

Annex: F FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL POLYTECHNIC OF VANUATU: Amalgamation of VITE and VIT – some issues for consultation

Background

As set out in the Vanuatu Education Sector Strategy and in the Education Summit held in March 2007, The Ministry of Education is considering an amalgamation of the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education (VITE) with the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT) to form the National Polytechnic of Vanuatu. This will be the forerunner for Vanuatu's own national institute for tertiary education which could include other professional studies in areas such as Business, Health, and communications as has been achieved in Samoa at the National University of Samoa which has now incorporated the previously separated school of Nursing, Teachers College, Maritime School and Polytechnic while adding programmes in journalism, tourism, and hospitality.

The reasons for considering this amalgamation are these:

- To bring together scarce resources and enable a re-think of the curriculum at VITE, and in particular to enable teachers to be trained in a wider range of technical subjects and skills relevant to ni-Vanuatu society. A major issue here is the need to expand teacher education to take account of the Government's commitment to education for all to year 8 and the need for life skills and technology to be included to a greater extent in the VITE curriculum.
- To provide a basis for VITE to expand its in-service training and make sure of VIT's provincial facilities.
- To create a learning environment for VITE students that includes opportunity for communication with students who are preparing for employment in other professions.
- To strengthen the management of both institutions and create some economics of scale that will make teacher education more sustainable and enable future developments to occur more effectively.
- To improve access to training for teachers at all levels in Vanuatu – not just primary and secondary, but at pre-school and TVET levels as well.

In the immediate future, VITE will continue to operate as it now does from its campus at Malapoa, and the merged institution would be a two-campus operation. However, in the first year after the merger a major curriculum review of teacher education would take place with possible implementation in the following year. In the context of considering this merger and the curriculum review, issues of accreditation, the life-long learning needs of teachers, the ongoing training of the large pool of untrained teachers in Vanuatu, and improved opportunity for teachers to achieve degree level qualifications all need to be considered.

Consultation:

Before a merger of this nature can proceed, therefore, it is necessary for key stakeholders to be consulted and their opinions and comments noted. These key stakeholders would include

- The Staff and Councils at VIT and VITE
- USP
- Relevant Ministries and PSC
- Senior educators, Principals, Inspectors and Zone Curriculum Advisers
- Aid donors with an interest in education in Vanuatu

THE VISION

The vision is to create a single national tertiary institution for Vanuatu that can provide for the present and future education and training needs of Business, Industry, and the Professions.

The National Polytechnic of Vanuatu will be a multi-level provider catering to local and regional needs and ranging from professional diplomas of up to three years duration through to short courses in technical and vocational areas.

The National Polytechnic of Vanuatu will provide qualified, productive and well-supported teachers for every school and strengthen the professional competence of teachers through strengthened pre-services and in-service programmes for teachers and educators and the provision of provincial campuses and school support centres. It will also strengthen education by providing training for Provincial Education Boards, school council and committee members, and parent teacher associations in at least two Provinces each year.

The National Polytechnic of Vanuatu will forge stronger links with other providers in the country and the region including the University of South Pacific and the Australia Pacific Technical College. Where appropriate it will seek curriculum support and moderation from international providers and it will seek to attain accredited status for its diploma and higher programmes.

MISSION

The mission is to provide equitable opportunity for all ni-Vanuatu to access a wider range of educational opportunities at the institution and for teachers to become better resourced to adapt to both rural and urban school environments.

The National Polytechnic of Vanuatu will offer:

- Education and training relevant to Vanuatu's needs
- Cross-credited courses from other sections within the institution
- Wider opportunity for community participation in teacher education through in-service and pre-service programmes.

Some issues for consultation:

- What does a teacher in Vanuatu need to know and be able to do in order to improve the learning of young people?
- Does a teacher have a separate role in the local community?
- What is the best way to provide the expertise and facilities to enable teacher trainees to achieve these things?
- What would VITE stand to gain by merging with another institution?
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- Are there any reasons why teacher education should be retained in a stand-alone institution?

- Internationally, teachers are increasingly required to complete a degree before entering the profession. In the long term this is inevitable for Vanuatu as well. Would this merger either hinder or help this kind of development? And would there be implications for other professions such as nursing and business in the future?
- A key issue for the Vanuatu school system is to protect and enhance the national languages. Would the merger have any impact (positive or negative) on this issue?
- VITE at the moment has two separate curricula – one for Francophone and one for Anglophone students. Is this something that should be continued, or should a single harmonized curriculum be developed for both Francophone and Anglophone students? How can VITE become a model of best practice for a bilingual approach to education?
- If the merger proceeds, it is possible that the existing departments at VIT would continue unchanged and that VITE would become a Faculty of the National Polytechnic of Vanuatu to be called (say) the Faculty of Education with its Academic Head entitled the Dean of Education. Is this this a suitable way of giving status and recognition to the continuation of VITE and encouraging its staff to take leadership roles in advancing teacher education, or are there other options that should be considered?
- What form of qualification needs to be developed for currently untrained teachers? What other new courses are needed to diversify teacher education?
- Are there any special areas for teacher education that would need to be protected in the Act that would replace the current VIT and VITE Acts?
- Likewise, are there any special areas for VIT that would need to be protected in the Act?
- What form of advisory committee should the amalgamated institution establish to ensure ongoing input from the profession at large?

Time frame for the merger

Task	To be completed by
Complete an agreed consultation document	End of June 2007
Consult with identified stakeholders through focus groups	End of July 2007
Complete first draft of legislation for merged institution Complete first draft of financial implications	End of July 2007 to DG for Minister
Draft position descriptions for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of the Institution • Dean of Education • Technical Adviser for one year to work in VITE on curriculum reform 	End of August 2007
Develop a framework and timeframe for merging the admin units of VIT and VITE during 2008 incorporating a central budget and merged costs	End of July 2007
Legislation passed through Parliament	November 2007
Develop an in-service unit to administer and operate in-service teacher training from Vila or from the RTCs.	July 2008
Develop harmonized academic regulations for the institution under a single academic framework for implementation from January 2009	July 2008
Develop harmonized curriculum for teacher education including a certificate to be offered by in-service training to untrained teachers, all to be implemented starting in 2009	November 2008

Consultation visit to SICHE (Solomon Islands) or FIT (Suva) by task force members	2008
<p>Approve course structures and training programmes under the following divisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Education • School of Business Management • School of Trade and Training • School of information Technology • School of Vanuatu Studies • School of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing • School of Physical Education • School of Civic and Religious Education 	November 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polytechnic brought together on a single campus • All courses lead to certificates or diplomas approved by an assessment board and endorsed by the relevant industry or professional advisory committee • Development and delivery of Higher Diplomas • Further development of new courses and schools in consultation with industry and the professions. 	2009 - 2015

Annex: G “SO THAT” CHAIN: Lesson Learnt from FNU Feasibility Study (TENTATIVE)

STRATEGY

Formal establishment of Vanuatu Tertiary and Higher Education networking and collaboration committed to amalgamate existing tertiary training providers towards an establishment of a national university that is owned by the government and people of Vanuatu.

Belief systems

- Christian values – service learning model
- Humanistic values – Service learning model

Goal 1

A shared collective plan to address existing institutions’ human and physical readiness in the amalgamation process of tertiary education and training.

Goal 2

Legislation is accepted to provide legal direction and support for institutions to collaborate in offering industrial and trade demanded courses in conjunction with higher education and training.

Goal 3

Management of program (phase & cluster approach) during the amalgamation process (transition) are sequenced for the amalgamation of categorized courses - from campuses to campuses or centres to centres in adherence to mutual working relationship to respective Government Ministries that are operating existing tertiary programmes and courses.

Goal 4

Courses offered from two (suggestion only - two) initial schools of VNU are recognized by Vanuatu Qualification Authority (VQA) and comply with regulations of Education Act #: 9 and in principle for VNU Act.

Goal 5

First ever Trade diploma; Bachelor in Teacher Education and Agriculture are successfully awarded.

Goal 6

Pathways of education and training from secondary to post-secondary sectors are streamlined and better coordinated to register an audited Foundation or Pre-tertiary studies in order to offer specialized course modules or subject descriptors from clustering of certificate courses from campuses to campuses or centres to centres.

Goal 7

Students' pathways through formal, non-formal and informal sectors have registered and recognized benchmarks for exit points, terminal students' performances, cross-matriculation purposes in order to allow greater flexibility for students to be given sufficient opportunity to obtain tertiary or higher education and training.

Goal 8

Increase of enrolment in tertiary education and training for service learning such as apprenticeship, entrepreneurship stimulation to an economic and social leverage for industrial demands in Vanuatu.