

# Preface

This book brings together key vocational education and training (VET) researchers across different countries and regions to provide the most comprehensive view available of emerging issues in the internationalisation of VET in both developing countries such as Laos, Kuwait, Vietnam, Korea and China and developed countries such as the USA, the UK, Australia, Germany and the Netherlands. The volume addresses a range of internationalisation dimensions in both the public and private VET sectors and onshore and offshore VET delivery in developed countries as well as foreign-funded VET programmes in developing countries. Most scholarly works in the field of internationalisation of education do not focus on the vocational education and training sector. Thus, this is the first time such a volume has been created to address the concepts, models, tensions, opportunities and innovation in internationalisation of VET across national borders and the impact of these internationalisation trends on institutions, students, staff and educational work in VET. In addition, the VET sector has a high level of flexibility in approach and course design as it matches courses with industry demands and in response to local workplace requirements that all sectors of education could adapt and learn from.

This edited collection of chapters addresses a range of aspects of internationalisation in vocational education and training. The volume considers the impact of internationalisation and student mobility on VET at the sectoral, institutional and individual levels as the sector emerges as a key tool for social and structural change in developing nations and as a flexible and entrepreneurial means of growth in developed nations. It explores not only the effects of the neoliberal market principle underpinning VET practices and reforms but importantly considers internationalisation as a powerful force for change in vocational education and training. The text provides insights into the ‘internationalisation’ nature and practices of a significant but often-neglected player within the field of international education – vocational education and training. This text:

- Represents the first volume in the world that addresses the concepts, models, tensions, opportunities and innovation in internationalisation of VET across different countries

- Provides readers with unique insights into a range of internationalisation dimensions as VET is adopted or adapted across national boundaries between developed nations and developing nations
- Presents both practical tools and conceptual frameworks on the internationalisation of VET practice, localisation of foreign training models and the impact of mobility on educational work in the distinctive context of VET
- Provides foundational work to develop an emerging field of scholarship and research on internationalisation of vocational education and training

This book is a unique contribution to the field of international education and to current debates about internationalising the VET sector. Currently, there is an absence in the literature and published work on issues related to the internationalisation in VET around the world. Many chapters included in this volume provide the reader with new data, conceptual knowledge and emerging models relating to teacher professional development in international VET, localisation of foreign training models in developing countries and the impact of mobility on educational work in the distinctive context of VET. Thus, in contrast to many existing titles, this book can engage with readers on both practical and scholarly levels. The insights into these crucial aspects of internationalisation in VET, from a wide range of cultural perspectives presented in this book, are hoped to attract dialogue about some of the critical issues related to the engagement of VET institutes at the forefront of internationalisation. This book challenges an essentialising perspective that considers internationalisation as uniform and unproblematised. Instead, it attempts to consider the commonalities and context-specific differences as well as tensions in internationalisation policies and practices at the sectoral and institutional levels and in different domains across developed and developing countries.

VET reforms in various countries have been aligned with neoliberal ideology, globalisation, changing global/national/local labour markets and demands of the knowledge economy. Despite the growing focus of institutions around the world on internationalisation of education and worldwide interest in international education, the internationalisation of VET remains a largely under-theorised and under-researched field. Little has been written about the synergies and contestation over the conceptualisation, purpose, nature and effects of processes and practices of internationalisation in the VET sector across different countries and continents. Our volume, through its focus on these themes, responds to this gap in scholarly work, as well as complements studies of internationalisation in higher education. It seeks to meet this need by providing VET and international education policymakers, practitioners, researchers and educators with informed, practical information about the implementation of internationalisation in VET, based on empirical evidence that can be used by others to develop beneficial outcomes in specific national contexts. In particular, as the first volume in the world that examines internationalisation practices in VET, this book provides an international forum to address the strengths, potentials, constraints and tensions involved in contemporary internationalisation in VET institutes and community colleges.

Ly Thi Tran  
Kate Dempsey



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