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Introduction
At the turn of the twenty-first century, five Australian universities started describing themselves as a “dual sector university.” This chapter looks at the use of the term in Australia and the characteristics of the universities so described, and speculates why other Australian universities with otherwise similar histories developed as single sector universities. The chapter concludes by considering the potential for the development of new dual sector universities in Australia.

The Term “Dual Sector University”
The first use of the term “dual sector university” that I have been able to find is in a paper published in 2000 that considers how dual sector universities can challenge the binary divide between vocational and higher education (Doughney 2000). Later that year, Wheelahan (2000) reviewed the difficulties faced by dual sector universities in bridging the deep divide between vocational and higher education in Australia. The first reference to “dual sector institution” or its cognates that I have been able to find is in a 1995 conference paper by Cole and Corcoran (1995: 9) describing the early development of Charles Darwin University, a dual sector university then called Northern Territory University. Other early references to dual sector institutions are by Trembath et al. (1996), Patterson (1997: 301), Donleavy (1998: 68), and Sommerlad et al. (1998: xxii).

The Australian institutions that identify themselves and recognize each other as dual sector universities are Charles Darwin University, Swinburne University of Technology, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, the University of Ballarat, and Victoria University in Melbourne. These universities share two characteristics that define them as dual sector universities: they have a substantial student load in both vocational education and higher education, and they undertake substantial research and award research doctorates.
Higher Education

Higher education comprises programs that typically require a minimum of three years’ full-time study after the final year of secondary schooling, are theoretically based, and either provide access to high-status occupations or prepare students for research in basic disciplines. While many countries have higher education institutions that are not universities, the sector is dominated by universities that are similar throughout the Western world, and the oldest of which trace a continuous history back to the Middle Ages (Moodie 2008). Higher education is therefore readily identified in most jurisdictions, although there are important differences in the sector in each country that should inform international comparisons. Higher education is classified as level 5A by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation’s (1997) international standard classification of education.

Vocational Education

There is far less international coincidence in the definition of the sector of tertiary education that is called in this chapter vocational education: it is the upper levels of further education colleges in the UK and it is the tertiary education offered by two-year colleges in the US, community colleges in Canada and the US, Berufskademien (vocational academies) and Fachschulen (trade and technical schools) in Germany, instituts universitaires de technologie (university institutes of technology) and sections de techniciens supérieurs (higher technical education units) in France, hogescholen (higher vocational colleges) in the Netherlands, vocational education and training providers in Australia, and polytechnics in New Zealand. Vocational education comprises programs that typically require no longer than two years’ equivalent full-time study, are practical, and either provide access to middle-status occupations or prepare students for higher education. There is considerable variation between countries in the structure, orientation, and, as we have seen, nomenclature of vocational education. Nonetheless, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation’s (1997) international standard classification of education identifies vocational education as a distinct sector, which it classifies as level 5B. While organized vocational education probably pre-dates higher education, few if any vocational education institutes can trace a continuous history beyond the industrial revolution (Moodie 2008).

Other Instances of Dual Sector Provision

Many Australian universities appear to be dual sector because they offer some vocational education programs. Some offerings are vestiges of history. Thus, the University of Adelaide offers three vocational education diplomas and four certificates in music through the Elder Conservatorium of Music established by a bequest in 1898. Many dual sector offerings are the result of amalgamations
with previously single sector institutions. For example, the University of Queensland offers the Queensland certificate of agriculture at its Gatton College, which was formed as a result of the university’s amalgamation in 1990 with the Queensland Agricultural College. Curtin University has 320 full time equivalent students, or 1 percent of its total student load, enrolled in vocational education programs at its Kalgoorlie and Esperance campuses, which are more than 500 kilometers from Curtin’s main campus in Perth. Edith Cowan University has 400 full time equivalent students, or 3 percent of its student load, enrolled in vocational education programs in music and theatre.

An institution is vertically integrated to the extent that it owns its upstream suppliers and its downstream buyers. Thus, a university is more vertically integrated if it offers vocational education or the final year of compulsory schooling since these programs supply its students. Chipman (2002) argued that higher education may be made more affordable by reducing vertical integration—by having research done by one part of a university system, scholarship and curriculum design by another part, and delivery by yet another part of the system. But the trend seems to be in the opposite direction, towards greater vertical integration of tertiary education, often by pragmatic extensions of existing programs or integration of programs or services that had previously been offered by other organizations.

Thus, the University of Sydney and most other Australian universities offer English language programs that are secondary or vocational education in level and had hitherto been offered by English language institutes. The University of Adelaide offers a certificate in teaching English to speakers of other languages, and Flinders University offers a certificate in disability studies offshore. The Australian Catholic University is a registered training organization and offers vocational education certificates and diplomas in education, exercise science, frontline management, and nursing.

Some Australian universities have vertically integrated programs and services systematically, most often for international students. One of the earliest and most successful vertical integrations was the University of Technology Sydney’s offering of secondary and vocational education and other sub-bachelor programs and services through Insearch, which it established as a wholly owned for-profit subsidiary in 1987. At its Sydney center Insearch offers academic pathway programs to the university, a range of English pathway and language programs, and one of the world’s largest international English language testing system centers. In China, Insearch has offered diplomas in English and business as well as the university’s bachelor of business in partnership with Shanghai University since 1994. Insearch established a center at the University of Essex in 2004, where it offers English language preparation programs and academic and English pathway programs that lead to direct access to Essex University (Insearch 2006a).
Several other Australian universities have followed the University of Technology Sydney’s example in offering vocational education and secondary-level programs mainly, although not exclusively, for international students. The University of Wollongong established Wollongong College Australia in 1988 to offer English language, university preparation, and diploma programs to international and domestic students. Monash University established Monash College as a wholly owned for-profit subsidiary in the 1990s, and it now teaches diplomas at the university’s Clayton, Caulfield, and Peninsula campuses and also in Singapore, Guangzhou (China), Jakarta, and Colombo (Monash College 2007). Monash University’s English language center mounts intensive language programs, and the Monash University foundation year is an equivalent Australian final school year program offered by Taylors College in Australia and other partners in Laos, Jakarta, and Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur and Johor Bahru). The Australian National University (ANU) has established ANU College as a registered training organization that offers a foundation studies program, an ANU access English program, English language instruction for overseas students, extended university English, an advanced secondary studies program, math bridging courses, and group study tours. Charles Sturt University has established CSU Training as a registered training organization to offer programs for its staff, industry, and professionals in niche areas and to embed vocational qualifications within higher education programs.

Most Australian universities’ vocational education programs are small in size, confined to one campus (Australian universities have an average of 3.4 campuses1), are in one or two disciplines, and many are offered through separate organizational units. They therefore have little if any impact on the university outside their immediate area. Dual sector universities first identified themselves as being distinctive in having to manage dual systems and processes to report to two levels of government since in Australia responsibility for vocational and higher education is split between the state and federal governments. Where vocational education is a small part of a university’s operations it can be handled as an exception to the structures, systems, and processes established to handle higher education. But where vocational education is a substantial part of the university’s operations a separate system has to be established to handle it. Vocational education must also be a substantial part of the university’s student load to affect higher education.

“Substantial”

Dual sector universities have never specified the proportion of load needed in each sector to be considered “substantial.” The issue can be put rigorously by asking: how high a proportion of total student load must vocational education be before it is no longer considered an exception and it is generally accepted as a normal part of the institution? The same question arises in different contexts:
how many women do there have to be in an occupation or worksite before they are no longer considered exceptional but are accepted as part of the norm? Conversely, when do women become so large a part of a workforce that it becomes “feminized,” its wages and working conditions deteriorate, and men leave it (Pfeffer and Davis-Blake 1987)? A similar dynamic has been observed in the racial segregation of housing in US cities (Grodzins 1958). Another context is the adoption of an innovation, a new technology, a fad, or a new idea: at what point does an innovation pass from the innovators to the early adopters and thence to the early majority (Wilson 2006)?

A number of analytical perspectives have been proposed for these problems: threshold models, bandwagon effects, contagion effects, epidemic theories, and tipping point. As LaFree (1999: 162) points out, while these concepts vary greatly, all of them assume that in the right circumstances social trends may be nonlinear. The phenomenon has also been studied empirically. The phrase “tipping point” was coined by Grodzins, who studied the racial integration of US neighborhoods in the 1950s and 1960s. He discovered that most white families would remain in a neighborhood as long as the number of black families remained comparatively small. But at a certain point, when “one too many” black families arrived, the remaining white families would move out en masse in a process known as white flight. He called that moment the “tipping point” (Grodzins 1958). The threshold or tipping point differs for each social trend, but 20 percent is often observed (Wilson 2006). So for the want of a better alternative one may posit that a university is a dual sector university when at least 20 percent but no more than 80 percent of its load is in vocational education. It will be noted from table 5.1 that from 26 percent to 51 percent of the total student load of Australia’s dual sector universities are in vocational education.

Table 5.1 Australian dual sector universities’ full time equivalent student load by type of program (2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of program</th>
<th>Ballarat</th>
<th>Charles Darwin</th>
<th>RMIT</th>
<th>Swinburne</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocational education</td>
<td>3,111</td>
<td>3,562</td>
<td>10,525</td>
<td>12,211</td>
<td>12,285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education coursework</td>
<td>7,563</td>
<td>2,938</td>
<td>29,221</td>
<td>11,384</td>
<td>14,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education research</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>1,102</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total higher education</td>
<td>7,705</td>
<td>3,081</td>
<td>30,323</td>
<td>11,789</td>
<td>14,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10,816</td>
<td>6,643</td>
<td>40,848</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>26,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational education as % of total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DEST (2007) and universities’ annual reports
Australia has many non-university providers that offer both vocational and higher education. Some were established as higher education providers and subsequently added vocational education programs to broaden the range of prospective students from which they could recruit. Others were established as vocational education providers and added higher education programs to follow their students up the educational ladder. Some of these institutions might be accurately described as dual sector institutions, like some “mixed economy” (Higher Education Funding Council for England 1995) further education colleges in the UK and some community colleges in Canada and the US that also offer bachelor degrees.

But arguably dual sector universities are more complex than other dual sector institutions because of the research role of universities. Compare the differences between higher education coursework and research programs with the differences between coursework vocational and higher education programs, which are presented in table 5.2. Coursework vocational and higher education follow a curriculum that is specified in advance while research candidates’ curriculum is developed with their research. Coursework students are taught in groups whereas research candidates are supervised individually or in a very small group. Moreover, coursework students have substantial contact hours each week whereas research candidates’ formal teaching would typically be a meeting with their supervisor for one or two hours every week or fortnight.

On some characteristics, such as student independence, there is a continuum from vocational education to coursework higher education to research higher education.

Table 5.2 Differences between vocational education, coursework higher education, and research higher education programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Vocational education</th>
<th>Coursework higher education</th>
<th>Research higher education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Specified in advance</td>
<td>Specified in advance</td>
<td>Developed with the program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program length</td>
<td>6 months–2 years</td>
<td>2–5 years</td>
<td>3–4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Employment/discipline</td>
<td>Discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class size</td>
<td>Small to medium group</td>
<td>Large groups and some small groups</td>
<td>Mostly individual supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact hours per week</td>
<td>15–30</td>
<td>10–15</td>
<td>1–2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student independence</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
education. On other characteristics, such as length of program, coursework and research higher education programs are more similar than vocational education and coursework higher education programs.

Overall, the differences between coursework and research higher education programs are at least as big if not bigger than the differences between coursework vocational and higher education programs. Research programs thus add considerably to the complexity of managing an institution. Universities with a substantial institutional research role offer programs that prepare students for occupations and for proceeding to advanced study and research. Sometimes they seek to combine both these functions within one program while on other occasions they offer programs that concentrate on either occupational preparation or research training. Whichever approach is adopted, the curriculum has to be developed and presented and students’ performance has to be assessed differently for occupational and research expertise. And universities need policies and processes for students to transfer between occupational and research tracks with minimal loss of progress.

Universities with a substantial research role need to appoint and promote academic staff not only for teaching expertise, but also for research expertise. Some universities aim for all their academic staff to have substantial teaching and research roles; others appoint significant proportions of academic staff to concentrate in either teaching or research, and others seek to systematize staff’s different allocations of their effort to teaching and research in proportion to their expertise and inclination and the institution’s needs. Whichever approach a university adopts, it needs to have appointment and promotion criteria for research that are different from those for teaching, it needs to establish relativities between appointment and promotion criteria for teaching and research, and it needs a mechanism for allocating staff resources between teaching and research.

Many universities not only differentiate academic staff roles by their engagement in teaching and research, but differentiate academic organizational units by the extent of their teaching and research roles. Thus, while some universities seek to have all their departments, schools, and faculties engaged equally in teaching and research, many more recognize different levels and types of engagement in research by allocating different levels and types of support. Many universities establish specialized research institutes, centers, or schools, and some establish specialized teaching schools and units. These organizational units with different levels of engagement in teaching and research are typically established within the same formal organizational structure, but the more collective decision-making appropriate for teaching is infrequently adopted for research, which typically relies more heavily on the judgments of research leaders. In practice, the organizational dynamics of the two types of units are quite different and have to be managed differently by subordinate staff, the heads of units, and the institution’s senior management.
Teaching and research require different types of facilities and resources and different support arrangements and operate on different academic calendars. Universities typically handle this by establishing different central service and support units for teaching and research, multiplying the organizational complexity of central and support units. While a few universities establish research libraries and research computing units dedicated to supporting specialized research function, most ask their libraries and computer centers to support both teaching and research. This seems straightforward from outside those units, but it of course internalizes the complexity of supporting different functions and allocating resources between them.

Because of the different demands of teaching and research, Newman, in his *The Idea of a University*, argued against universities having a research role:

> The nature of the case and the history of philosophy combine to recommend to us this division of intellectual labour between academies and universities. To discover and to teach are distinct functions; they are also distinct gifts, and are not commonly found united in the same person.

(Newman 1853/1959: 10)

Much academic effort has been spent countering Newman’s observation by positing a teaching–research nexus. For example, Hattie and Marsh (1996) reviewed fifty-eight studies of the relationship between research and teaching (to find no relationship).

Having a substantial research role therefore adds considerably to the complexity of institutions and therefore justifies dual sector universities distinguishing themselves from other dual sector institutions. But what amounts to a substantial research role? The new US Carnegie classification of institutions of higher education (Carnegie Foundation 2007) defines doctorate-granting universities as institutions that award at least twenty doctoral degrees per year. As will be seen from table 5.3, the University of Ballarat just satisfies this criterion and Charles Darwin University falls somewhat short. Both are located in rural cities without a large urban elite or industrial base to generate local demand for research degrees. Even research students in Australia do not tend to relocate for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Ballarat</th>
<th>Charles Darwin</th>
<th>RMIT</th>
<th>Swinburne</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
<th>All unis mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% research load</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD graduates</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% research fund</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: DEST (2007)*
study, and neither Ballarat nor Charles Darwin University has much money to allocate to research scholarships.

Research adds a significant complexity to an institution, not by its scale but by its size in proportion to the institution’s other activities. Research intensity rather than research scale is salient for institutional complexity. The Carnegie Foundation further classifies doctorate-granting universities by research intensity on measures specific to the US. Measures of research intensity commonly used in Australia are the proportion of full-time equivalent students undertaking research degrees and research block grants as a proportion of total revenue. Charles Darwin does reasonably well on these measures because of its strength in tropic and desert knowledge. The University of Ballarat does less well and is generally understood to be one of the least research-intensive of Australian universities. Nonetheless, it (just) meets the Carnegie Foundation’s criterion for doctorate-granting universities and it seems reasonable to conclude that both Ballarat and Charles Darwin universities have enough research activity to be classified as research-active universities.

University Groupings

Hirsch (1976) pointed out that some products and services have positional value. Consider a diamond. It has special characteristics that give it objective value, such as extreme hardness, clarity, and luster. These characteristics are not any more special or objectively valuable than other characteristics of other precious and semi-precious stones, yet diamonds are much more valuable than other stones. This value is a result of their scarcity. Diamonds have a positional value—they are a positional good—because their possession indicates a high position in the social hierarchy. Similarly, highly sought real estate, the “best” table in the “best” restaurant, and membership of exclusive clubs are positional goods that are valued far more highly than their objective characteristics warrant because they indicate high social standing.

Education is also a positional good. Possession of a university qualification indicates an academic achievement that makes the graduate a more valuable citizen and employee. When university education was accessible only to the social elite, possession of a university qualification also indicated membership of the elite: it therefore also had considerable positional value. With the mass expansion of higher education following the Second World War, possession of a university degree no longer signals such exclusivity. However, some institutions remain accessible mostly only to members of the social elite. These institutions, normally the oldest, and almost always the universities well established before the mass expansion of higher education, have greater positional value than other, normally younger institutions (Moodie 2008). Examples of these institutions are the members of the Ivy League in the US, Oxbridge in the UK, and the “sandstones” in Australia.

As access to higher education expands, the desire for social differentiation is
increasingly sought, not just in the fact of graduating from a university, but in
the choice of institution, program, and higher degree study (James 2007: 10).
The expansion of participation therefore leads to overtly tiered systems, what-
ever their official designation by government. This segmentation has been made
explicit by the universities with the greatest positional value forming them-
selves into self-selected clubs. Interestingly, one of the oldest of such groups
was formed in the US, the first country to move from elite to mass higher
education. In 1900 the fourteen well-established universities offering the PhD
formed themselves into the Association of American Universities. This associ-
ation of “leading research universities” currently comprises sixty-two US and
two Canadian universities. In the UK an informal self-selected group of twenty
“research-led” institutions formed itself into the Russell Group in 1994. In the
same year in Australia the eight “leading” universities with the biggest research
expenditure formed itself into the Group of Eight.

Subsequently, other groups of universities with less positional value have
formed, some to distinguish themselves from other universities with even
less positional value, and others to challenge the older groups’ valorization
of positional good. Thus, in 1994 many of the UK’s “smaller research-intensive
universities” formed themselves into the 1994 Group. In 2003 the Australian
universities established in the 1960s and 1970s, following to various extents the
interdisciplinary example of the University of Sussex in the UK, established
themselves as Innovative Research Universities Australia. This group associates
with the UK’s 1994 Group. In 1997 UK institutions recognized as universities
since 1992 formed the Coalition of Modern Universities, later called the CMU
—campaigning for mainstream universities—and currently called Million+. A
similar group of newly designated universities in Australia formed themselves
into the New Generation Universities Network in 2002, but this has since dis-
banded. The Australian Technological Network was formed in 1999. It is a
group that seems to be unique to Australia, formed of universities located in
or near capital cities’ central business districts that originated as technical col-
leges. RMIT, formerly known as the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology,
is a member of the Australian Technological Network.

A potentially salient distinguishing characteristic of universities that is dif-
ferent from and to some extent cuts across positional value is cross-sectoral pro-
vision. This is significant in Australia in providing opportunities for vocational
education students to transfer to higher education. Table 5.4 shows the number
of domestic students commencing a bachelor level program or below who were
admitted on the basis of a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) qualifi-
cation. It will be noted that most Australian dual sector universities admit a
higher proportion of undergraduate students on the basis of TAFE qualifica-
tions than other universities. The University of Ballarat reports admitting a
very low proportion of students on the basis of a TAFE qualification even for a
single sector university, as will be noted from the table. The university’s vice-
chancellor, Professor David Battersby, reported in a personal communication of April 1, 2008, that the source for this data is students’ self-report. Students transferring from a TAFE program offered by the University of Ballarat report that they are admitted on the basis of an award from the university, which they do not consider an award of a TAFE institution. Battersby says that the figure reported by the university is probably of students transferring to the university from other TAFE institutes. He reports that the university’s internal data suggest about 15 to 17 percent of its higher education enrolments are students with a TAFE award.

“Metro new generation universities” in table 5.4 are all universities located in a metropolitan area with a population of at least 250,000 that were recognized as universities after the collapse of the binary divide in Australia in 1988, not including Victoria University, which is classified in the table as a dual sector university. “Rural universities” are all universities located outside a metropolitan area with a population of at least 250,000, not including Charles Darwin University and the University of Ballarat, which are classified in the table as dual sector universities. The “Australian Technological Network” are the universities formed from central institutes of technology, except RMIT, which is categorized as a dual sector university. “Innovative Research Universities Australia” is the group that associates with the UK’s 1994 Group, and the Group of Eight is the group that associates with the UK’s Russell Group.

### Table 5.4 Students admitted on the basis of a TAFE program and all students commencing a bachelor program by university group (2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution/group</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>TAFE</th>
<th>% TAFE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swinburne University of Technology</td>
<td>2,893</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMIT</td>
<td>5,462</td>
<td>1,147</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Darwin University</td>
<td>2,101</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>4,466</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Ballarat</td>
<td>1,266</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average, dual sector universities</td>
<td>16,188</td>
<td>2,930</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro new generation universities</td>
<td>28,291</td>
<td>4,466</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural universities</td>
<td>33,285</td>
<td>4,171</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Technological Network</td>
<td>26,140</td>
<td>2,583</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative Research Universities Australia</td>
<td>34,831</td>
<td>3,053</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group of Eight</td>
<td>44,022</td>
<td>1,390</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All universities</td>
<td>183,329</td>
<td>18,593</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: DEST (2006), table 3.1.11: domestic students commencing a course at bachelor level or below by state, higher education provider and basis for admission to current course, full year 2005*
Why Did Only Some Universities Develop as Duals?

Three of Australia’s five dual sector universities are in Victoria and developed from vocational education institutions: RMIT, Swinburne, and Victoria universities. Several other Australian universities also developed from vocational education institutions but discarded their vocational education programs to develop as single sector universities: Curtin University (which was formed from the tertiary programs formerly conducted in the Perth Technical College and which subsequently amalgamated with the Western Australian School of Mines), Deakin University (Gordon Institute of Advanced Education), Queensland University of Technology (Central Technical College), the University of New South Wales (Sydney Technical College), the University of South Australia (South Australia School of Mines and Industries), and the University of Technology, Sydney (which developed from the Sydney Technical College two decades after the University of New South Wales separated from the college).

Other universities in the UK and the US also developed from vocational education institutions but discarded their vocational education programs as they acquired and strengthened their higher education programs. For example, the University of Bath traces its history back to the Bristol Trade School of 1856 and Carnegie Mellon University was established as the Carnegie Technical Schools in 1900. But as they developed their higher education programs and gained university status they relinquished their founding vocational education programs.

The four Australian universities that retained their vocational education programs to become dual sector universities therefore seem anomalous. The following section seeks to explain these apparent anomalies by speculating that three factors contributed to the development of dual sector universities in Victoria and not in other Australian states: geography, the strength of college councils, and politics.

**Geography**

The large majority of Australian university students—even those at the elite universities—commute to campus from home. One might therefore expect that dual sector institutions and universities would be established in the smaller population centers that could support one dual sector campus but not two tertiary education campuses. However, most dual sector universities emerged from technical colleges that developed strong upper-level programs. They therefore had to be in a population center big enough to generate enough demand for vocational higher education of a type not adequately supplied by the local university. This explains why most of the technical colleges outside Melbourne and Sydney did not develop into dual sector institutions.
College Councils

Many vocational education institutions in Victoria were founded as a result of the financial contributions and political activism of industrialists and philanthropists who formed and occupied positions on the institutions’ councils or governing bodies. The philanthropist Francis Ormond was a founder of the Working Men’s College, which became RMIT. George Swinburne was a founder of the Eastern Suburbs Technical School, which became the dual sector Swinburne University of Technology, and other powerful figures contributed to the establishment of vocational education institutions in Footscray (which became the dual sector Victoria University) and elsewhere.

These institutions’ councils directed the development of their institutions to further the interests of the institutions and the communities they served, which was not always consistent with the policies of government departments.

Vocational education institutions in other states did not have councils or even community advisory bodies until recently, and consequently their development was much more subject to government departments’ policies. This restricted and in some cases blocked institutions’ aspirations to offer programs outside the scope determined by the relevant government department. The lack of an independent council and a continuity of influential supporters made institutions in other states much more vulnerable to government decisions that disadvantaged the institution, such as splitting vocational and higher education parts into separate institutions. This happened to Sydney Technical College twice. Its higher-level programs were first split off in 1949 to form the New South Wales University of Technology, which became the University of New South Wales in 1958 and a founding member of the elite Group of Eight universities. It happened again to the college two decades later in 1969, when the New South Wales (NSW) government reconstituted the advanced programs of Sydney Technical College as a new institution, the New South Wales Institute of Technology, which became the University of Technology Sydney in 1988.

Conservative Victoria and Labor New South Wales

While the Australian government set the framework for the delineation of tertiary education sectors, until recently institutions’ development was determined by state governments. State governments have had very different political histories, and I suggest that this was a factor in the development of dual sector universities in Victoria but not in New South Wales.

The Australian Labor Party was founded in 1891 but did not win office until it formed the federal government for three months in 1904 and then for six months in 1909. The first sustained Labor governments won office in 1910: in NSW for six years, in Western Australia for five years, in South Australia for two years, and federally for three years. As shown in table 5.5, since 1910 Labor has
formed the government for 30 percent of the time in Victoria, the lowest of any jurisdiction. In contrast, Labor has held office for 61 percent of the time since 1910 in NSW. The civic institutions in Victoria have therefore been overwhelmingly shaped by conservative governments and the citizens who elected them, while in New South Wales they have been overwhelmingly shaped by Labor governments and voters. The formative period of the tertiary education sectors in Australia has been since 1945, when conservative governments and citizens have again dominated Victoria and Labor governments and voters have dominated New South Wales.

The interaction between institutions’ councils and state governments’ political orientation is seen in New South Wales and Victoria’s handling of proposals to establish technological universities in their states. The New South Wales Labor government was sympathetic to the aspirations of the higher education division of Sydney Technical College to form a technological university. While the college did not have a strong council to advance the aspirations of the college to be made the new university, neither was there a strong council to oppose the splitting of the institution, an outcome opposed by its supporters.

The conservative Victoria government was attracted to the financial savings of forming a technological university out of Melbourne Technical College, the forerunner of RMIT; but this was not sufficient to overcome its view that such a development would be second best and, it feared, second rate. This feeling was reinforced by the advocates for a totally new institution, repeating in Victoria the disparaging appellation of the New South Wales University of Technology as “Kenso Tech.” The Melbourne Technical College council promoted its institution’s aspirations very vigorously, publicly before government enquiries and in private lobbying, but it was associated with vocational rather than higher education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Since 1910</th>
<th>Since 1945</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
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<td>44</td>
</tr>
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<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future Developments

Of Australia’s five dual sector universities, the University of Ballarat became a dual sector university by the merger of two hitherto single sector institutions. However, while the other dual sector universities have merged with other institutions, most with several, they originated as vocational institutions and became dual sector universities by developing higher-level programs and functions over time. That is, they became dual sector institutions by developing from the bottom up.

The current dual sector universities may follow the other universities that developed from vocational education institutions and subsequently discard their vocational education programs to concentrate on higher-level programs and research. However, that seems unlikely at present because the trend seems to be towards vertical integration, not disintegration. This may be observed in other vocational institutions that are following a similar trajectory as dual sector universities.

From 2005 the Australian government started offering income-contingent loans for students occupying full-fee-paying places in higher education programs in public and private institutions. This has greatly expanded the number of degree places offered by private providers, including providers that had hitherto offered only vocational education programs because of their lower market entry barriers. Some public technical and further education institutes are also offering degrees. The private providers are not required to report complete enrolment figures, and enrolment figures are not published separately for individual TAFE institutes, but it seems that the biggest secular vocational institutions have only 100 or 200 students enrolled in higher education programs. However, this provision is expanding fast and is a potential route for the development of dual sector institutions in the medium term and dual sector universities in the long term.

Another possible development of a dual sector university is from the top down. Several single sector universities have been introducing vocational and secondary education programs while at the same time trying to strengthen their research and higher degrees. We have seen that the University of Technology Sydney, the University of Wollongong, Monash University, and the Australian National University, among others, have established what in the UK would be recognized as further education colleges offering English language, final year of school, and diploma programs mainly to international students but also to domestic students. It is hard to know the size of these developments since they are typically established as separate companies that are not required to report even standard information such as enrolment figures.

However, the most recent annual report of the largest such body, Insearch (2006b), the feeder college of the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), notes that over 1,100 international students had progressed from Insearch
English and academic courses to undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at UTS during 2006. This would be almost 5 percent of UTS’s total student load of 23,000 full-time equivalent students, and so the university would have to expand Insearch fourfold to conform to the Australian understanding of a dual sector university. Nonetheless, this is a possible route to the development of a dual sector university: from the top down.

A similar development has been entertained by the vice-chancellor of Central Queensland University. The university is located in a region with an estimated resident population of 190,000. Most Australian university students do not relocate to study, so university planning bodies have proposed that a local population of at least 200,000 people is needed to sustain a university. Since the population of Central Queensland is rather less than that and the population within ready commuting distance of the university’s foundation campus at Rockhampton is only 70,000, Central Queensland University could not be sustained as a conventional university. It therefore introduced distance education soon after it was founded, and more recently it has established a network of campuses in Brisbane, the Gold Coast, Sydney, and Melbourne, which enroll mostly international students. A recent downturn in international student numbers has made the university vulnerable and the vice-chancellor has discussed the possibility of ensuring its viability by its becoming a dual sector university (O’Keefe 2007).

Another possible development is that made by several large universities based in capital cities such as Deakin, La Trobe, and Monash universities and the universities of South Australia and Tasmania. These have established or taken over campuses in small regional centers with populations of less than 100,000 and some even in towns of fewer than 50,000 people. These are clearly not sustainable and require substantial and draining cross subsidies from the universities’ main campuses. An obvious possibility is to amalgamate the regional university campus with the region’s technical and further education institute, which will usually already be well-established and viable. Some regional university campuses are co-located with TAFE campuses, and universities with regional operations propose more effective partnerships with TAFE. But university co-locations and partnerships with TAFE still maintain separate teaching staff, administrations, and facilities, making them less efficient than combined operations. A more efficient and effective option would be a full amalgamation of tertiary education institutions in each region to form a dual sector tertiary institute, university campus, or university college.

Regardless of whether the possibilities canvassed in this section emerge, it seems that dual sector developments are likely to be active in Australia for some time yet.
Note

1. I calculated this average from the data file of 2004 student enrollments compiled by the then Australian Department of Education, Science and Training from enrollment returns submitted by universities.

References


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