



The rewards (and challenges) of delivering the Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills

CAVSS challenges literacy and numeracy teachers to find ways to adapt to new and different training cultures. Industry training cultures are not like school, or like teaching the CGEA. The discourses of industry training reflect the languages, interactive behaviours and ways of looking at the world of people involved in a wide range of industries, but not the academic industry. The quotes included below are some of the responses of CAVSS lecturers asked to describe the most successful aspects of delivering CAVSS.

“the students’ appreciation”

Some literacy teachers love delivering CAVSS. They love the chance to see the fruits of their labour immediately, and to enjoy students’ responses and successes.

“the focus on VET context was rewarding”

CAVSS makes the connections between theory and practice for students, and for some students it is where they are first able to clearly see the relevance and usefulness of some of the maths and literacy skills they learned years ago.

“the students’ joy at passing”

VET students are very serious about their training goals. For many of those students, they have finally got past school, into a learning environment that interests and challenges them, where they can be recognised for their talents and skills. But for some of those students, literacy keeps on creating barriers for them.

“students continuing with course who otherwise wouldn’t have”

CAVSS is a new approach to literacy and numeracy support for VET students. Teaching CAVSS is a chance to make a real difference, and to work alongside the VET lecturer to help every student succeed and move out into the workforce with a lot of confidence, and the skills to back it up.

“using the practical aspects of training to teach and apply theory”

CAVSS teachers teach students how to apply reading, writing and maths skills to industry training activities. The skills taught by CAVSS teachers are always directly related to the VET course competencies.

“developing an understanding of the skills involved in the VET course”

This means handing out pages of worksheets is out, and becoming a learner yourself is in. CAVSS teachers need to feel comfortable about being a learner in front of the VET lecturer and the VET students, and to learn as quickly as possible.

It is important to be able to start talking the industry talk, and to understand the concepts, as soon as you can. CAVSS teachers get to learn all sorts of new skills from making butter curls, to rendering walls and maintaining hydraulics.

“respect is the key...respect for the VET lecturer and their knowledge and the students and their goals”

CAVSS is also a chance to broaden your professional skills, including collaborative teaching. One of the major challenges that CAVSS presents is learning to share teaching roles inside someone else’s classroom. Many school teachers are used to having control, but team-teaching requires respect, a lot of thought, and a focus on fitting in, rather than taking charge.

“working alongside VET instructors”

Team-teaching is a lot of fun, and worth the time it can take to get started. Students get two teachers for the price of one, and CAVSS seems to make a big difference to students’ motivation, as well as their success with the course.

“Team-teaching is so much fun, and the momentum carries everyone along. It becomes so much more than just the sum of two teachers. It’s a real buzz, and the students love it.”

Further Information

For further information about CAVSS delivery, please contact:

T: 08 6212 9715

E: literacy@dtwd.wa.gov.au