zealand accredited training providers”.

This benchmarking exercise developed indicators that were comparable to the standards in these countries, with a focus on management, financial efficiency and teaching quality.

Kalbeo Kalpat, VIT Principal was a great supporter of the benchmarking exercise and saw value in benchmarking VIT’s performance regionally to identify areas where additional effort was needed to progressively raise training delivery and management standards.

According to the strategic review, individual demand for VIT places currently exceeds supply. The VIT-APTC partnership has also facilitated an increase in the number of skilled local trainers to allow VIT to increase its capacity to cater for this growing demand

<sup>2</sup> Vanuatu Technical Vocational Education and Training Sector Strengthening Program (Phase 2) – Strategic Review, June 2010

## Pathways for continued learning

A key aspect of the APTC-VIT partnership is the focus on offering pathways for students who are enrolled at the Certificate II levels at VIT to progress towards higher-level certification. This provides VIT students with more options for careers that are relevant to their respective workforce and industry.

The TVET sector in the Pacific is relatively underdeveloped and TVET study is not given the same significance as traditional higher education in universities. These perceptions of TVET are compounded by the lack of support for TVET by local government and problems with accreditation and standardisation of higher-level education and training by national TVET institutions.

Kevin Tabi is a graduate of the APTC Certificate III in Tourism and the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and one of APTC’s first national trainers in Vanuatu. Kevin graduated from VIT and also worked there as a trainer.

Kevin acknowledges that the APTC-VIT partnership has created new pathways for both himself and his students.

Kevin’s progress to become a trainer means that his training delivery is benchmarked against similar Australian institutions. For APTC-VIT graduates who have studied under Kevin, their certification is recognised as a prerequisite for further study so they can progress to higher-level TVET education.

Kevin sees the importance of the APTC-VIT partnership in his everyday work.

“It has been vital from the beginning to have APTC work alongside VIT in the development and implementation of programs,” says Kevin.

“There has been a lot of work done by APTC in reviewing VIT’s current units of competencies in each stream to align their students to have better pathways to continue with the Certificate III level or higher at APTC.”

<sup>3</sup> The Asian Development Bank and Pacific Islands Forum joint study, ‘Skilling the Pacific’, identified the need for strategic investment and regional intervention in TVET in the Pacific.