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17. VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Using Outdoor Education as a Lens

The only real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes. (Marcel Proust, 1871–1922)

INTRODUCTION

Outdoor education is a broad field informed by several different learning theories and psychological perspectives. The psychological perspectives include, but are not limited to, behaviourism, humanism and cognitive development. Among the learning theories that influence the outdoor education field are constructivism, which includes Vygotsky's work, Dewey's experiential learning theories, and Bandura's social cognitive theory (Merriam & Caffarella, 2001; Propst & Koesler, 1998). Outdoor education encompasses a broad spectrum of practice and definitions are at times contested according to Barnes (2006). However, many practitioners (Barnes, 2006; Higgins, 2009; Priest, 1999) agree that outdoor education is a process that uses experiential education and the learning takes place primarily in a natural environment. In much outdoor education practice, emphasis is placed on relationships between the self, others and the natural world (Priest, 1999; Ritman, 1993). Outdoor education students may typically participate in an activity that is non-mechanised and self-propelled. In Australia, activities often include bushwalking, climbing, canoeing, cycling, high ropes, rafting and skiing (Lovell, 2013). Outdoor education programmes such as The Outdoor Experience (Holmes, 1998) and Outward Bound (Dickson & Herbert, 2005) frequently involve travelling through and living in natural environments from periods of hours to several weeks.

Outdoor educators require complex skills and knowledge in order to work effectively in the field of outdoor education (Martin, 1998; Priest & Gass, 2005). Typically a person is required to demonstrate ability in several outdoor or journey based travel skills: the capability to manage a group of students out in 'the bush' (Australian slang for being in wild or remote places), crags or rivers; the capacity to teach these same skills; and be able to educate students across multiple disciplines. For example, much outdoor education curriculum focuses on psychosocial elements of human/nature relationships, as well as inter and intra-personal relationships (see for example Martin, 1996, 1999, 2004). Sometimes these foci are the backdrop to naturalist study, or perhaps technical skill

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development in a particular pursuit (see for example Stewart, 2008; Thomas, 2005). Allison and Pomeroy (2000) and Higgins (2009) have argued that the complexity of outdoor education teaching requires staff with expertise in outdoor education epistemology, critical pedagogy, and significant ‘know how’ or vocational orientation.

According to Grubb and Lazerson (2005), the workplace expects graduates to be work ready, implying that tertiary education should be vocational in comparison to higher education curricula with its traditionally more liberal approaches to learning. This nexus or meeting point deserves critical assessment. Breunig (2005) has highlighted the intersection of experiential education and critical pedagogy, calling for a more critically informed praxis through which to reflect on our educative practises. It is from this position that I propose outdoor education as an ideal lens through which to examine the intersection of vocational training and higher education, and offer comment on whether outdoor education learning for higher education students is relevant and authoritative. Student perspectives of an embedded vocational training course within an outdoor education higher education subject can offer insights into this meeting point of educational approaches. In the following case study, I sought to identify, record and analyse students’ reflective thinking about their experiences in the outdoor learning context. Three themes emerged as students reported the following:

- They found merit in a collaborative approach to the delivery of both vocational and higher education curriculum;
- They felt better prepared to enter the workplace; and
- The separation of vocational training and higher education is an arbitrary construct.

The theoretical background for the investigation that follows provides a context for the study.

VOCATIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND INTELLECTUAL KNOWLEDGE

Western civilisation has elevated certain types of knowledge over the course of its history. Hager (1998) wrote, “from the Greeks we have inherited the notion that knowledge is represented by universal necessary truth, i.e. truth that is purged of emotional or practical considerations” (p. 522). Pardy and Seddon (2011) maintained that the pursuit of objective truth has been elevated against, and separated from, practice and emotion. As a result, they claim, western culture has afforded higher value to mental/mind work and in turn given less value to knowledge that is embedded in a person’s practice of their craft, creativity, unique problem solving attributes and the hands on skill to perform a task.

In his seminal work, Ryle (1949) described two ways of thinking about vocational and intellectual knowledge. He articulated that people typically have two ways of knowing about something as they participate and interact in the work force: ‘knowing that’ and ‘knowing how’. Stolz (2013), has described ‘knowing that’ as being associated with mental and intellectual learning, and ‘knowing how’ as the practical knowledge of how to do something, where “performance is just a

matter of conditioning or habit” (p. 2). However, Winch (2009) argued that Ryle’s construct is an artificial separation and that there is an intelligence embodied in the practice of doing the job and hence within the ‘knowing how’. He wrote that in the performance of every physical skill there is an “underlying mental intentional action” (p. 90). Kemmis (2005) argued that a way of thinking comes through the practice of one’s craft, which he refers to as a ‘knowing practice’. That when a craftsperson (a skilled practitioner) is undertaking their work they are undertaking more than just doing, the habitual or routine work, ‘the knowing how’ of getting the job done. Pardy and Seddon (2011) concur with Kemmis (2005) as they discuss a similar concept to ‘knowing practice’. They also argue that the mastery or performance of a skill as performed by a craftsperson has an intelligence embedded within it, which they refer to as ‘an intelligence of practice’. Adding to this Stolz (2013) highlighted the interaction between ‘knowing that’ and ‘knowing how’ and the intelligence of practice visible as we observe a skilled practitioner. He maintained that our judgement of whether someone is masterful at a particular skill will depend on how smooth and effortless, even graceful, the enacting of the skill appears and whether it aligns to what we believe we know (both ‘knowing that’ and ‘knowing how’) to be good about that skill. Hence, the craftsperson is not judged only on their articulation of how the skill is performed or the biomechanics of the performance, but on an aesthetic of how well the task is completed.

A person becomes masterful in their profession, over an extended period of time. However, it is not only time that is required, but also mindful thinking and reflection of practice, both on an individual level and within a community of practice. Pardy and Seddon (2011) viewed this mindfulness of practice as creating knowledge that is not repetitive or mindless work, but developmental, resulting in knowledge that is practical, intelligent and an example of higher order thinking. It is from this position that they articulate that the separation of knowledge is an artificial construct and therefore the rigid separation of tertiary and vocational education is neither warranted nor useful. Germany’s tertiary education practice, for example, does not separate vocational orientation and higher education. According to Winch (2009), Germany utilises a framework where “the underlying concept is the theory of ‘complete action’, that includes planning, executing, controlling as opposed to just executing” (p. 100). A model such as this blends both the ‘[knowing how’ and the ‘knowing that’ into a more holistic approach to tertiary education. The blended approaches described by Winch (2009), and advocated by Pardy and Seddon (2011), provide an important reference point for the case study discussed in this chapter, in the context of outdoor education practice.

THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In order to understand the significance of this study and its implications for future practice, a case study approach was utilised. Van Maanen (1995, 1996, 1999) has written extensively on voice and representation, and the role of the case study in ethnographic research. He highlighted the role and relevance of experiential

learning in practise because it can bridge the gap between the theoretical ('knowing that') and real world ('knowing how') by portraying real people and their perceptions of their experiences. Added to this Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) maintained that case studies are useful in allowing us to see things from different perspectives, and hence consider "different ways of seeing as new ways of knowing" (p. 290). Just as the French philosophy Proust wrote in the 19th century that discovery is about seeing things with new eyes, it is the viewing of new perspectives of education delivery that is important for this research.

During the winter of 2013, students undertaking their third and final year of a Bachelor of Outdoor Education at Latrobe University, Bendigo Australia, participated in a subject where both a vocational and a higher education curriculum were concurrently used throughout the semester. In this study there were seven participants, comprising four males and three females aged between 21 and 30. All student names have been changed. The depth and richness of responses that can be gained from this case study approach compensates somewhat for the small sample size.

The aim of the subject is to critically examine the recreational, cultural and environmental features of the winter environments at Kosciuszko National Park in the context of outdoor education and nature tourism. The subject examines use and management of the National Park particularly in winter and the relationships with the various stakeholders and lease holders operating in the Park as it relates to the snow skiing industry. The aim of the ten day field trip is to integrate the readings and theory with practical experiences where the students can see the interplay of relationships between the various stakeholders by exploring three different uses of the winter alpine environment through cross country skiing in the National Park.

The university subject in which the students participated, consists of several parts:

- Four one-hour lectures.
- A ten day trip with two phases. The first phase is a four-day self-supported cross-country ski tour in Kosciuszko National Park. This higher education phase of the subject involved a ski tour, which students carry all of their equipment, tent, stove, sleeping bag, food etc and demonstrate that they can be independent and self-reliant in a winter alpine environment for the duration of the tour. The second phase consists of a competency-based programme, where La Trobe University staff, under a licence agreement with the Australian Professional Snowsports Instructor (APSI) Scheme delivers the three-day APSI Level 1 Nordic Ski Instructor qualification during the field trip in Kosciuszko National Park. APSI is Australia's peak body for all aspects of snow sport instruction and assessment, including alpine, nordic and telemark skiing, and snowboarding.
- Assessment. This includes an assignment, a class presentation, submission of lesson plans and a one day APSI on-snow assessment of teaching and skiing skills.

During the semester one 2013 offering of the subject, students were invited to be research partners in a collaborative effort with their lecturer. This strategy parallels Steinberg and Kincheloe's (1998) view, that engaging students as researchers enhances deeper learning as they participate in the discovery of new knowledge.

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Students cease being consumers of knowledge and, instead, become observers of their own learning. Asking questions of what they observe then assists them in the process of constructing knowledge. As new researchers the students have started on the journey of reflective practice, which is a key component to become intentional in an individual's practice of the craft and vocation. To highlight this critical observation role, focus groups were utilised before, during and after the field trips in order to draw out the students' ways of seeing and knowing. Students kept a reflective journal in which they were asked to comment on their experiences during both the focus groups and the practical trips. The students' journals were collected after the practical trips. As a means of supporting the students' learning and participation in this process, a number of readings related to contemporary issues of workplace training, and vocational and higher education, were made available. The readings (Hager 2000; Hager & Laurent, 1990; Maclean & Pavlova, 2011; Symes, 2000; Pardy & Seddon, 2011) were chosen in part to facilitate student knowledge and engagement in the observation and reflection aspects of the study. Structured questions were distributed in order to guide student reflection on their learning experiences. The questions were:

1. Why is it useful/not useful to have a vocational learning model in this subject?
2. We tend to use a prescriptive learning model, 'follow these steps and you will get your qualification'. How did this influence your learning? Positive and/or negative?
3. How does this vocational training experience help to develop your instructional practice?
4. In what ways is this combination of vocational training and higher education different to other subjects you have studied at university?
5. How is the Australian Professional Snowsport Instructor scheme trying to shape you as an instructor?
6. How has this course increased (or not) your capacity to be work ready upon graduation?
7. Hager (2000) states that there is an educational approach to learning that states "the application of knowledge is necessary for proper understanding: 'it was only in doing it that I really understood it'" (p. 51). How does or does not this statement of Hager apply to you?

ANALYSING STUDENT RESPONSES

Symes (2000) has proposed that there are four common historical positions, or discourses on the issues of vocationalisation of universities. They are:

- Higher education must maintain its liberal education model.
- Higher education should be pragmatic and outcomes driven.
- The workplace and higher education provide a connection of learning.
- Vocational and higher education are interwoven.

Each of the above four discourses will be briefly outlined and then used as a method to categorise and to draw meaning from student responses.

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1. Higher Education Must Maintain Its Liberal Education Model.

According to Symes (2000), this position emphasises the role of higher education in providing a liberal education and courses that have intrinsic worth. An education that cultivates and encourages scholarly application, self and moral improvement is seen as ideal for higher education in this position. Symes (2000) maintained that this discourse questions the validity of vocational training and argues that an education that is instrumental in its intent makes for a compliant and easily manipulated workforce. Furthermore, in this model, the workplace and government demands for outcomes are not the driving force for accountability and/or the curriculum process. The following excerpt from Nadine's journal illustrates a view that values a broad liberal based education:

I feel like my university study has taught me to be an educator, rather than just a guide. It has developed my critical thinking skills and provided an exposure to a range of different ideas and thoughts on what outdoor education could and should be. Whilst I may not take on all the ideas that university has taught me in my own practice, I think the awareness of other alternatives and possibilities of outdoor education is a positive thing and still has value for use beyond my time at university. I feel, despite the university's traditional liberal focus, they're still providing a solid grounding of skills to be used in the workplace. (Nadine)

Nadine reflects on the value of her liberal education and the benefits of a generalist education. She sees that the capabilities and skills she has learnt in her higher education can help her to think critically and that there is a certain currency in such, when she enters the work force.

2. Higher Education Should Be Pragmatic and Outcome Driven

Symes (2000) contends that this position rejects the liberal education ideal in favour of instrumental and pragmatic education. This discourse has its origins in the Scottish Enlightenment, and argues that education should be useful to a country's economic development by driving forward workplace utility and employability. Jack articulates how he values such a utilitarian approach:

As a student, I appreciated the competency based training approach to the subject, as it was concerned more with skills and technique rather than theory and abstract thought. (Jack)

Another student described their pragmatic and instrumental view of the education delivered in the subject:

The direct emphasis on skill development is brilliant and the positive results can be seen immediately on our three-day ski tour where these skills were applied. Travelling over snow cover, which ranged from freshly fallen powder snow to bullet proof ice required the use of a multitude of skiing

skills. The direct application of these skills made the tour safer and more manageable in what was already very trying conditions. (Mark)

Joe reflects on his vocational learning through this subject, comparing it to the more liberal traditions of his Outdoor Education degree:

The vocational experience with the Australian Professional Snowsports Instructor Scheme (APSI) was completely skills and teaching focused, with the concept of only one way of learning to ski. Very different to outdoor education at La Trobe University. APSI sets a strong routine and simple steps to follow for beginner instructors to follow. (Joe)

While Joe could clearly perceive the value of a step-by-step process of learning a skill, Larry was frustrated with being told what to teach and how to teach it. He described the vocational training phase of the subject as prescriptive and highly structured, maintaining it limited his ability to learn and apply the learning to broader circumstances:

It felt as though all there is to teaching skiing, is to complete the teaching recipe that has been taught to us. (Larry)

Nadine describes the tension she perceives between acquiring skills and safety in her higher education context:

The irony of La Trobe's huge emphasis on safety, is that the university de-emphasis [sic] the personal physical skills that are required of outdoor instructors. It appears to me that these two areas of knowledge go hand in hand in outdoor education. For example, as was evident whilst ski touring, efficient and effective cross country skiing skills was a safety issue. Our group didn't have solid skiing skills, we as a group were too slow to cover the distance planned and rather than camping in a sheltered valley, spent the night on an exposed ridge line at 1980m above sea level in a blizzard instead. It is for the reason above that it is important to have quality hard skills in the outdoor pursuits, that you are guiding in. (Nadine)

One student's evaluation of the vocational training phase was that it was narrow and limiting.

Without the assistance from my prior learning from my time at university I would feel disempowered by the Australian Professional Snowsport Instructor course. The course alone is limited in what it can offer for the environment and adapting to new pedagogical paradigms. (Glenda)

It would seem that the APSI course with its pragmatic approach to teaching and learning, did not actually assist Glenda in reaching her goal to be able to instruct nordic skiing. Glenda reports that she felt disempowered and frustrated with the vocational approach taken.

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3. The Workplace and Higher Education Provide a Connection of Learning.

In this position there is a nexus between education and the workplace. According to Symes (2000), this discourse positions schools and higher education institutions as part of the system that supplies educated people for the workforce. In this way, work, workplace learning and education are not disparate. Hence, practice and concepts of the workplace as a place of learning stem from this discourse. Symes (2000) maintained that underpinning this position is a different view of learning, labour and work, that “overturns the distinction between mental and servile labour” (p. 34). Similarly, Beckett and Hager (2002) argued that links between theory and practice are integral, and theory empowers practice and gives it a framework within which to work. Reflecting on her experience, Nadine observes how learning in higher education has assisted her to be work ready:

Vocational courses are effective at teaching base level skills required of outdoor leaders. These skills are relatively easy to teach and easy to assess. In the case of the Australian Professional Snowsport Instructor course, when it came to teaching skiing, having a simple framework to remember was a reliable fall back position when things became difficult or challenging. However, La Trobe provided an exposure to ideas and options for outdoor education, developed environmental knowledge and helped to teach us to become educators. This being said, having this broader set of knowledge is only truly valuable if the graduate also has that solid grounding of outdoor skills, necessary when working in the field. (Nadine)

Nadine’s perspective is that a work ready graduate requires the combination of both vocational and higher education. Grubb and Lazerson (2005) argued that the goal of higher education is to ensure graduates are work ready. They advocate for a closer relationship between theory and practice, and observe that professional associations often criticise universities as being too research orientated and separate from the real business world, and consequently resulting in poorly prepared graduates. Jack also subscribes to the view that there should be a closer connection between theory and practice, leading to work ready graduates:

The higher education model is based in a generalist and broader framework and whilst it may prepare a graduate for entry into a profession, it does not render them competent. The inclusion of vocational training in an outdoor education degree programme may go some way to developing more complete, work-ready graduates. (Jack)

Glenda relays her experience of higher education and sense of being work ready:

Questions of competence are expressed as La Trobe students focus less on ‘hard skills’ and more on the theory behind the activity, the theories of learning, and the place in which the activity is held. Therefore, hard skills learned at La Trobe may not always be up to the expectations of the workforce, as the minimal amount of skill may not be present in order to meet the standards of the workplace. (Glenda)

Through their reflective journals students have articulated that the vocational orientated course has better prepared them to be 'work ready'. At the same time, the higher education content has enabled students to think more broadly about the issues of educational theory and content; which employers have identified is one of the key advantages of employing university graduates (Munge, 2009).

4. Vocational and Higher Education Are Interwoven

In Symes' (2000) view, this position argues that both a liberal and an instrumental education can be delivered through a balanced and integrated approach. He maintains that all education must be a blended delivery of both vocational content, and the critical and reflective approaches. Beckett and Hager (2002) contend that together, vocational and higher education are complementary, each building on the other's strengths, and allowing previous dualistic approaches to education and knowledge to be rejected. Advocates of this position reject hierarchies of knowledge between the practical ('knowing how') and intellectual ('knowing that'). In this discourse, according to Symes (2000), the separation of knowledge is groundless and "vocational education is not an oxymoron" (p. 34).

A useful example of this form of blended delivery is provided by Joe as he explores the connection between knowledge and ways of teaching. The following excerpt demonstrates how using both a competency based training model of learning combined with a higher education approach enables Joe to solve a learning problem encountered by one of his students:

The Australian Professional Snowsport Instructor (APSI) scheme has given me a background of knowing and a basis to teach from. My time in higher education has allowed me to adapt the APSI into a teaching style that will work with multiple clients and situations. The principles I have learnt from the APSI course, I can transfer to teaching in other environments, therefore I can say the APSI course has given me the best insight into teaching skills. For example in a university subject, Teaching River Environments were |I was teaching white water skills to first year university students I came across students that were finding it hard to hold the edges of their kayak. I found it difficult to communicate the skill and for them to grasp it. I decided to drop everything I had previously tried and followed a teaching strategy I had learnt from the APSI ski instructors' course. I modified the approach to allow for a different skill set (kayaking). This worked extremely well and they picked up the new skill quickly and easily. As I was doing this one of the my lecturers was watching and afterwards commented about the approach saying, that it worked well and he had not seen it before. This shows to me the teaching platform used in the vocational experience of the APSI is not just specific to skiing and can be used in many other skill teaching in outdoor education.
(Joe)

This vignette illustrates Hager's (2000) point that, "there is a body of educational thought that maintains the application of knowledge is necessary for proper

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understanding, ‘it was only in doing it that I really understood it’” (p. 51). It was while Joe was teaching, and consciously applying his learning from a competency based training experience to an immediate learning problem, that his understanding and teaching became integrated at a deeper level – it was by ‘doing it’ that he really got ‘it’. This gets to the crux of a dilemma of skill learning and demonstrates how the artificial separation of practical and intellectual learning is unhelpful in seeking to understand the learning process. It was in both the doing (practical) and the thinking/applying/analysing that the learning challenge as described above was overcome.

In another example, Mark makes the link between skills and critical outdoor education as advocated by Martin (2008). Mark reflects on his experience of how a higher level of skill competence (in this case, cross country skiing) enables him to be more invested in his practice as a critical outdoor educator.

A competent outdoor educator may have developed abilities, skills and attributes that become intuitive over time. When able to complete these tasks in an unconscious manner, ‘things just get done’, this allows the outdoor educator to operate with a calmer state of mind. It allows them to utilise and put into action those broader cognitive skills as required. This allows the leader to respond to other cues whilst giving little to no thought as to how to perform the skill. The outdoor educator can then focus on other areas of the curriculum other than the skills. Ten days devoted to skill development allowed me to feel confident that I can fully apply myself to providing a better standard of critical outdoor education – the ultimate aim of the La Trobe degree. (Mark)

Mark’s observation that having an approach to learning which brings vocational training and higher education together enables graduates to be more effective in the workplace. This illustrates the concept of a working knowledge viewed by Symes (2000) as the bridge between theory and practice, vocational and higher education. Elsewhere Mark offers an interesting insight that reflects Grubb and Lazerson’s (2005) criticisms of graduate workplace competency described earlier.

None of my outdoor activity electives at university demanded of me to be able to prove that I have the necessary occupational skills, so as to adequately perform in the workplace. The university just wanted to know if I could operate in a safe manner. La Trobe University emphasised the mind/head knowledge, the theory of why go outside into the outdoors as it places the theory of knowing above and beyond the physical skill sets. The question I have as a student and learner is: does higher education create a lesser graduate than it potentially could by focusing so much on the mind/head knowledge, the theory? (Mark)

Mark’s question is one that deserves consideration. Another student, Cathy, makes an observation that may offer at least a partial response while reflecting on the practical nature of the vocational training phase:

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Without these new vocational skills (how to teach skiing), I consider that I may not have been as confident in teaching and leading others in cross country skiing. I also believe teaching others how to ski would have been more difficult as I wouldn't have had a distinct set of instructing skills. I feel as though when I was stuck on what to teach I could fall back onto my newly acquired instructional skills, it was in the doing of teaching that I came to finally understanding it. (Cathy)

The vocational training phase clearly gave Cathy the skills for both the craft of skiing and the ability to teach skiing to her students while on placement. For Cathy the embedding of vocational training into higher education seems to address both the criticisms of Grubb and Lazerson (2005) and go some way to answering Mark's question.

Interestingly, when Cathy writes about learning vocational skills, she is referring to 'the learning of how to teach'. By implication then, the question might be asked, is doing a Diploma of Education an example of vocational training or of higher education? Perhaps the only difference is cultural and/or political, as suggested by Symes (2000) and Maclean and Pavlova (2011). Symes (2000) asserted that the "distinction between a liberal or vocational education is largely a spurious one . . . for all education is vocational and, in the end, it is simply a matter of to what degree" (p. 42).

DISCUSSION

According to Maclean and Pavlova (2011), "on the epistemological level there is a basis for developing close relationships between higher education and vocational education" (p. 325). At the launch of the Bradley Review of Higher Education, the then Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, Julia Gillard, called for a bridge between the two sectors of vocational and higher education (Gillard, 2009). Likewise, Hager (2000) and Pardy and Seddon (2011) has advocated for a more inclusive higher education sector, increased recognition of the value of vocational training, and links between both sectors. Jack articulates some of these issues when he writes:

The arbitrary separation of vocational education and higher education is difficult in outdoor education because there are components that are inherently vocational. (Jack)

In this chapter I have described the trial of such a bridge from a student perspective. I embedded a recognised vocational training course within a higher education subject and worked in partnership with students as they observed and reflected on their learning. Student reflections indicated a positive view overall of such a combination of vocational and higher education. Jack comments on the strength of the collaborative approach to his learning at La Trobe University:

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The vocational style of learning in the activity/outdoor skill subjects at La Trobe demonstrates a marriage between the capabilities of an outdoor leader and the knowledge of the teacher. (Jack)

Students reported that the learning of skills necessary to teach skiing lead to a sense of wellbeing and confidence in their employability. They also felt empowered to undertake leadership of the activity and felt an increased capacity to manage groups safely while also delivering educational outcomes. This confidence enabled one student to become more critical in his education as he became more aware of the teaching opportunities that presented themselves, subsequently enhancing his delivery of both outdoor and environmental education. Mark wrote:

Knowing that I can move easily and safely, as well as impart this knowledge to my students allows me to share my observations and provides more than just a trip to the Snowy Mountains. (Mark)

Students reported feeling better prepared and more ready to enter the work force, with both a theoretical knowledge and a knowledge of practice. Without exception students reported that the integration of a vocational course had increased their work readiness and confidence to become outdoor educators. Students articulated that they valued the balanced and integrated approach taken in this subject. Interestingly, Hager and Gonczi (1996) referred to this approach almost 20 years ago as an 'integrated competence' where the higher education preference for the development of intellectual attributes meets the task focussed style of vocational education. The intersection of a 'knowing how' and a 'knowing that' approach, results in a richer learning experience for students. Skills (both of teaching and demonstration) will assist a graduate to be workplace ready and capabilities such as problem solving and reasoning form part of the quality critical outdoor education students received.

IN CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have described an investigation into the intersection of vocational training and higher education using outdoor education as a lens. During this process I worked collaboratively with students as they observed and reflected on their learning. Three themes emerged:

1. Students report that the balanced approach of blending vocational and higher education taken in this subject enhanced their learning.
2. An integrated delivery increased the students' perception of work readiness.
3. Student reflections support Hager and Laurent's (1990) view that the separation of vocational training and higher education is arbitrary and does not support learners becoming experts or masterful in their practice as educators.

These themes emerged from student reflections and responses to a specific teaching and learning experience in Kosciuszko National Park. The case study of student experiences and perceptions contains strengths and limitations. This was a

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unique experience for the seven students involved, and as such, it would be inappropriate to attempt to generalise from this case study to the international debate about the vocationalisation of higher education. Among the strengths of this study are that the themes that have emerged are supported by much of the literature, giving additional weight to the students' reflections. The implications for outdoor education at the tertiary level at least, are that an integrated approach of vocational and higher education has value and should be considered. Learning that brings together both 'knowing that' and 'knowing how' will almost certainly produce better graduates able to apply their craft in the workplace. The collaborative approach I have taken in this case study demonstrates the potential for a richer and deeper learning experience for the students, which will assist them to be more work ready. As Jack concludes his journal:

My overall goal in attending university is to get a vocation and thus essentially universities are vocational in that sense, preparing students to work in their chosen vocation. (Jack)

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Peter Holmes
School of Outdoor and Environmental Studies
La Trobe University
Australia