Beyond the boundary: A three-way partnership creating valuable learning experiences for young people in senior secondary education

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Abstract

While Australia has experienced a steady increase in the proportion of young people who complete their Senior Secondary Certificate there is still a large number of young people who leave school prior to completion (ABS 2015).

To support Year 12 attainment, various policy, programming and curriculum initiatives have been implemented. Relevant for this thesis are the National Partnerships policies that mandate and support school participation, the introduction of the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) and the proliferation of Flexible Learning Programs (FLPs). Each of these policies and initiatives provide the current education context for the Cricket Victoria Sports Development Program (CV-SDP). The program is designed along applied learning principles to reengage young people with learning who might otherwise have left school without completing Year 12.

The research set out to investigate the learning experiences and education outcomes valued by students in this program which is delivered in the state of Victoria, Australia, in partnership between SEDA, a provider of senior secondary programs, and Cricket Victoria (CV) the peak body for cricket in Victoria. The research also considered how the SEDA-CV partnership contributed to these learning experiences and education outcomes.

The research was conducted using a single case study methodology. Data was gathered using student videos and interviews, senior staff and program staff interviews from SEDA and CV and organisational documents. The data identified two key findings. The first highlights interest-based learning, choice and autonomy as unique features of learning valued by the students.

Secondly, the research reconceptualises educational partnerships beyond the philanthropic relationships currently described in the literature to one of joint value creation (Austin & Seitanidi 2012) where SEDA and CV demonstrate a genuine ability to create value for themselves and each other. Beyond philanthropic, the research also reframes educational partnerships as a three-way partnership that valued young people for their unique contribution, and in exchange provided them with valued learning experiences and education outcomes.

Doctor of Education Declaration

I, Adriana Johanna Maria van Son, declare that the EdD thesis entitled: *Beyond the boundary: A three-way partnership creating valuable learning experiences for young people in senior secondary education* is no more than 60,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.
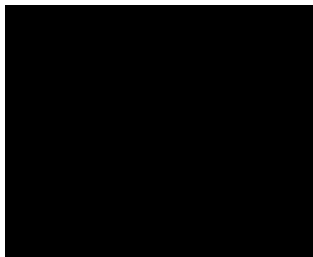
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Abbreviations

ACE	Adult and Community Education
ACER	Australian Council for Education Research
ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CA	Cricket Australia
CV	Cricket Victoria
CV-SDP	Cricket Victoria Sports Development Program
CV-TPP	Cricket Victoria Talented Player Program
FDO	Female Development Officer
FLP	Flexible Learning Programs
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
NFP	Not for Profit
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PE	Physical Education
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RDM	Regional Development Manager
RDO	Regional Development Officer
RE	Religious Education
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SEDA	Sports Education Development Australia
SSEF	SEDA Student Experience Framework
SWL	Structured Workplace Learning
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TEPA	Training Education and Development Australia
VCAA	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
VCAL	Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Over the past decade Australia has experienced steady increases in the number of young people who complete their Senior Secondary Certificate (Year 12) but there are still more than 80,000 young people who did not complete Year 12 by age 19 (Lamb Jackson, Walstab & Huo, 2015). For these young people there are significant consequences which can lead to ongoing social and economic disadvantage (Lamb et al. 2015). For example, when compared to their peers, non-completers are much more likely to experience periods of long-term unemployment or underemployment, which puts them at greater risk of marginalisation, social exclusion and mental health issues (Brotherhood of St Laurence 2014; Lamb, Walstab, Teese, Vickers & Rumberger 2004; McLachlan, Gilfillan & Gordon 2013).

Policy attention for the issue of non-completion is not new. Of particular relevance to this thesis, in Victoria in 2000 the Kirby report recommended the introduction of a flexible senior secondary program that would sit alongside the traditional and more academic Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) in response to concerns about the number of young people leaving school without completing Year 12. In the face of rising youth unemployment young people were continuing to leave school, seeking paid work, because school no longer appeared relevant to them (Kirby 2000).

As a result of the Kirby Report, the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) was introduced in 2002 enabling schools and Flexible Learning Programs (FLP) to offer a hands on and applied curriculum in addition to the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). In 2013 there were 22,853 enrolments in VCAL (compared to 51,266 VCE enrolments). The majority of VCAL students were in Government, Catholic and Independent schools (78%) with the remaining 5108 students (22%) in adult or alternative settings (VCAA 2014a).

Whilst there have been a number of new approaches to both teaching and learning implemented as part of these VCAL reforms (Blake & Gallagher 2009), a vital and ongoing requirement for VCAL programs is the need to provide young people with learning experiences in industry and community in contexts beyond the traditional classroom. In particular, the VCAL curriculum requires schools to build partnerships for

the delivery of VET qualifications, Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) and other work readiness and community learning experiences (VCAA 2016).

Whilst partnerships are an essential component of the VCAL teaching and learning approach, the responsibility for educational partnership development frequently rests with teaching staff who, all too often, have limited time, resources and expertise to invest in partnership development. Partnerships for VCAL programs are highly reliant on the personal networks of individual VCAL coordinators and teachers. In an environment of high staff turnover and burnout these partnerships can be fragile and transitory (Henry, Dalton, Walsh & Wild 2002) and therefore impact student learning experiences in these programs.

Research into educational partnerships in Australia has generally focussed on: school-family partnerships (Kim & Sheridan 2015); school-university partnerships (Kruger, Davies, Eckersley, Newell & Cherednichenko 2009); and learning communities (Kilpatrick, Barrett & Jones 2003). The purpose of such partnerships is generally to focus on resolving existing problems or challenges in education (Clerke 2013b; DEEWR 2010).

The focus of this research is on school-business partnership which aims to create additional learning experiences for students in the Cricket Victoria Sports Development Program (CV-SDP) a program delivered by the SEDA group (SEDA) in partnership with Cricket Victoria. In terms of the literature, school-business partnership research in Australia is generally limited to the evaluation of funding based programs such as the National Australia Bank – Schools First Awards or reports produced by sponsoring bodies or program agencies (DEEWR 2010; Lonsdale et al. 2011). This type of educational partnership research and program evaluation identifies both the outcomes and challenges of productive partnerships but rarely extends partnership development beyond what is currently prevalent. Whilst educational partnerships literature (Kruger et al. 2009; Williams 2014) emphasises the need for reciprocity and mutuality, partnerships are labour intense and the benefits to industry are rarely seen as more than philanthropic (DEEWR 2010) which also contributes to their fragility, especially during economic downturns.

Today, VCAL programs cater for some of Victoria's most marginalised young people, many of whom have experienced bouts of disrupted learning and/or disengagement with learning. It is essential therefore that the learning experiences created through

these educational partnerships are consistent with the needs and aspirations of students who experience these programs. This means innovative and engaging VCAL programs require – and students deserve – genuine, robust and sustainable educational partnerships and the learning experiences that flow from these. It is therefore important to continue to develop new ways of conceptualising educational partnerships beyond the problem based (fixing schools or students) approach to creating genuinely engaged learning experiences valued by young people.

1.2 The research

This research is about a group of young people who chose to leave school and complete their senior secondary education in a non-traditional setting (also referred to as a Flexible Learning Program (FLP)). In general, these young people completed Year 10 before deciding that school was either 'not working out for them' or the CV-SDP appeared to offer a more appealing alternative. Some, but not all of these students could be described as being 'at risk' of not completing a senior secondary certificate. Young people find out about the program from friends or family or receive promotional information through their Cricket Victoria membership. They apply online through the SEDA website and attend an information session and selection interview with their parents before deciding to join the program.

The students undertook full time studies with SEDA to complete their VCAL and VET qualifications enrolled in the Cricket Victoria Sports Development Program (CV-SDP). The combination of these studies leads to the awarding of a senior secondary certificate (Year 12), namely the VCAL, as well as a VET Certificate IV in Sport and Recreation. Most students choose to stay enrolled with SEDA for a 'Year 13' to complete a VET Diploma in Sport and Recreation. The young people who participated in the research chose the CV-SDP from a range of SEDA program offerings including sports such as netball, tennis, aquatics, and football.

The CV-SDP is delivered by SEDA in partnership with CV, provided young people with a series of learning experiences over the life of their program. It is these experiences that were investigated, focussing particularly on the students' perspectives. SEDA is a non-school provider[1] of senior secondary education in Victoria. In 2013 SEDA also delivered senior secondary programs in Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

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[1] Organisations delivering senior secondary qualifications in Victoria must be registered with the VRQA as either a school or a non-school senior secondary education provider.

1575 students commenced a SEDA program in 2013 across Year 11, Year 12 and Diploma level qualification with enrolments continuing to steadily increase in 2014 and 2015 (SEDA 2015a).

CV is the peak body for the sport of cricket[2] in Victoria. It administers the men's Victorian state team (the Bushrangers) who compete in the national competition for the Sheffield Shield and the Victorian Women's state team (Vic Spirit) who compete in the Women's National Cricket League. Players are selected for the state teams from Premier Cricket clubs who play competitions each weekend. CV is responsible for the growth of grassroots cricket through fan, player, official and local club administrator development (Cricket Victoria, 2015).

The program is designed to engage young people who are passionate about cricket (or sport in general) and who are 'more suited to an applied learning pedagogy' (SEDA 2013). While the SEDA programs can be described as part of the FLP offerings (Te Riele 2014), which genuinely attract young people who would otherwise not have completed Year 12, the SEDA programs also attract young people who had the academic capacity to complete VCE at school but are looking for something different.

SEDA as the setting for the research creates an unusual challenge for terminology. Whilst the SEDA program and its delivery of senior secondary certificates is officially a form of schooling, the young people interviewed use the word 'school' exclusively to refer to their previous school(s). They do not refer to SEDA as 'school'. In contrast, when considering the school–business partnerships literature, SEDA is a school or at least an educational institution. This thesis prioritises the young people's perspective and therefore uses 'school' to refer to conventional schools only, not to SEDA. The exception is that in discussions of school–business partnerships SEDA is included as 'school', as contrast with CV which occupies the 'business' side of that phrase. A more detailed description of SEDA, their partnership with CV and the program is provided in Chapter 4.

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[2] Cricket originated as a children's game in England and followed convicts and free settlers to Australia (Pollard 1986). Explained simply, cricket is a game played between two teams of 11 players on an oval field with a turf pitch in the middle. The objective of the game is to score runs when at bat and to put out the other team when bowling. The batting team has two batters facing each other across the turf pitch; each uses a bat to defend a set of stumps. The bowling team has one person bowling a ball to one batter, and 10 people in the field in order to catch any ball that is hit by the batter and throw it to the stumps. Generally, the batter can go out by being bowled, caught, leg before wicket or stumped. The batter can score runs by running between the wickets (also known as stumps), hitting the ball to the boundary (which counts as four runs) or hitting the ball over the boundary without touching the ground (which counts as 6 runs). The team with the most runs wins (Cricket Rules, 2016). There are multiple versions of the game that range from 3-5 hours to 5 days.

The research was driven by the following overarching research question.

- How do educational partnerships shape the learning experiences and education outcomes of young people in a flexible learning setting?

The research also posed two sub-questions.

- Which learning experiences and education outcomes (from their three-year program) are valued by SEDA students in the program?
- How does the SEDA-CV partnership contribute to these learning experiences and outcomes?

1.3 A personal journey

The decision to investigate the CV-SDP reflects my professional interests as well as my career to date. I undertook the first three units of the professional doctorate whilst working as the Associate Dean – Youth at Victoria University. During this time, I managed the university's Youth Strategy and worked with others to develop youth services and programs in an effort to improve education outcomes for young people who had chosen VET as an alternative to completing Year 12. In this role I met many young people whose education had been seriously disrupted because they had not been able to remain engaged in mainstream schooling. Their reasons for disengagement were diverse and individual but the consequences were consistently dire. In an environment where low level VET qualification completion is regularly less than 50% (NCVER 2015), the process of disengagement from school set many young people on a life course of low level employment with poor health and social connectedness outcomes (McLachlan et al. 2013).

Prior to the Associate Dean role, I worked in the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector of the same university as the Head of School for Sport and Science. It was early in this role that I was introduced to SEDA and the CV-SDP. SEDA started its operations in 2007. By 2010, in their third year of operating, their programs had grown rapidly and they were looking to secure a partnership with a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to auspice the delivery of their vocational qualifications. The university developed an agreement for SEDA to deliver vocational qualifications on their behalf.

Over the next three years SEDA, with the university as partner, grew the program from approximately 150 to 600 students. This rapid growth of a senior secondary program

delivered by a for-profit education organisation was highly unusual in the education sector; and the program drew a reasonable amount of attention from the funders and regulator. After three years of working in partnership the university and SEDA went their separate ways. Whilst the decision to discontinue the partnership made sense for both organisations the SEDA program continued to offer a valuable alternative to mainstream schooling for a large group of young people who had experienced limited success at school.

SEDA's education attainment results are one indicator of value. However, it was not until I met some of the young people who had experienced the program that its impact on them and their families became evident. There was something very right about these confident and articulate young people who loved their sport and appear to have 'recovered' from their earlier experiences of traditional schooling. When meeting their parents, I was often surprised by their admission that SEDA had not only 'saved their child' but also 'saved their families', many acknowledging that having a young person who is unhappy at school can lead to real problems at home.

In 2013 I was offered the opportunity to join SEDA as the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Education. While I had reservations about joining a for-profit education institution the student outcomes achieved by this organisation far outweighed that reservation.

1.4 Lucy's story

In my first few weeks of working at SEDA I attended a partnership meeting with Netball Victoria with a colleague and ex-SEDA student.   Lucy[3], an articulate young woman who had just graduated from the third and final year of the SEDA program, was about to commence a Bachelor of Education in Physical Education at a regional university. Part of SEDA's work with peak sporting partners, such as Netball Victoria, is to communicate the value the partner organisation brings to transforming young people's lives and vice versa.

Lucy was a terrific advocate for the program. She told her story simply but eloquently. As a Year 10 student she was told by her Physical Education (PE) teacher that she wasn't bright enough to go to university and should start to think about looking for a job. Being a PE teacher had been Lucy's dream for most of her high school years. Her

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[3] Pseudonyms are used for all young people and research participants.

mum and dad were both teachers and she loved sport. She left school and joined the SEDA program in Year 11 with her teacher's comments 'burnt into her brain' (her words not mine). She continues on to tell a story of developing confidence, receiving support from her SEDA teachers, working hard to achieve good marks and getting great volunteering opportunities at Netball Victoria. The NV staff were moved by her story as I was; they understood that as the partner organisation they were part of something that made a difference in young people's lives like Lucy.

I left the meeting knowing that I wanted to understand more about how the partnership between a sporting body and SEDA contributes to the learning experiences and education outcomes valued by young people. I wanted to understand this from the student perspective as it was their story, their words, that resonated for me. I also recognised that I was in the fortunate position of being an insider researcher in my own organisation with good access to the organisation and at the same time, a recent-arrival who would bring fresh eyes to the research.

1.5 Shaping the research

The research focus on young people and school-business partnerships reflects more than my most recent work experiences. These two foci have been fundamental to my career as an educator since my very first role as Outdoor Education Coordinator at St Michael's Grammar School, where I worked with young people in a partnership between the Outdoor Education Group and the school. This role and many others to follow required the constant balancing of the needs of each partner organisation as well as the young people in the school, program, or course. The research design commenced from a philosophical and praxis stance: that partnerships can enhance the student learning experience and they are often complex, tenuous and highly reliant on the goodwill of individuals.

I am also deeply shaped as an educator by my experiences of working in the outdoors with young people. Outdoor Education taught me that experience can be the best teacher and some experiences don't need teachers at all! Young people also taught me that each of us can experience the same moment very differently, and this experience is mediated through our beliefs, values and prior experiences. I recall sharing the top of Mount Kosciusko with a group of young people when I noticed Sachi (a Japanese exchange student) in tears. I asked him what was the matter and he said 'it is so beautiful; you are so lucky to have so much space! Where I come from there is

no such place.' I had been to the top of Mount Kosciusko many times with many groups of young people and none had experienced this moment the way Sachi had. For me, reaching the top of Mt Kosciusko meant that the skiing from here, back to our campsite, would be all downhill!

It was essential therefore that the process of conducting research about the learning program would prioritise young people's voice (Pomar & Pinya 2015). As described above, this stems from my personal experiences of listening to and learning from young people. This desire to genuinely listen to young people and change in response to their feedback comes from a philosophical belief that young people have important ideas they are keen to express and, in particular, they have a right to be heard on matters that affect them personally (Thompson 2008).

The approach developed for the research was based on these initial ideas and commitments.

1.6 A case study design

A single case study approach was chosen as it offered the opportunity to investigate, in detail, a single educational partnership with a focus on the student perspective. CV was selected as the partner organisation because it was the initial partnership developed by SEDA and is recognised by its directors and staff as one of the most robust and productive partnerships. Therefore, the CV-SDP was identified as the program to be investigated.

Since it was important for me to capture the students' experience of the program, the case study privileges the student voice and then builds on these findings with perspectives from a range of staff from both organisations. The student perspectives were captured via video (a three-minute video created as an assessment task in the previous year) (student videos N=9) as well as semi-structured interviews with graduates from Year 3 of the CV-SDP (student interviews N=7). While these young people are ex-students of the program they are referred to as 'the students' in the thesis.

Interviews were also conducted with senior managers and directors from CV and SEDA (senior staff interviews N=5) and program staff from CV and SEDA (program staff interviews N=5). Alongside these interviews, the research puts to use key

organisational documents from SEDA and CV to create a more holistic view of student learning experiences, education outcomes, the program and partnership.

1.7 Significance of the research

The research considered how the SEDA-CV partnership contributes to the experiences valued by young people. The research is significant because SEDA and CV have developed a senior secondary program that appeals to a group of young people, some of whom may not have otherwise completed Year 12. When so many young people are still leaving school early and the consequences are consistently dire, an opportunity to investigate a program that appears to work for young people is invaluable.

Educational partnerships are also essential for the delivery of the VCAL and the applied learning pedagogy it promotes. The research also makes a contribution to the emerging body of work that has been conducted into educational partnership as it relates to the development of learning experiences and education outcomes for the VCAL. This study provided an opportunity to investigate in-depth an educational partnership with the outcomes of the research providing insights for educational partnerships more broadly.

The research created an opportunity to investigate an unusual case in the context of the educational partnerships literature. The SEDA-CV partnership is unusual in the educational partnerships landscape because it challenges many of the established principles of secondary education. SEDA is a for-profit senior secondary provider, which is unusual in Australian schooling. It is also unusual for a school to work in collaboration with a prestigious business partner like CV.

Newby (2010) identifies that exemplar cases are a unique opportunity to investigate well-established practice through the unusual to create new theory. Understanding how this partnership has come about could shed light on achieving this type of partnership in education more broadly.

1.8 Structure of the thesis

This research investigated the learning experiences and educational outcomes valued by a group of CV-SDP students and considers the contributions made by the SEDA-CV partnership in delivering these experiences and outcomes.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature that positions the CV-SDP in a broader education context including the current policy environment which emphasises the importance of Year 12 completion. The review highlights the challenges faced by young people who become disengaged from learning and outlines some of the program and curriculum initiatives that have been implemented in Victoria to support and improve their educational attainment. In particular, it acknowledges those outcomes delivered through the VCAL curriculum and Flexible Learning Programs (FLPs).

The chapter also considers the role educational partnerships play in delivering valued learning experiences as one of many possible outcomes. In doing so, this section draws on concepts from the broader business and not-for-profit partnerships literature to create a context in which to consider the SEDA-CV partnership.

Chapter 3 outlines the single case study methodology chosen to investigate the CV-SDP and SEDA-CV partnership. The chapter describes the case study design which, while prioritising the student voice, uses data from a range of sources. The chapter also outlines the data collection tools and participants of the research including student interviews, student videos, senior staff and program staff interviews as well as organisational data and documents.

Chapter 4 provides a detailed description of the CV-SDP which includes a description of SEDA as the education institution, CV as the partner organisation, and the program students. The chapter also outlines the history of the SEDA-CV partnership as articulated by the instigators of the partnership.

Chapter 5 identifies key learning experiences and education outcomes valued by students in the CV-SDP. The chapter summarises the learning experiences and education outcomes valued by young people through the themes of 'loving cricket' and 'learner autonomy'.

Chapter 6 investigates how the SEDA-CV partnership makes a unique contribution to learning experiences and education outcomes valued by students. The chapter explores how students, SEDA and CV benefit from and contribute to the partnership and in doing so reconceptualises educational partnerships as 'joint value' ventures (Austin & Seitanidi 2012) and three-way relationships. This inclusion of young people as the third partner in school-business partnerships is not without challenges or dilemmas. These are also explored in the chapter.

Chapter 7 draws together the findings of the research. In terms of learning experiences and education outcomes, the chapter focusses on interest based learning and learner autonomy as the two most valued aspects of learning experiences and education outcomes of the CV-SDP for young people. The chapter outlines educational partnership findings which are described as being about joint value creation and three-way partnerships. Finally, recommendations for future research into educational partnerships are presented.

CHAPTER 2. SENIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the contemporary policies and practices that establish the education context for the research, drawing on contemporary literature to consider the reasons for early school leaving and associated costs. This creates a context for the important role of VCAL and Flexible Learning programs in supporting senior secondary completion. More specifically, the chapter locates the CV-SDP in an Australian and Victorian education policy context that is committed to increasing the number of young people who complete their secondary education.

Section 2.3 outlines the purpose of senior secondary education and delivered outcomes through VCAL and Flexible Learning Programs (FLPs) while section 2.4 investigates the strategies utilised in FLPs and VCAL to improve student engagement through the delivery of valued learning experiences.

The final section (2.5) recognises the role educational partnerships play in delivering valued learning experiences. In doing so, the chapter draws on concepts from broader business and Not for Profit (NFP) partnerships literature to create a context in which to consider the SEDA-CV partnership.

2.2 Year 12 attainment

International and Australian research attests to the importance of completing a secondary education qualification as a strong foundation for a healthy, productive and fulfilling life (Brotherhood of St Laurence 2015; Cassells, Duncan, Abello, D'Souza & Nepal, 2012; Lamb et al. 2015). Both in Australia and internationally there are many young people leaving school early without completing this important milestone (Brotherhood of St Laurence 2015; Lamb et al. 2015). In 2015, 79% of Australian school leavers had achieved a Year 12 qualification (or equivalent) but over 55,000 (21%) of young people were not successful at completing their Senior Secondary Certificate (ABS 2015). While completion rates have steadily increased since 2005, there is genuine concern for those who do not complete a secondary education because of the disadvantage associated with non-completion. Moreover, the burden of

non-completion is disproportionally carried by young people who are from regional areas, Indigenous, from government schools, from non-nuclear families, from families with low skill jobs and parents who themselves are low academic achievers (Curtis & McMillan 2008). For example indigenous young people demonstrated non-completion rates of 30% compared to non-indigenous students at 15% and Metropolitan student non-completion rates were at 13% compared to 20% for rural students (Curtis & McMillan 2008 p9).

Senior secondary completion and the transition to further study is also a priority for governments looking to remain competitive in the global knowledge based economy (Commonwealth of Australia 2012). This ability to remain competitive relies on working Australians having higher levels of education and training than what were previously required (Lamb & Rice 2008) and greater levels of participation from all parts of the community. This has led to heightened levels of government attention and considerable policy formation to ensure more young people remain at school and achieve a relevant qualification for entry into the labour market.

2.2.1 Leaving school

For some young people the need to 'leave school' (whether pulled or pushed) is more urgent than completing their Senior Secondary Certificate. Research conducted by Lamb et al. (2015) found that approximately 26% of young people had not completed Year 12 (or Certificate III equivalent) at age 19 and in not doing so also risked impacting future key milestones such as being in work or further study at age 24.

In Victoria, all students who leave school (at Year 12 or earlier) are surveyed by the Education Department about their transitions from school. This destination data is referred to as On Track data. The destination data (DEECD 2014) highlights that the key push factors for early school leaving continue to be driven by a dislike of school and teachers or a disinterest in the learning that does not meet their individual needs. For example, early school leavers respond to schooling as follows.

> [It was] 'not for me' or it was 'not [a] good environment' or '[I was] not learning; [and I was] not coping well at school', I had failed subjects or I [found it] too hard (DEECD 2014 p.33).

The key pull factor as articulated by young people who participated in the On Track data was the drive to find work or pursue a career. Whilst this may have been a valid reason for leaving school early in the 1960s and 1970s, a young person's chances of obtaining full-time, ongoing work, particularly for those looking for unskilled labour jobs has become less over recent years (FYA 2015).

The On Track data also highlights an increase in the number of young people choosing to leave school early to study at TAFE or other settings (from 3.8% in 2010 to 5.9% in 2014) (DEECD 2014, p.33). This would appear to point to an increasing number of young people actively choosing a different learning environment or style of learning where that alternative or flexible learning setting is seen as a genuine option for young people who want to leave school and study elsewhere. This is the case for a number of the students who choose the SEDA program rather than remain at school. Section 2.3.2 considers the role FLPs play in supporting young people who choose alternative settings for completing Year 12.

Choosing to leave school early is rarely the result of a single factor; however, the Australian policy context of learning or earning generally holds the young person as responsible for their own outcomes (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler 2015) and does not address the early school leaver's experience of schooling. Young people who leave school early suggest they find much of what senior secondary education has to offer is irrelevant to their personal interests and needs (Blake 2007). Alongside their own personal challenges, some young people find the structures of traditional schooling and their unproductive relationships with teachers too hard to negotiate. As such, they would prefer to leave to find work rather than continue with schooling that does not interest them (Blake 2007). In these situations, holding young people responsible for early school leaving without changing what happens in schools limits the potential for permanent improvement in Year 12 attainment (Reid & Young 2012).

More broadly, school leaving is a decision (or sometimes non-decision) made in the interplay between home/community/family factors and school factors. The term 'early' in early school leavers suggests that society expects young people to complete school. And as such, both personal and societal expectations are played out in this decision-making process.

Factors associated with early school leaving are summarised by NESSE (2010) as being about school, curriculum, family and individual factors. School factors might

include lack of supportive pastoral, poor relationships with teachers and unsupportive school exclusion policies. Curriculum factors might include a narrowly prescribed academic curriculum, perceived irrelevance of this curriculum and incompatible student-school expectations. Family factors might include absence condoned by parents, contradictory social, behavioural and cultural expectations and limited support to remain in school. Individual factors might include issues to do with self-esteem, confidence, social skills, coping skills and resilience (NESSE 2010 p.26). A reduction in early school leaving will therefore require a diverse range of strategies beyond those requiring mandatory participation and withholding social benefits to non-conformers. It is important therefore to investigate alternative program options and strategies employed at the local level to improve Year 12 attainment.

2.2.2 Non Completion – at what cost?

Failure to complete a Senior Secondary Certificate is well documented to have serious implications for the long-term outcomes of a young person (Brotherhood of St Laurence 2015; Cassells et al. 2012; Lamb et al. 2015). Leaving school without Year 12 has personal, economic, social and health consequences for young people and places them at risk of marginalisation (Cassells et al. 2012).

In Victoria, of those that leave school without completing Year 12, slightly more than half continue with further study (DEECD 2014), predominantly in VET. As stated previously, the completion rates for vocational qualifications are poor (NCVER 2014a) and the outcomes for early school leavers are even lower with less than 10% completing a VET qualification (Karmel & Woods 2008). This is likely to leave many early school leavers with no or very low levels of formal qualifications.

Furthermore, young people with low levels of education attainment are more likely to be unemployed or underemployed (Brotherhood of St Laurence 2014) and more reliant on welfare compared to their peers who have continued on to further education (McLachlan et al. 2013). Although there have been some minor improvements in the youth employment market, the Australian youth unemployment rate at 12.4% is more than twice that of the rest of the population (6.2%, ABS 2016) which makes securing work a challenge, particularly for young people with low level qualifications.

In terms of getting a job – any job – having a senior secondary certificate is nearly as useful as a vocational or tertiary qualification, but those who leave early are

significantly disadvantaged with up to 25% not making the transition to employment four years after leaving school (Commonwealth of Australia 2011, p.4). Moreover, unemployment early in a young person's career can be especially demotivating when endured over a long period. This can scar young people and reduce further their capacity for employment, especially when combined with other characteristics of disadvantage (McLachlan et al. 2013) so commonly prevalent in early school leavers.

Young people with low levels of academic attainment are also more likely to have lower paid jobs than those who complete Year 12 and those who go onto further study (Cassells et al. 2012) and this gap widens by midlife. As adults, early school leavers continue to be less likely to pursue further study and thereby continue to limit their future potential for skill development and career advancement. These combined factors lead to a significant reduction in earning capacities compared to their peers who continue to study beyond Year 12 (McLachlan et al. 2013). Adults with high levels of education attainment are able to considerably increase their earning capacity by midlife while those with lower levels of education attainment marginally increase their earnings over their working life (Cassells et al. 2012). For example, 'A person with a postgraduate degree will earn … almost 1.8 times the projected lifetime earnings of a person with just Year 11 or less' (Cassells et al. 2012, p.31).

While the level of education attainment clearly impacts employment and earning capacity outcomes, education also delivers skills beyond those necessary for economic participation. Education allows young people to obtain skills for social and personal benefit and civic engagement. There are well-established correlations between early school leaving, low level foundation skill development, economic disadvantage as well as poor health outcomes (CEDA 2015); but socially, low levels of education attainment are also correlated to lower levels of political advocacy, higher levels of mistrust of others and reduced engagement in community activities such as volunteering (OECD, 2012). Each factor further isolates these young people from the broader community and social connectivity. Social disadvantage is also perpetuated by early school leaving. Young people with parents or guardians who do not hold a Year 12 qualification are less likely to stay at school and young people from low SES backgrounds (contributed to by low level qualifications) are more likely than any other group to leave school early (ABS 2011). Their lack of education attainment has the potential to perpetuate a cycle of poverty as less educated people find it harder to escape disadvantage (CEDA 2015; Curtis & McMillan 2008).

2.2.3 Measures to increase attainment

The Australian Government and Education Departments in each state or territory have developed a range of policies and strategies to increase school completion. The following section discusses three important initiatives pertinent to the research. This includes the National Partnerships Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transition which aimed to increase Year 12 attainment through the strengthening of participation, the introduction of VCAL as an alternative senior secondary qualification to the more academic VCE in Victoria, and the ongoing development and expansion of a flexible learning sector nationally.

2.2.3.1 Strengthening participation through policy

Over the past five years the key policy initiative to improve Year 12 attainment has been the National Partnerships on Youth Attainment and Transitions agreed to by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2009. To increase young people's 'engagement, retention and attainment' COAG committed to a target of 90% of young people aged 20-24 years to achieve Year 12 or a vocational Certificate II by 2015 (COAG 2009, p.3).

The COAG (2009) agreement focussed on improving secondary education attainment by 'strengthening participation'. The agreement mandates that young people attend school (or equivalent) at least until they have completed Year 10. Beyond Year 10, young people up to age 17 are required to be in education, training or work or forego social income benefits. The agreement also limits access to income allowance for young people under the age of 21 without Year 12 to those who are undertaking a minimum of 25 hours of education, or training (COAG 2009). This was intended to discourage early school leaving without undertaking further education or obtaining work.

The agreement also provided young people with automatic entitlements for a vocational training place (COAG 2009). VET is an important bridge for young people as many early school leavers who do continue with further study do so through vocational education (DEECD 2014). Moreover, vocational education has become an important pathway to tertiary education for young people without Year 12, as some will continue learning through vocational education and transition to tertiary studies from a diploma

level vocational qualification (Victorian State Government 2014). While this option is available to young people, less than 45% of students who start a diploma level (or above) qualification complete it (NCVER 2015, p.6). Furthermore, only 16% of diploma completers go onto university (Griffin 2014, p.10), suggesting that many young people who leave school early do not gain higher level qualifications.

As stated previously, approximately 21% of young people who left school between May 2014 and May 2015 did not complete Year 12 or equivalent (ABS 2015). It is unlikely therefore those education leaders can claim success in achieving the COAG (2009) goal of attainment rates of 90% by 2015. The National Partnerships review undertaken by Dandolo Partners (2014) does however suggest that the National Partnerships policy of mandatory participation has made an important contribution to an increase in completion rates.

A critique of these findings by Groundwater-Smith & Mockler (2015) suggests current policies have done very little to create inclusive, engaging schooling for young people at risk of leaving early. They argue that this policy environment has not supported re-engagement with learning, and that education systems 'must aim to learn from alternative programs and incorporate the most valuable strategies into mainstream schooling' (p.147). The policy environment of mandated participation has also led to a larger proportion of less motivated and engaged young people staying on at school (Vickers, Barker, Perry & Dockett et al. 2015) or undertaking further training, creating more diversity of learners in each classroom. It is also not automatic that all of these young people will be better off (Clarke 2013) by staying at school or in training longer. For example, the measure of Certificate II (equivalent to Year 12) does not guarantee strong employment outcomes when Certificate I and II qualifications are seen as weak currency in the Australian labour market and extra years of study do not increase the likelihood of getting a job (Clarke 2013).

As part of the National Partnerships Agreement (COAG 2009) the Australian Government also funded: the Youth Connections Program; the School Business Community Partnership Brokers Program; and the Smarter Schools Initiative. Youth Connections were initiated to re-engage young people who had disengaged or were at risk of disengagement from school and connecting these young people with activities to support their re-engagement with learning, family and community (Dandolo Partners 2014). The program was cut in the May 2014 budget despite media coverage that

highlighted the negative impact of this change on the young people it supported (Partland, 2014).

A change of government in Victoria in 2014 led to the new Labour Government developing a vision for Victoria as the 'Education State'.   The Education State aims to provide all Victorian's with 'the skills, knowledge and confidence to create the lives they want to live and get the jobs they need' (State Government of Victoria 2015a, p.13). The initial consultation on the Education State vision brings into focus the importance of 'inclusivity' and aims to ensure everyone has access to the 'capacity for success' (State Government of Victoria 2015b, p.11). While much of this work is still in the consultation and reporting phase the new government has chosen to invest $8.6 million in 'Navigator', a service that directly support disengaged young people who are no longer in school and / or not engaged with either education or training. Navigator will provide case management and flexible support to young people to get them back into education or training (State Government of Victoria 2015c, p.1). This program at first glance is not dissimilar to the work previously undertaken by 'Youth Connections'.

The current national and state based policy environment mandates and promotes participation in secondary education and delivers services to young people who are already disengaged from learning, but provides limited guidance as to how schools might work to keep a more diverse group of students engaged with learning in ways that improve their long-term outcomes. Wyn (2015) suggests education needs to change to become 'fit for purpose' in response to the changes that have occurred for both young people and society. She claims young people are staying at school longer; are a diverse group of learners; want the opportunity to make decisions; and will need to be 'self-navigators' of more complex pathways from school to work and further study (Wyn 2015, pp.18-23).

2.2.3.2 VCAL – a strategy for improved Year 12 completion

In 2002 the Victorian Education Department introduced important senior secondary curriculum and qualifications reform specifically to engage a more diverse group of learners. VCAL was introduced in response to the Kirby report, a ministerial review of post compulsory education and training pathways in Victoria. The report responded to three community needs: a need for a skilled and knowledgeable worker for the

Victorian and Australian economies; to build social capital; and the need for social justice where all young people benefit (Kirby 2000).

While the panel made no specific recommendations about the establishment of a VCAL program, it acknowledged the existing VCE was academically demanding and suited young people who intended to go on to university, but poorly linked to employment and vocational training (Figgis 2005). This created the impetus and backing for the development of VCAL as an equivalent alternative to the VCE. Since 2003 there has been a steady increase in the number of young people completing a Senior Secondary Certificate through VCAL (VCAA 2013a).

VCAL has three award levels consisting of Foundation, Intermediate and Senior VCAL that more or less match Years 11 and 12 with the majority of students completing a Senior VCAL. In 2013 there were 22,853 students enrolled in VCAL in Victoria with 27.5% enrolled in Foundation VCAL, 42.5% in Intermediate VCAL and 30% in Senior VCAL (VCAA 2014a) across both mainstream schools and FLPs.

VCAL aims to prepare young people for work but also develops a range of personal and life skills not automatically delivered as part of the VCE curriculum. The VCAL design incorporates four strands with accredited units in literacy and numeracy, industry specific, work-related and personal development skills.

Each unit of study has agreed learning outcomes scaffolded in terms of difficulty, complexity and learner independence from Foundation through to Senior VCAL (VCAA 2013d). VCAL was designed for young people who would benefit from a more individualised learning program utilising an applied learning pedagogy. This program aims to develop the whole person through 'study, work and community engagement' and 'widens the student experience beyond the school gates' incorporating vocational pathways (Henry et al. 2002, p.6).

The VCAL applied learning pedagogy is described as bringing together theory based learning with the opportunity to apply new knowledge in a hands-on way in a real world context and is underpinned with key delivery principles, modes and practices including:
- starting where the learners are at;
- negotiating the curriculum;
- recognising the knowledge students bring;
- connecting with real-life experiences and community;

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- building resilience, self-confidence and self-worth;
- considering the whole person;
- integrating learning;
- promoting a diversity of learning styles and methods; and
- utilising the theories of applied learning, experiential learning and project based learning (VCAA 2013e, pp. 2-4).

These principles for creating engaged learning experiences are further discussed in section 2.4.4.

While VCAL was initially intended for a group of young people who wanted to transition from school to work rather than go to university, the increased availability of alternative pathways to university has led to more young people entering university having completed a VCAL program initially, thus positioning VCAL as a genuine alternative to the VCE.

In 2016, VCAL is delivered by a range of organisations including school and non-school providers (TAFE, Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and Adult and Community Education (ACE)). Their capacity to deliver a more flexible senior secondary qualification in contexts outside traditional school structures has led to an increasing number of young people in 'alternative' settings and programs to achieve a Year 12 completion or support their transition to work or further study (Te Riele 2007). Alternative programs, referred to here as Flexible Learning Programs (FLPs), offer much more than merely an alternative setting.

2.2.3.3 Flexible Learning programs

Flexible Learning Programs (FLPs) are generally seen as alternatives to mainstream schooling developed to support young people to re-engage or remain engaged with learning. The sector has responded to a growing need for alternatives to mainstream schooling when traditional schooling often does not meet the needs of a predominantly disadvantaged group of learners (Te Riele 2014). As such the target groups for these programs are young people at risk of not completing school or leaving early (Te Riele 2014).

FLPs are delivered alongside mainstream programs in schools, within TAFEs community colleges or serve as standalone programs generally delivered by not-for-

profit organisations (Te Riele 2014). In Australia, the flexible learning sector consists of more than 900 programs delivering education to over 70,000 students with the majority of these programs offering either junior secondary, senior secondary or vocational credentials (Te Riele 2014). The success of these programs has been in their ability to identify and implement strategies that re-engage a young person with learning in ways not always available to that young person at school (Wilson, Stemp & McGinty 2011). A more detailed analysis of these engagement strategies employed in VCAL and FLPs are discussed in section 2.4.3.

SEDA, the focus of this research, is recognised as part of this flexible learning sector (Te Riele, Plows & Bottrell 2014). Previous research on SEDA as a FLP found one of the successful elements of the program is the opportunity for students to learn in a 'hands on' way with learning opportunities created through their partnerships with national sporting bodies, primary schools and the local community (Te Riele, Plows & Bottrell 2014). Crump & Slee (2015) have also undertaken an evaluation of the SEDA program at Tiwi College and identified partnerships as one of five key elements of success. These are important findings given Crump & Slee (2015) claim the program at Tiwi College as a pilot program has the potential to be a 'game changer' for indigenous education where despite 'substantial investment' and 'dedicated effort' indigenous children are worse off since the last review into indigenous education in 1999 (Wilson 2013 p.11). These initial findings suggest partnerships are a vital element for the SEDA programs and worthy of further investigation.

2.3 The purpose of senior secondary education

The OECD, the Australian National Partnerships Agreement and the new Victorian Education State vision, all reflect a dominant policy discourse that places a clear focus on education as a tool for maintaining a national competitive advantage in the global economy (OECD 2012; Commonwealth of Australia 2012; State Government of Victoria 2015a). These place a heavy burden on the nation's education systems to deliver work ready and highly educated individuals. Further, they challenge young people to meet these outcomes or run the risk of being left behind (Lamb et al. 2015).

Over the last 20 to 30 years there has been a steady shift away from earlier education policies which focussed on a more socially just and equitable valuing of the role of education (Apple 2012; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler 2015). For example, in 1983 the Australian Schools Commission articulated a broad senior secondary education

experience for all young people – not just those going on to university (Australian Schools Commission 1983).

This research is positioned within a liberal view of education which incorporates the 'development of distinctly human capabilities to be exercised in all aspects of life...' (Crittenden 2006, p.106) rather than narrowly focussed education attainment for economic prosperity.

The Melbourne Declaration (MCEETYA 2008) as a contemporary reflection of education outcomes also provides a contrasting view to the neoliberal perspective of the role of education. It articulates the importance of senior secondary completion followed by further education and training to ensure young people have the opportunity to 'lead health, productive and rewarding futures' (MCEETYA 2008). The Melbourne Declaration identifies two goals for improving education outcomes for young people. Firstly, that Australian schooling promotes 'equity and excellence' and secondly, that all young Australians become 'successful learners', 'confident and creative individuals' and 'active and informed citizens' (pp.7-8).

This more 'holistic' view of education (Huitt 2011) moves beyond the neoliberal perspective of education as a tool for developing young people as market economy consumers and human capital to contribute to national economic prosperity (Apple 2012) and instead focusses on the whole young person, engaging each young person in their learning by considering their personal interests and capacities to realise their full potential (MEETYA 2008).

Research and policy for education outcomes (Lamb et al. 2015; OECD 2013) offers multiple and contrasting views on the role of senior secondary education that can broadly be divided into promoting either social/personal or employment oriented outcomes. The Melbourne Declaration places young people in the central position whilst fostering ongoing economic prosperity and social cohesion. It commits to action in terms of providing young people '…with high quality education to ensure they complete senior secondary and transition to further education, training or employment' equipped with the skills to make this transition and an 'appetite for life-long learning' (MCEETYA 2008, p.12).

The key aspects of the curriculum identified by the Melbourne Declaration include: the development of foundation knowledge; understanding and values for further learning

and adult life; the capacity to 'develop new ideas' and their practical application; and the ability to 'think flexibly and analytically', 'work with others' and 'work across disciplines' (MCEETYA 2008, p.13). It is important for the research to utilise this broad understanding of education outcomes when positioning the CV-SDP amongst other VCAL and FLPs.

The following sections (2.3.1 and 2.3.2) will consider some of the key education outcomes delivered through VCAL and FLPs in the context of the discussion above on the purpose of senior secondary education.

2.3.1 VCAL outcomes

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) promotes the VCAL program as an alternative to the more academic VCE for students who are looking for a pathway to work or further vocational studies rather than going on to university (DET 2014). The VCAL curriculum therefore has a stronger focus on preparing young people for the world of work than the VCE. Generally, VCAL students can also complete all or part of a VET qualification in the industry area of interest. These VET courses develop a range of practical, technical and employability skills relevant for the specific industry or trade. The VET units provide credit towards VCAL attainment but also stand alone as an important pathway to further studies, or employment in their chosen industry (DET 2014).

Alongside an increased focus on work-related skills and knowledge, the VCAL curriculum also has a strong focus on personal development skills and a commitment to the development of foundation skills in literacy and numeracy. This foundation skill development is grounded in real world preparation for participation in work and community life (Blake 2007). The personal development strand aims to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes that foster 'social responsibility, building community, civic responsibility, improved self-confidence and self-esteem' and the 'valuing of civic participation in a democratic society' (Blake & Gallagher 2009, p.55). This strand relies on the development of learning experiences beyond the classroom so that students can implement real projects in their local communities.

Continued literacy and numeracy skill development is also an important outcome of the VCAL curriculum. The curriculum uses authentic literacy and numeracy contexts beyond school to re-engage young people with literacy and numeracy in contrast to the

more academic literacies developed in the VCE (Blake & Bowling 2011). In VCAL mathematics can be taught in a work relevant context; for example, while constructing a pergola as part of the building and construction VET qualification, literacy skills can be integrated into an assessment task that requires students to document the outcomes of a student led community event.

In terms of education outcomes, VCAL does not provide students with an ATAR (Australian Tertiary Access Ranking) as the qualification was not intended to offer students access to university. Increasingly universities are however offering pathway places to students with vocational qualifications (VCAA 2013b). And as such, students with VCAL and VET qualifications are now accessing tertiary studies through these alternative pathways.

In the VCAL context, formal education outcomes are measured in terms of Senior Secondary Certificate completion and VET certificate completion as well as transitioning to work or further study, not dissimilar to the dominant neoliberal focus of education on employment. The actual learning outcomes outlined in the VCAL curriculum (including the development of numeracy, literacy, work relevant and personal development skills), offer students much more than just work readiness.

Regardless of the valuable outcomes delivered through VCAL programs, when compared to VCE, it is frequently undervalued by schools and their communities. There is an ongoing struggle between the dichotomies of learning created by the VCE-VCAL divide which values mind over hand, academic learning over vocational learning, learning over working, theory over practice and cognitive development over personal development (Blake 2007). Similarly, public perception still holds (Polesel 2008) that programs that do not provide ATAR scores to university are somehow academically inferior. This is a challenge for schools when they are highly reliant on a strongly academic public profile to maintain student enrolments. As such VCAL and their associated VET programs, especially when delivered in Flexible Learning Programs, are frequently seen as a dumping ground for the disengaged (Wilson et al. 2011).

2.3.2 Flexible Learning Program outcomes

The DEECD (2010) policy framework for flexible learning options recognises the importance of three key outcomes of FLPs. These include student learning, student engagement and wellbeing, and student pathways and transitions. FLPs have proven

themselves to be particularly successful at re-engaging young people with learning (McGregor, Mills & Thomson 2012). In general, young people who leave school early have often experienced disrupted learning and/or have struggled in highly structured mainstream learning environments (DEECD 2010). Young people's previous experience of schooling impacts their capacity to continue to learn and their personal perceptions of themselves as learners. These perceptions will shape their future capacity to thrive in a knowledge based economy (Hayes 2012) unless they can create a new narrative for themselves as capable learners. Young people in FLPs have identified that they particularly value becoming more self-confident. Many begin to see themselves as capable learners (Te Riele 2014) as they pursue learning of interest to them and their future aspirations.

In terms of student wellbeing, Davies, Lamb and Doecke (2011) and Te Riele (2014) recognise that attending to each young person's wellbeing is essential for re-engagement with learning. This includes dedicated focus on emotional, behavioural, social and health related outcomes to engage with learning.   Myconos (2014) identified that more than 50% of students who commenced the Brotherhood of St Laurence Community VCAL program self-reported low self-esteem, had relationship difficulties, suffered bouts of anxiety and addiction and saw themselves as poorly motivated with a lack of future direction. This is not an unusual profile of the kinds of issues faced by young people who attend FLPs (Te Riele 2014).

FLPs are also recognised as being able to provide a broader range of support services and community connections that allow the young person to work through their learning challenges as well as their personal and social challenges (DEECD 2010). Innovative examples include the 'hubbing' of services around the learning environment, for example the Sunshine Visy Cares Hub (Broadbent 2011) or the combing of accommodation, support services and learning environments demonstrated in the Foyer model (Sealey 2014) where accommodation for homeless young people and youth support services are co-located on the education institution's premises. This provision of additional support services is not easy to achieve for FLPs. Each of the two abovementioned examples manages highly valuable philanthropic or community partnerships to deliver these important outcomes. Other FLPs are not so fortunate and rely heavily on teaching staff who serve as both facilitators of learning and student wellbeing, placing a heavy burden on teachers (Myconos 2014).

In terms of pathways and transitions, young people who leave school to undertake study in a FLP still value the opportunity to obtain qualifications (Te Riele 2014). Although many young people who have left school early see themselves as 'not good enough' to go on to further studies (Archer & Yamashita 2003, p.58), time and effort is put into these young people by caring staff to negate the young person's self-narrative as a poor learner (Hayes 2012) thus re-establishing a sense of an achievable future.

FLPs have a strong vocational focus where young people can pursue an area of interest or consider a range of career options. FLPs generally achieve pathway outcomes for young people by working intensely with the young person, supporting them to attend TAFE or work experience as part of the program (Myconos 2014) including the development of individual learning plans in collaboration with the young person. FLPs encourage young people to move between a range of learning contexts (such as TAFE and workplaces), developing an understanding of what is expected in each new context in preparation for life beyond the program (Blake 2007).

In addition to outcomes identified by the Department's Flexible Learning Outcomes Framework (2010), Te Riele, Davies and Baker (2015) also identify community outcomes as valued outcomes of the Melbourne Academy (a Melbourne based FLP). In Te Riele's review of FLPs across Australia (2014) community outcomes included both recognition from the community as well as students making a valued contribution to their community. The outcome of recognition from the community, reinforces the importance of the program, the students and the types of learning undertaken in the program as being valued by the broader community. Rather than being seen as an at-risk program or a program for at-risk students, which labels young people outside of mainstream pathways; parents and the wider community see the benefits of the program as they are experienced and articulated by the young people. Where young people start to see themselves as capable learners and the community recognises the benefits of the program, young people can then feel proud of their achievements and community members develop a vested interest in the program (e.g. See also *Youth of the Streets program* – Key College, Bottrell, Te Riele & Plows, 2014).

Young people also value being able to make a unique contribution to their community through volunteering and service. Te Riele, Plows and Bottrell (2014) describe the importance of this outcome as it is experienced by students in the SEDA Darwin Sports Development Program, where students deliver sport clinics in primary schools that benefit both primary school and SEDA students. Service learning or civic learning

supports young people to care for others; become more community conscious; challenges their assumptions; encourages moral decision making; and increases their preparedness to take action on behalf of others (Finley 2011).

Since not all FLPs or young people in FLPs are the same, the outcomes for each young person will be different and therefore not comparable. Young people in FLPs have generally experienced significant disadvantage and are frequently behind in their academic skills; but the outcomes of these programs can be assessed in terms of the change in the young person since they commenced in a FLP (Te Riele 2014). Similarly, Lamb et al. (2015) recognised that young people who miss important milestones (such as Year 12 completion) can recover and still achieve future milestones by pursuing further learning in alternative settings.

As outlined above, there is a well-established evidence base for the education outcomes achieved through VCAL and the FLP, especially for young people who have become disengaged from learning in traditional settings. Of interest to the research is the identification of education outcomes valued by young people and how they are achieved, supported and enhanced through educational partnerships.

2.4 Learning experiences and student engagement

2.4.1   Learning experiences

The types of learning experiences students are exposed to during their education are a fundamental factor that either supports or hinders their engagement. In this study learning experiences are defined as all of the experiences that create the totality of both the curricular, co-curricular and informal experiences accessed by the student during their senior secondary studies.

In the SEDA CV-SDP context, curricular refers to the VCAL (learning outcomes) and VET (units of competence) delivered in the CV-SDP. The co-curricular experiences are those learning experiences indirectly linked to formal learning outcomes but contribute to the overall learning experiences of schooling for the student. Finally, informal experiences are those not specifically related to the curriculum or intended learning but identified as valuable by students (e.g. playing cricket at lunchtime with your friends). This definition conceptualises learning experiences beyond the traditional classroom based, teacher led interaction. This reflects a broader pedagogical and technological

shift which sees learning as taking place in multiple settings with a focus on the outcome (learning) as opposed to teaching as the input (Abbott 2014), and reflective of the in-community approach promoted in VCAL and FLP (Blake & Gallagher 2009; Te Riele 2014).

A broad theoretical framework for learning experiences can be found in the education foundations of constructivism. It suggests that the learner's basis of meaning is found in his or her direct experience. The centrality of experience in education is a key focus for the work of Dewey (1938), who believed that education is fundamentally a 'social experience, not a discreet, isolated academic or individualistic one' (Ozmon 2012, p.114). Dewey further refines the idea of experience by stipulating the need for quality experiences in school. These experiences are defined by their inherent 'agreeable-ness' or 'disagreeableness' and their effect on later experiences (Dewey 1938, p.27). In modern terms, these learning experiences can be described as either relevant to the young person and engaging, or in contrast irrelevant and disengaging and impacting on the student's future engagement with learning.

Building on the foundations of Dewey (1938), a more contemporary view of learning experiences is defined by Fink (2003) who sees significant learning experiences as those which are important in terms of the student's life, where the student has learnt something, and which has the potential to change their life in an important way. Fink (2003) considered these to be one of three outcomes: they enhance the individual's life; enable them to contribute to the communities that make up their lives; or prepare the student for the world of work (p.7). Whilst Fink was referring to Higher Education students in his studies, the work offers some insights that are useful for the research. In a powerful learning experience students will be 'engaged in their own learning, there will be a high energy level associated with it and the whole process will have important outcomes as a result' (Fink 2003, p.7). He therefore highlights the importance of the learning experience and the impact this experience has on student engagement and education outcomes.

2.4.2 Student engagement

A critical aspect of senior secondary completion is student engagement with learning. At the most fundamental level, a student who does not attend is difficult to teach and unlikely to complete a Senior Secondary Certificate (Hancock, Shepherd, Lawrence & Zubrick, 2013).

Beyond attendance, Appleton, Christenson and Furlong (2008) develop the notion of student engagement as a 'meta-construct' which brings together research that has taken place to date in the spheres of motivation, student belonging and school climate (p.369). The work of Appleton et al. (2008) considers research ranging from student engagement, academic engagement, school engagement, participation, school identification and belonging.

While student engagement is a complex, multi-dimensional construct that incorporates behavioural (positive conduct, effort, participation), emotional (interest, belonging, positive attitude) and cognitive (self-regulation, learning goals, investment in learning, autonomy, competence and relatedness) (Appleton et al. 2008, p. 370; Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris 2004), this research will consider student engagement with learning through the lens of individual learning experiences and question how these learning experiences support the young person's engagement with learning.

This approach is also reflective of the literature on student disengagement. Finn (1989) describes this as a 'gradual process of reduction in interest in learning, participation and school, which leads to disengagement' (p.118). In this process the reduction of interest in learning is experienced by the young person, one learning experience at a time.

Researchers overseas and in Australia have grappled with ways to identify who is 'at-risk' of disengagement. The South Australian Department of Education and Childhood Development (DECD 2010), for example, have developed a student engagement tool to assist students and their teachers or support workers to identify the level of engagement / disengagement. The tool categorises a range of student behaviours that describe the level of engagement in the dimensions of wellbeing, relationships and involvement in learning (DECD 2010).

This approach, whilst providing valuable insights about an individual student's level of engagement to be explored by the student and teacher, appears to place total responsibility for engagement at the feet of the young person and ignores the vital role schools can play in improving engagement with learning. Furthermore, if communities continue to hold young people responsible for early school leaving they ignore the evidence that early school leaving is an issue predominantly experienced by the most marginalised young people in our communities (Lamb et al. 2015) and their education outcomes are unlikely to improve.

Another approach to researching disengagement has been the profiling of groups of young people who are more likely to become disengaged. Curtis and McMillan (2008) identify those most likely to leave school early as: male, low SES, indigenous, from non-nuclear family, live in the country or remotely, having parents with blue-collar occupations, Australian born and attend government schools. Whilst this type of research is important and relevant for the establishment of policy and funding decisions at a state and national level, it does not provide schools and FLPs with significant insights into how to develop programs and learning experiences that will re-engage these young people.

Lamb et al. (2004) have developed a broader conceptual model of completion and early school leaving on behalf of the Queensland Government. This model conceptualises student completion / early school leaving as being defined by individual student attributes, their context and personal dispositions which impact on school engagement, academic engagement, education and work plans and academic achievement. The model brings together both malleable and non-malleable aspects of student engagement and acknowledges that student engagement is a complex web of factors. In light of the complexities and interrelatedness of these factors there will be no one simple solution. It is important therefore to investigate programs, practice and learning experiences that change the dynamic of early school leaving for some young people regardless of their background.

2.4.3 Strategies for engagement

Effective strategies for student engagement (whether in school or in FLPs) are identified in the literature as broadly about schools, teachers, the curriculum and their interplay. The most engaging school (or alternative education setting) has been identified by contemporary Australian research as being: located in the community context; in places young people reside; and small communities of learning (Wilson et al. 2011) that provide a positive school culture (Lamb & Rice 2008) where students feel they belong (Myconos 2012). The school has strong links with local support services (Clayton, Lewanski, Pancini & Schutt 2010; Wilson et al. 2011) and provides early intervention programs to support literacy and numeracy (Lamb & Rice 2008) including mentoring and remedial programs (Lamb & Rice 2008). Whilst the program is seen as voluntary (i.e. students choose the program) (Wilson et al. 2011), attendance requirements are clearly articulated and enforced (Lamb & Rice 2008). Students are treated as adults (Myconos 2012) and are involved in decisions made about their

education (Wilson et al. 2011). Students are taught by qualified staff experienced in working with young people (Wilson et al. 2011). Teachers are skilled at working with disadvantaged youth and are therefore able to develop individualised learning plans (Wilson et al. 2011); they have a deep understanding of the student's background and take into account a student's past negative experiences of learning (Myconos 2012). The curriculum is relevant to students' needs and life experience (Wilson et al. 2011). Learning is project based and student centred (Lamb & Rice 2008) and teachers utilise applied and adult learning principles (Myconos 2012).

An Australian study (Clayton et al. 2010) 'Enhancing the retention of young people to Year 12 – especially through vocational skills' investigates programs similar to the CV-SDP with a particular focus on vocational education. Clayton and colleagues identify seven categories of success factors for the retention of young people in courses similar to those offered at SEDA. This research is particularly important because of the large component of vocational studies embedded in the CV-SDP. These success factors identified in the research include: institutional leadership; quality information about pathways, options and opportunities; identification of individual student needs and expectations; monitoring of student attendance and performance; supporting students though mentoring; relationships with teachers and access to services; teaching of an applied learning curriculum tailored to individual needs; and connecting students to teachers, communities and employers (Clayton et al. 2010). The factors identified by Clayton et al. (2010) are not dissimilar to those found in the student engagement literature for VCAL and FLPs. They provide a strong basis for understanding what works in terms of student engagement.

Clayton et al. (2010) identify at least three success factors for student engagement that relate to the experiences provided through industry partnerships and VCAL including: teaching that utilises applied and experiential work-related and work-based learning approaches; connecting students to employers; and connecting students to structured pathways into further education and work (Clayton et al. 2010, p.27). What is however unclear from this research is how the identified success factors impact engagement and how the student views these learning experiences. Since students and their education outcomes are most affected by learning experiences that are engaging (or not), it is important that research considers their views on what works in terms of engaged learning experiences that deliver student valued outcomes.

2.4.4 VCAL curriculum for engagement

Policy and curriculum frameworks regularly dictate the sorts of learning experiences teachers can create or co-create with students. The types of learning experiences prioritised for the delivery of VCAL are based on an applied learning pedagogy (Shultz, 2012) and the initial intent of the Kirby report, which was to deliver programs to meet the needs of a more diverse group of learners (Kirby, 2000). The curriculum is underpinned by a number of guiding principles that support teachers to deliver the curriculum utilising an applied learning approach (VCAA 2013e).

In the first instance the VCAA sees applied learning as student centred. Students are recognised as integral to decisions made about their 'program design, delivery and evaluation' (VCAA 2013e, p. 2). Each program is built on the personal strengths, experiences and interests of the student and is expected to cater for individual learning needs. This includes the pace of learning, preferred learning styles (Kolb 1995) and forms of assessment (e.g. written, oral or physical demonstration). VCAL is frequently referred to as a 'hands on' learning option (Victorian State Government 2014b) which prioritises a kinaesthetic or 'accommodating' (Kolb 1995, p.230) learning style where individuals have the ability to learn from 'primarily hands – on experience' (Kolb 1995, p.230). Hence a number of young people who have struggled to excel in the more academic VCE context have transitioned to a VCAL program.

The VCAL program structure is also student centred through its flexible design, allowing students to enter and exit the program at each level (foundation, intermediate or senior) to pursue a range of pathway options. For a student leaving a VCAL program these could include transferring to a VCE course of study, leaving school and transitioning to an apprenticeship, or undertaking further study in a vocational setting. Students may be entering directly into VCAL from Year 10, or they may have completed a year of VCE (Year 11) before switching to VCAL or may have left school earlier and returned to VCAL when they are ready to finish Year 12.

Secondly, applied learning in VCAL is focussed on 'authentic learning' (VCAA 2013e, p.3). Learning is authentic when the learning 'reflects the way the knowledge will be used in the real world' (Herrington & Oliver, 2000, p.4). It is purposeful and relevant for the young person, and they can see how the learning might be applied to life beyond school. Authentic learning also constructs knowledge collaboratively amongst peers

with teachers participating in a 'coach' role to support the learning at 'critical times' (Herrington & Oliver, 2000, p.5).

Alongside authentic learning experiences, the VCAA encourages the use of 'experiential learning and skill development' (VCAA 2013e, p.3). As the third guiding principle, experiential learning is a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Experiential learning is student based, personal, process oriented, holistic, perception based and organised around direct experiences (Kolb 1995). Learning takes place through success and failure, adventure and uncertainty and these learnings are experienced as deeply personal (Kolb 1995), whilst simultaneously creating a sense of community and belonging.

Fourthly, the VCAL curriculum also encourages learning experiences that build resilience, confidence and self-worth (2013a, p.3). Each of these terms is part of contemporary education vernacular with its own well-established body of research that collectively focusses on academic and personal resilience (Martin 2002). The VCAA encourages a number of strategies to support the building of academic and personal resilience by increasing the likelihood of learner success including 'starting with where the student is at', 'engaging in interest-based learning' and using approaches to learning that work for the individual young person (VCAA 2013e, pp.2-4).

This focus on building academic and personal resilience utilises a fifth VCAL guiding principle of accessing learning environments that strengthen connections with community. The VCAA promotes the delivery of VCAL in a range of settings in the community (VCAA 2013e, p.3). Frequently, these learning experiences are structured along service learning principles (Levesque-Bristol, Knapp & Fisher 2010). Service learning as an education strategy involves students in meaningful service to their school or local community, while also engaging in some form of reflection and / or study related to the service. These experiences are particularly meaningful for young people when they have the opportunity to be directly involved with community and they feel like they are making a difference (Levesque-Bristol, Knapp & Fisher 2010, p.219).

VCAL prioritises learning in the community to ensure students experience a range of vocations, develop an understanding of the world of work and apply new knowledge to unfamiliar contexts, particularly through structured workplace learning (SWL). These forms of applied learning draw on situated learning concepts (Herrington & Oliver), such as communities of practice, allow the learner to test their knowledge and skills in

a vocational setting and assist them to develop an understanding of the practice of that community through legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger 2002).

The totality of the learning experiences encouraged through the VCAL curriculum appears to be inherently positive and highly motivational for the young person. The VCAL curriculum framework and guiding principles outlined by the VCAA (2013e) appear to satisfy the three basic psychological needs of the young learner, identified by Ryan & Deci (2000), in learning more broadly through autonomy, competence and relatedness. As identified in the guiding principles of VCAL, autonomy is encouraged through student centred learning experiences, individual student choice and the pace of learning. Students actively participate in decision making about what will be studied, and when and how it might be assessed. Competence is fostered through appropriately tailored personalised learning that is interest-based and creates multiple opportunities for students to be successful. Relatedness is achieved through the opportunities created for shared (peer) learning, particularly through experiential or adventure based activities, organising events collaboratively as well as a sense of connectedness achieved by working in the community.

These types of learning experiences, especially those undertaken in the community require programs to establish partnerships with local community groups and businesses. The ability to develop and foster partnerships is therefore essential to the success of these learning programs.

2.5 Partnerships

2.5.1 Defining partnerships

In an everyday definition, partnerships are commonly understood as a 'relationship' or 'association' that exists between two organisations (Oxford University Press, 2016). Partnerships can be seen as relationships that serve a specific purpose or achieve an aim that meets the needs of both organisations.

Educational partnerships as a particular type of partnership are the relationship (whether formal or informal) between an education institution and a partner organisation (DEEWR 2010). Education institutions generally partner with either community organisations, businesses or other education institutions (NISC 2008). These partnerships are generally driven by a desire to access additional resources and

expertise to deliver services to students (DEEWR 2010). Beyond financial and physical resources (e.g. technical equipment), educational partnerships have also been leveraged to develop unique learning experiences not available to the education institution without the partnership. For example, these learning experiences may provide students with opportunities to experience the world of work and community beyond the school gates. They are seen as a strategy for engaging students with learning that is authentic and relevant to their life and career development stage (Clerke, 2013b). In secondary education these partnerships can serve an important function of supporting students at risk of not completing Year 12 (Clayton et al. 2010).

Research undertaken on FLPs by Te Riele (2014) showcases educational partnerships that create opportunities for students to experience learning activities such as work experience, work placement or internships and mentoring programs in collaboration with business and community organisations. Educational partnerships with community organisations also allow students to become involved in community events, initiatives, fundraisers, or projects that require them to develop a range of interpersonal, teamwork and communications skills and encourage the application of technical vocational skills learnt during the course (Clerke 2013b). Due to the nature of the learning experiences that can be created through educational partnerships, productive partnerships are recognised as important for both the delivery of VCAL (Henry et al. 2002) and FLPs (Te Riele 2014). These partnerships are seen as essential to support education institutions to provide a wider range of curriculum opportunities for student learning (VCAA 2013c) and engage.

The VCAA identifies the need for educational partnerships to ensure learning experiences of the students are sufficiently integrated into the realms of work and community and provide real-life opportunities for learning (VCAA 2013e). The initial review of VCAL undertaken in 2002 identifies both the need for partnership development and the fragility of these partnerships when they are highly reliant on individual teachers and their personal connections to community, and industry connections in a high staff turnover environment (Henry et al. 2002).

More than 10 years on, the formation of partnerships for the provision of learning experiences in VCAL as a senior secondary context is still a developing field of research. Whilst there has been research (e.g. Kamp 2006) undertaken into the role of Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLEN) (another initiative from the Kirby report), the LLEN's role is more aptly described as developing networks to support

interconnectedness and transitions between schools, TAFE, universities and industry rather than to improve VCAL learning experiences through partnerships. While LLENs have actively promoted and fostered educational partnerships to improve outcomes for young people, partnership building is still seen as a 'bubble' of good practice rather than a 'common language for education' (Ellum 2014, p.3).

There is however a substantial body of research about partnership development in schools internationally (Boyles 2005), vocational education and tertiary education in Australia (Callan & Ashworth 2004; Kruger, Davies, Eckersley, Newell & Cherednichenko 2009), internationally (Kisker & Carducci 2003) and the partnership literature more broadly (Austin 2010; Apple 2012). All of these can inform partnership development in secondary education and VCAL.

With regard to VCAL research, Blake (2007) and Blake & Gallagher (2009) have investigated the challenges and implications of the VCAL reforms for schools and teachers but there is still very little research about how young people have experienced these programs and how educational partnerships can contribute to the learning experiences provided.

2.5.2 Theorising educational partnerships

Two dominant perspectives on educational partnerships are evident in the literature. The first positions the private sector as an important and valuable contributor in making government services, like education, more efficient and effective (Steijn, Klijn & Edelenbos 2011). These are referred to as public-private partnerships. The second dominant perspective for educational partnerships is the view that businesses should, as part of their corporate social responsibility, work alongside NFP's (including schools) and government agencies to solve complex social issues. These are broadly referred to as social partnerships (Lee 2011).

Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in the education sector have increasingly meant the involvement of the private sector in public sector activity including the traditional roles of public education systems such as 'policymaking, education provision, inspection and school management' (Robertson & Verger 2012, p.1). PPPs theory is based on widely held neoliberal policy assumptions that government or not-for-profit involvement with the private sector will lead to improvements in 'quality of a product, service or policy'

and provide 'better value for money' as well as 'sharing project risk' (Steijn, et al. 2011, p.1235).

These types of partnerships are about systems change which acknowledge that government services such as education and health stand to benefit from the experience and knowledge that the private sector might bring. It also acknowledges that governments are privatising due to limited fiscal resources whilst facing increasing demands for social services (Austin 2000a). Such partnerships are negotiated on the basis that the private sector can earn a profit whilst delivering cost minimisation for governments. They are not intentionally focussed on improving the student or client experience. Government imperatives have therefore set a context that encourages partnering as a means to increased access to resources and knowledge for the NFP and government sectors. Ball (2007) argues however that this privatisation of education is much more than a change in the delivery of educational services as it 'changes the meaning and experience of education…where the possibilities of authenticity and meaning in teaching, learning and research are inexorably eroded' by privatisation and commodification (p186-187).

The second philosophical underpinning for educational partnerships is the social partnerships literature. In the first instance this literature considers partnerships in terms of being multi-sectoral rather than a binary view of public-private (Waddock 1989) and focusses on 'common interest social issues or causes' (Lee 2011, p.29). Business involvement in these social partnerships has initially been driven by a broader corporate social responsibility agenda (Kanter 1999) and, more recently, an understanding that this social responsibility can contribute to the financial health of the organisation (Kanter 1999)

This focus on social outcomes is particularly relevant and well aligned with current views about educational partnerships which sees their key benefit as helping schools resolve local problems that focus on student outcomes through the additional talents and resources able to be leveraged from partner organisations (Bentley & Cazaly 2015; Clerke 2013b; DEEWR 2010; Williams 2014).

These social partnerships are born out of common vision, a shared crisis, organisational overlap, public pressure or legislative change (Waddock 1989). To achieve success, social partnerships need to overcome three key barriers identified by Waddock (1989) as economic, competitive and political forces. As well as these,

Selsky and Parker (2005) point to friction issues created when two organisations from different economic sectors come together. When this occurs they also bring different values, motivations, modes of operation, create change and blur sector roles (Selsky & Parker 2005). All of these tensions need to be understood and resolved in the development of sustainable educational partnerships.

Moreover, NFP, education or community organisations are often drawn to social partnerships with business out of a need to access expertise not currently available to the organisation (Froelich 1999). This is similar in emphasis to that expressed by the VCAA with regard to VCAL (VCAA 2015c) where it suggests partnerships offer 'access to expertise' and 'additional resources' as well as 'opportunities to meet curriculum learning outcomes' (p.42).

2.5.3 Educational partnerships

In the last 10 years educational partnerships have become more important to schools in three key ways. The first is to increase access to funding and resources through direct funding by business or by increased exposure to additional funding sources accessible to the business over time (DEEWR 2010; Lonsdale et.al 2011). The second is the organisation's potential to contribute to student learning experiences and outcomes (Bentley & Cazaly 2015; Clerke 2013a). Each of these two key ways are fundamentally about the education institution's ability to offer a broader range of learning experiences to a more diverse learner group with limited financial resources. Thirdly, is the ability to learn from business and build capacity in schools (DEEWR 2010) with a particular focus on efficiency and effectiveness, not dissimilar to the intent of the PPP.

Fundamentally, the key driver for partnership development between school and business identified in the DEEWR (2010) report is to help the school deliver the existing curriculum. One of the most frequently identified partnership benefits for schools is the potential to develop new sources of income (DEEWR 2010; NISC 2008). It is questionable therefore whether schools would partner with business if it had sufficient resources to conduct all of the programs it wanted to deliver.

Clerke's (2013b) report exemplifies some of the potential tensions with educational partnerships. Her research reports on a range of projects that were funded by the National Australia Bank to support schools to build partnerships with communities or

business. These funded projects mainly focussed on delivering improved learning outcomes for students. Key rationales for partnership activities included the broadening of 'vocational options and skills; enhancing the health and wellbeing of students; connecting students with the community' and 'improving student engagement' (pp. 8-13). However, Clerke (2013b) does not seek to understand what motivates and sustains business involvement in educational partnerships to deliver these types of outcomes.

The DEEWR report (2010) confirms that business involvement has stemmed from a genuine desire to give back to the local community, reflecting the 'social partnership' relationship. The business benefits through improved staff engagement and morale and helps staff develop a stronger understanding of the challenges schools face (DEEWR 2010). Businesses also value an enhanced community profile that comes from this philanthropic giving (CCC 2004) and demonstrated social corporate citizenship. However, business is less clear about the financial benefits of these partnerships beyond the general sense of improved brand profile (DEEWR 2010).

There are also genuine questions in the literature about whether business should benefit from their relationships with schools (Apple 2012; Boyles 2005; Williams 2014). DEEWR (2010) confirms that schools are comfortable with the idea that business may wish to serve as 'good corporate citizens' and give generously but are highly suspicious of business interests in schools beyond philanthropy (Seddon & Ferguson 2009). Beyond suspicion, Seddon and Ferguson (2009) also highlight a pervasive fear that children may be used for commercial purposes. This suspicion is regularly played out in the media with unscrupulous employers exploiting students through internships (Tahmincioglu 2010) and other work volunteer programs (Keeping Volunteering Voluntary 2014).

From a business perspective, Kanter (1999) recognises that there are additional layers of complexity when working with the community sector or NFP organisations as these organisations are often driven by goals other than profitability (Kanter 1999). She recognises tensions played out between these divergent organisations and respective goals. In educational partnerships with business these tensions are between inherently socialist (or social good) education systems and a capitalist business world. These tensions are rarely discussed explicitly in the Australian educational partnerships literature. Williams (2014, p.47) utilises the works of Cardini (2006) to argue that educational partnerships are not 'positive' 'collaborations of trust' as they are purported

to be, nor do they overcome traditional problems of 'hierarchies and markets such as competition, bureaucracy, distrust, antagonism, monopolies and stiffness' (Cardini 2006, p.395).

These tensions are also seen in the expansion of Edu-businesses where multi-nationals view public education as having enormous revenue and profit potential. Hogan (2015) highlights some of the concerns expressed about the increasing level of influence exerted by Edu-businesses over governments and policy development where

> …the for-profit activities of Edu-businesses might undermine the sovereignty of national education policy practices, contribute to a democratic deficit and in the process, add to undesirable consequences associated with the increasing privatisation of the provision of public 'goods' (p.304).

McMurtry (1991) suggests these tensions are due to philosophical incompatibility between the demands of capitalism and those of education. In Australia, educational partnerships are generally seen as philanthropic in nature (DEEWR 2010). In this relationship, schools identify a problem and seek support (either financial or human) to assist in addressing student focussed problems and in doing so may not meet the needs of business.

Clerke's (2013b) review of the Schools First Program (an initiative of the Foundation for Young Australians and ACER) identifies that schools mainly partnered with community groups rather than business. While she doesn't explore the reasons for this phenomenon, it may suggest that schools either do not yet have the capacity to engage with business in ways that motivate their participation beyond philanthropy, or they choose not to. This is not surprising when the key competency for school principals in developing partnerships is identified by Caldwell (2013) as the ability to act strategically to ensure '…educating our young people is the responsibility of the entire community, not just schools' (p.2) rather than an ability to understand the business partner's needs (beyond philanthropy).

Austin (2010) confirms that businesses have started to re-examine their philanthropic contributions to community and social projects and ideally these contributions now need to make a much greater corporate or financial contribution. To be viable for the business partner these partnerships need to contribute to core business. Kanter (1999) refers to this process of going from 'spare change' to 'real change' where

instead of companies handing over their 'spare change' at arm's length to business, they get involved in solving social issues by contributing their most valued resources to produce both 'profitable and sustainable change' (p.1) '…moving beyond corporate social *responsibility* to corporate social *innovation'* (p.2, original italics).

This shift in focus from 'philanthropy to value creation' is described by Austin and Seitanidi (2012) as a shift along the 'collaboration continuum'. It recognises that partnerships can exist somewhere along the continuum from 'philanthropic' to 'transactional' and finally 'integrative' and 'transformational' (Austin & Seitanidi 2012, p.736). Partnerships in the philanthropic category have value flow one way. In this case, partnerships are only viable while the business has the resources to be giving with little value return. The transactional stage sees an exchange of benefits to both organisations that are openly sought and acknowledged in the partnership (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012). At this stage there is likely to be an alignment of beliefs and values and the exchange is more than overcoming the initial problem or resource gap to be addressed. The integration stage sees the partnership develop shared missions and activities. The partnership is likely to experience increased participation from staff in both organisations, the boundaries between organisations seem to disappear and staff will start to see the partnership and its activities as part of their job (Austin 2000a). These integrated partnerships rely on an ability to generate value for each client rather than address a narrow focus inspired by a purely philanthropic motive.

Austin (2000a) describes joint value creation as a key outcome of fully integrated partnerships between business and not-for-profit organisations. In joint value creation partnerships, the two organisations are so highly integrated they develop the capacity to build collaborative value rather than exchange resources. These joint value creations are activities and services created via the talents and expertise of both partners that each could not achieve without the input of the other organisation (Austin & Seitanidi 2012).

For educational partnerships with business to successfully provide learning experiences valued by young people it is essential that partners develop a shared understanding of their separate functions and understandings of value created for both partner organisations (Austin & Seitanidi 2012, p.742). What is of value to schools is of interest to business but may not be the best way to create value. For an educational partnership to endure and succeed requires evolving and making decisions based on

the distinct best interests of the partnership in addition to the best interests of each partner (CCC 2004, p.9).

2.5.2.1 Risks of partnering

The concept of serving business interests appears to create tensions in the educational partnerships literature (Williams 2014), especially when utilising Austin's (2010a) starting premise for cross-sector partnership: that creating value (for both) is the central justification. Whilst business to business partnerships focus on mission, vision and values (Austin 2003) sufficient to ensure good alignment, education institutions appear to either mistrust the intent of business (broadly) or require the use of an ethical framework to work with business (CBC n.d.).

The risks associated with school-business partnerships are well documented. This is particularly so in the American literature where districts and schools have partnered with both big and small business. Boyles (2005) provides an extreme example.

> In Colorado Springs the director of school leadership… sent a memo reminding teachers and administrators that in order to profit from the exclusive contract the district had signed with Coca-Cola, students needed extra breaks from class to consume 70,000 cases of coke products (p. 218).

From big brands, such as Coca-Cola, to the local shop offering incentives to parents to purchase goods in store with rewards flowing back to the school; schools agree they have become subservient to these partnerships because of the high reliance on revenue associated with them (Boyles 2005).

The focus for this research is the education provider's ability through partnerships, to provide engaged learning experiences and education outcomes valued by young people. This positions educational partnerships as a genuine vehicle for offering experiences that schools could not deliver regardless of the financial resources it could leverage and places the role of business as a unique contributor to learning. Whilst educational partnerships can play an important role in delivering these outcomes it is important to also consider the risks and challenges. The research also explores these tensions.

2.6 Conclusion

The chapter developed a conceptual framework that positions the research within a policy context that prioritises a reduction in the number of young people who leave school early, leading to an increase in Year 12 attainment. It recognises the important role that policy, curriculum and practice can play in increasing student engagement and Year 12 attainment. In particular, it emphasises the important education outcomes, learning experiences and student engagement strategies implemented through the VCAL curriculum and FLPs.

The chapter also considered the unique contribution educational partnerships can make in supporting schools and FLPs to deliver valued learning experiences and acknowledges the risks associated with partnerships between education and business. By borrowing concepts such as 'joint value creation' (Austin & Seitanidi 2012) from the not-for-profit business partnership literature, the chapter offered new ways of conceptualising some of the challenges experienced in educational partnerships with business which create an important foundation for the research.

CHAPTER 3. A CASE STUDY APPROACH

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 provides the methodological framework and design for the research. Section 3.2 describes the rationale for a single case study approach that prioritises student voice and utilises a qualitative methods data collection approach to create multiple, convergent lines of inquiry. Section 3.3 outlines the techniques used to enhance the credibility and applicability of the research to other education settings. Section 3.4 identifies the five key data collection tools employed including student interviews, student videos, senior staff interviews, program staff interviews and organisational documents. Section 3.5 positions the research as ethical in accordance with the *National statement on ethical conduct in human research* (Commonwealth of Australia 2015) and considers how the research was shaped by the insider researcher.

The research was driven by the following overarching research question.

- How do educational partnerships shape the learning experiences and education outcomes of young people in a flexible learning setting?

The research also posed two sub-questions.

- Which learning experiences and education outcomes (from their three-year program) are valued by SEDA students in the program?
- How does the SEDA-CV partnership contribute to these learning experiences and outcomes?

The research was developed from a pragmatist worldview that places a 'premium' on the human experience, utilises inductive methods, and aims to think logically and clearly about life problems (Ozmon 2012). It is this lived experience that is referred to in education research as interpretive in orientation (Carr & Kemmis 1986 cited in Merriam 1992). This research also incorporates an interpretive orientation that considers '…education to be a process and school as a lived experience' (Merriam, 1992, p.4). Merriam (1992) understands interpretive research as focussed on the meaning of the lived experience and that this meaning constitutes the knowledge to be gained. Hence the research investigated the lived experience of students and developed new understandings of the value students placed on their experiences. Of importance to the research is that these experiences were viewed in their unique context and in relation to the partnership between SEDA and CV. As initially identified in Chapter 1

there is much about the learning experiences and education outcomes achieved through the SEDA-CV partnership that is unique and needed to be analysed in context to be fully understood.

3.2 Methodology and research design

To retain the unique context of the research a case study methodology was chosen. As a research methodology, case study is described by Creswell (1998), as a process of detailed, in-depth data collection utilising multiple sources to explore a case (i.e. program, event, individual or activity), which is bounded by time and place. Case study is further defined as 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (Yin 2003, p.13). A case study approach provides a rich, holistic description of specific problems and how groups of people tackle these problems '…they are problem centred, small scale, entrepreneurial endeavours' (Shaw 1978 cited in Merriam 1992, p.2).

3.2.1 Single site

A single (rather than multiple) case study approach was chosen because it offered greater opportunity for in-depth understanding of the case (Creswell 1998). A single case study also creates opportunities for theory building (Yin 2014) in areas that have a limited theory base. This is especially important here as research about educational partnerships with business in the senior secondary context is not extensive and therefore the theory base is limited. In particular, case studies have a track record of being useful for theorising about cross-sector partnerships (Austin 2010). The SEDA-CV partnership is also unusual in the education context, therefore the research also aimed to develop an exemplar case (Newby 2010) thereby creating new insights through the investigation of the unusual.

The case to be investigated was the CV-SDP. It is a system bounded by time (for the duration that the cohort experienced it) and place (at the program locations in Victoria) (Creswell 1998). The CV-SDP is a product of the relationship between SEDA (the education institution) and CV (the business partner). The research considered the experiences of a group of young people (the cohort) who completed the program in November 2013.

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The case has been conceptualised in the following way.[4]
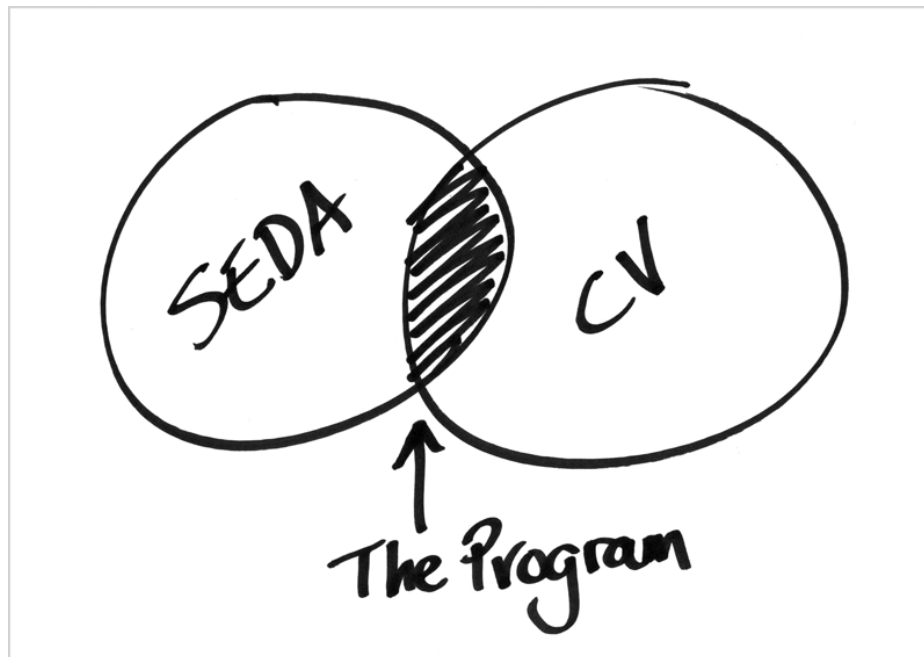
Figure 3.1: Conceptualising the case study

The diagram demonstrates that the CV-SDP is the central bounded unit of focus of the case study coloured in black. The program is shaped by the overlap between the two partner organisations (SEDA and CV) and impacted on and experienced by both SEDA and CV staff and the students. The case study utilised student interviews, student videos, senior staff and program staff interviews as well as organisational documents from both SEDA and CV (See Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 for details).

Case study research is generally seen as site/s specific (Yin 2014). The initial research site was identified as SEDA, the owner of the CV-SDP. SEDA is a non-school provider of senior secondary and VET programs to young people who are choosing an alternative program to mainstream schooling. The site definition would be limited however without recognising CV as another key site. As mentioned previously, CV is the peak body for the sport of cricket in Victoria. Chapter 4 draws on the data collected from senior staff interviews and / or organisational documents to provide a detailed description of the CV-SDP, the partnership and the students who attend the program.

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[4] All of the figures are hand drawn in a style that reflects the white board drawings and discussions that have taken place as part of the thesis process. After many attempts at formalising these illustrations with symbols that never really reflected the realities of the case (e.g. what should a school look like?), these simplistic drawings have been developed to allow the reader to create their own understandings of the research.

The SEDA and CV partnership was selected as the key partnership to be investigated in this study as it is the most established of SEDA's partnerships with a sporting association. CV was seen to be actively engaged in providing SEDA students with opportunities for learning and senior managers at SEDA and CV were particularly enthusiastic about participating in the research.

Once the case to be investigated was chosen, the research focussed on 'what' and 'how' questions by asking *what* learning experiences and education outcomes young people valued and *how* the SEDA-CV partnership contributed to these. As identified by Yin (2014) the case study methodology lends itself to these types of questions.

3.2.2 Student voice

This case study, in the first instance, privileges the student voice. Hargreaves (2004) suggests that to ensure educators develop personalised learning experiences for young people that are designed to meet their individual needs; educators need to listen to them. Privileging the student voice focuses on those young people that matter most in schools, and provides them with an opportunity to contribute to change (DoE 2007; Mitra, Serriere & Stoicovy 2012). Acknowledging that students can make an important contribution to both research and program evaluation is critical. This case study was designed on the premise that students have unique knowledge and perspectives about their learning experiences and the value they place on these experiences; these perspectives are personal and individual; and that their voices are essential to improving the quality of education experiences available to young people.

Beyond utilising student voice for school improvement a second discourse that focusses on the rights of the child to be heard, especially over matters that pertain to them (Thompson 2008) is also noted in the literature. Whilst commended for their desire to improve what is happening in schools these discourses have also been criticised in terms their underlying assumptions. In particular, it is suggested that educators hold the power over young people's voice and can hand over or 'gift' this power to students who are often positioned as powerless (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith 2015, p. 38). As articulated by Mockler and Groundwater-Smith (2015) this overly paternalistic view tends to undervalue the power young people already possess and exercise regularly and therefore can serve to disempower young people further.

3.2.3 Qualitative research

A single case study method using multiple sources of qualitative data collection allowed for the development of a multifaceted understanding of the case. While the focus of the research was qualitative, utilising both student and staff interviews and student videos to capture the student experience, the research was enhanced through the inclusion of statistical information about student outcomes collected annually by SEDA. This student outcomes information was compared with benchmarked data from the NCVER (2015) and VCAA (2013a) to creating a comparable view of the program and its education outcomes. These comparisons are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.5.4 Student outcomes.

In this case study the three key subjects of the research were SEDA, CV, and a group of graduate diploma students. These identified subjects were employed to create multiple participant groups and data sources (Yin 2014). Multiple participant groups enable a multi-layered and deep understanding of both student experiences and how these experiences came about. While the research prioritised the student voice additional groups of participants were included to achieve greater in-depth understanding of the student experience from multiple additional sources (i.e. staff from SEDA and CV) and to better understand the SEDA-CV partnership from multiple perspectives.

As identified above, the participant groups included in the research were students, senior staff and program staff of both CV and SEDA. Each of these groups offered unique views and understandings of the student experience and the SEDA-CV partnership. These groups are discussed in detail in section 3.4.

The research design used multiple data collection tools. These included: student interviews; student videos; senior staff interviews; program staff interviews; and organisational documents. Each tool is discussed in detail in section 3.4.

3.3 Credibility of the research

Case study methodology is recognised as being highly reliant on data that is created from limited sources and from sites which are unique (Gray 2014). This is particularly so in single case studies. Generalisations made from these types of data frequently create issues of validity and reliability for the research (Gray 2014).

Terms such as 'validity' and 'reliability' are however steeped in quantitative research practices that do not always reflect the intent or purpose of qualitative research. This research utilised the term 'verification' instead of 'validity' and 'employs the Lincoln and Guba (1985) terms of trustworthiness and authenticity…to create credibility for the study' (Creswell 1998, p. 201). Creswell (1998) recommends using a minimum of two out of eight verification procedures he has identified to increase the credibility of the research. Four verification procedures were designed for the research.

The first of these procedures is described as 'prolonged engagement and persistent observation' (Creswell 1998, p.201). This required the building of trust with research participants and also learning the culture of each organisation. Prior to commencing the data collection phase I had worked at SEDA for twelve months and as such I was still seen as relatively new. The data collection phase was undertaken over the next twelve months whilst I continued to work in the organisation. Thus engagement with the case exceeded two years.   As an insider researcher I had established relationships with a number of the participants. Issues of trust were predominantly around participants wanting to understand the research and how it would be published rather than the researcher. My position in the organisation as a senior manager and an authority figure for students also created power relationship challenges for the research. Section 3.5.5 Insider – outsider research, considers some of the challenges of insider research and how these were managed during the process

Secondly, Creswell (1998) recommends triangulation where 'researchers make use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators and theories to provide corroborating evidence… to shed light on the themes' (p.202). Data triangulation is achieved when the research findings are able to be supported from multiple sources (Yin 2014). Multiple sources of evidence, such as those employed in the research (videos, documents and interviews), create a variety of data formats with each making a unique contribution. For instance, the student videos are auditory and visual artefacts of the student experience completely devoid of any research influence in their creation. However, they were made as an assessment task with clearly identified requirements and therefore need to be seen in this context yet provide valuable data on the learning experiences and outcomes valued by the students in the CV-SDP.

Triangulation is supported in this research through the use of organisational documents. These established the intent of the program and the public persona of SEDA and CV while staff and student interviews provided personal insights that were

not always reflective of the organisation. Organisational documents also create a context for the research data including student outcomes which offers a means of comparison with similar programs.

The third procedural technique implemented was the use of 'peer review or debriefing to provide external checking of the research process' (Gray 2014, p. 202.) The initial research design was undertaken as part of the candidature process and ethics application but external checking was also important in the data analysis and write-up phase. These stages required the constant posing of the question: Does the data support this interpretation? This constant reflection on the emerging findings was especially important for me as an insider researcher, working to identify my own bias likely to shape my interpretations. Providing early drafts for review and discussion with my supervisors ensured there were multiple opportunities to review the 'strength of the links' between the data and the findings (Gray 2014, p.280).

The fourth technique was the utilisation of 'rich, thick descriptions of the case' (Creswell 1998, p.203) in the thesis. Creswell (1998) suggests this is an important aspect of verification as it allows the reader to make some of their own decisions regarding transferability of the findings, referred to by Gray (2014) as 'external validity'. Transferability is important because research findings may inform future thinking about educational partnerships; but at the same time there is a need to acknowledge that this case study is quite different to many other education institutions, schools or alternative education programs. It is this uniqueness that is of interest but also limits transferability unless the reader can make sense of similarities and differences in the case study when compared to other settings. The utilisation of statistical student outcomes information was used as one way to draw comparisons between the CV-SDP and other senior secondary programs in Victoria and Australia.

Credible research is also highly reliant on the researcher's capacity to be reflexive in the process of conducting and reporting the research. Insider research creates further challenges which are discussed in section 3.5.5.

3.4 Data collection and analysis

3.4.1 Data collection

The research used five key data collection tools. These included student videos, student interviews, senior staff interviews, program staff interviews and / or organisational documents. Each data collection tool will be discussed in terms of the participants and the process of data collection. Table 3.1 provides a summary of the data collected and how it was used in the research.

Table 3:1: Summary of data collection tools and participants

Data collection tools	Types	Count	Participants	Data
Student videos	Artefacts – literacy assessment task	9	7 male students 2 female students	Chapters 5 and 6
Student interviews	Semi-structured interview (1 hour)	7	6 male students 1 female student	Chapters 5 and 6
Senior staff interviews	Semi-structured interview (1 hour)	5	2 SEDA Directors 1 SEDA senior staff 1 CV senior staff 1 CA senior staff	Chapter 4
Program staff interviews	Semi-structured interview (1 hour)	5	3 SEDA staff 2 CV staff	Chapter 6
Organisational documents	See Table 3.2	8	NA	Chapters 4, 5 and 6

3.4.1.1 Student videos

3.4.1.1.1 Participants

The young people who participated in the research were selected from a specific cohort of the CV-SDP who graduated from the third year of the program in 2013 (referred hereafter as Program 3). One hundred graduates were invited to participate in 2014 once they had left the program. Whilst they are referred to as students in the research they are actually ex-students of the program.

In 2013, all Program 3 students (including the cohort) were expected to author and produce a three-minute video of their experiences of the SEDA program. This was part of the literacy course requirements for Program 3 but did not contribute to the completion of the Diploma of Sport Development. (The assessment task and assessment criteria are attached as Appendix B – *Literacy Task (Video).*) Students were not aware (at the time of production) that this video could be used for research purposes with their consent. These students were then invited to have their videos used for research purposes. Nine students from the cohort provided consent for the research to access their three-minute videos (seven males and two females).

3.4.1.1.2 Process

The three-minute time limit to author and produce the video meant students could think carefully about what they wanted to convey regarding their learning experiences and what they valued about the program. Including the videos in the research design was also particularly important for hearing from young people who might be reluctant to participate in the more formal and challenging setting of an individual interview (Thompson 2008).

In February 2014, SEDA provided a list of 100 CV-SDP students who had completed their video literacy assessment task. Each of these students was mailed the Information Sheet and Consent Form (See Appendix C and Appendix D). Students who wanted to participate in the research were asked to return their consent form in the reply paid envelope supplied.

There were two main challenges encountered in the student video data collection phase. While I had anticipated being able to access approximately 20 videos this proved to be unrealistic. I had anticipated a greater response rate for this data collection phase as it would appear to require relatively little student involvement. Secondly, there were also three students who gave permission but whose videos were not able to be used as they were not stored correctly on the SEDA student file system. SEDA staff made every effort to make these videos available but to no avail. SEDA provided all available video files on an external hard drive for viewing.

The videos collected as part of the research were in the main produced by students in a news reporter style with students sitting behind a desk reading from notes as prompts. Some students included additional photo and film footage and one student

produced a mini-episode of the current affairs show *60 Minutes,* about the day Shane Warne[5] stole his chips!

3.4.1.2 Student interviews

3.4.1.2.1 Participants

The students who participated in the interviews were part of the 2013 student cohort. In total seven student interviews were conducted (six males and one female student). One of these students had participated in the CV-TPP and six students had participated in the CV-SDP. By happenstance these were not the same students as those who gave permission for their videos to be used for the research.

3.4.1.2.2 Process

Semi-structured interviews were chosen because their 'conversational nature' (Yin 2014, p.112) offered both the opportunity to capture rich descriptions of the individual participants' lived experience (Merriam 2008) and seek deeper understanding of the specific examples provided (Yin 2014). The purpose of semi-structured interviews was to develop an understanding of the learning experiences and education outcomes that young people in the program valued.

The invitation to participate in an interview was mailed to participants in May 2014. Students were sent an introductory letter, information sheet (ex-student interview) and consent form (ex-student interview) (see Appendix C and Appendix D). This process was intentionally separated from the student videos to minimise confusion. Students could choose to release their video without feeling pressured to also commit to interview, as this was seen to require a much greater level of commitment. Four students responded to the first invitation to participate in the research. An administrative staff member followed up all students who returned their consent forms and arranged for me to meet students at preferred locations.

Interviews were conducted between May and September 2014. After interviewing the first four students it was decided the study would benefit from a greater number of participants. A SEDA administrator telephoned each of the 100 students in the cohort list in alphabetical order (by surname) inviting additional participants, which resulted in a further three students agreeing to participate.

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[5] Former Australian international cricketer widely regarded as one of the best bowlers in the history of the game (ESPN 2015b).

These interviews took place in meeting rooms at the student's university, SEDA Head Office, the Living and Learning Centre in Eltham as well as individual student workplaces. Each interview was scheduled for a one-hour session and commenced by discussing the interview protocol. After reminding participants of the overall research focus, each participant was asked a series of predetermined questions with follow-up questions in response to their initial answers (see Appendix E). The questions aimed to illicit rich descriptions of the learning experiences and education outcomes students valued. Each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed by a professional transcription service.

All participants were emailed a copy of their transcript. They were encouraged to read and make changes to the transcript to ensure the document accurately reflected their views. While not all participants responded to this offer, those who did chose not to make changes to their transcripts. Each participant was also provided with two movie tickets as a thank you for participating.

3.4.1.3 Senior staff interviews

3.4.1.3.1 Participants
Five senior staff agreed to participate in senior staff interviews including two Directors from SEDA, a senior staff member from SEDA and three senior staff from cricket, one from CA and two from CV respectively. Each of the senior staff had been involved in the SEDA-CV from its inception or very closely thereafter. As a group they collectively hold the historical knowledge of the SEDA-CV partnership from inception.

3. 4.1.3.2 Process
Senior staff interviews were conducted between February and April 2014 to establish an in-depth understanding of the SEDA-CV partnership. The initial interviewees with Donald[6] (SEDA Director) and Stephen (CA) were selected on the basis they were recognised by both organisations as initiators of the partnership. Additional interviewees were recommended by Donald and Stephen based on their previous involvement in the partnership including Jerry (SEDA Director) and Phillip (senior staff) from SEDA and Fiona and Joe from CV. As such, I exercised both my insider knowledge of the business (Drake & Heath 2011) and used a snowball technique (Newby 2010) to select the most appropriate senior staff for interviews. I met with each

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[6] Pseudonyms are used for all staff and student research participants to ensure they are not readily identified by the reader. Readers with insider knowledge of SEDA or CV /CA may be able to identify the participant based on their job titles and / or personal expressions. This was made clear to the participants taking part in the research.

SEDA senior staff member before emailing them an invitation to participate plus an information sheet and consent form. This process of personal informal invitation with a formal email follow up provided each potential interviewee with the opportunity to exclude themselves from the process via email, in a way that attempted to manage power differences in each relationship. Some of the challenges experienced in managing power differences in the interviews are further discussed in section 3.5.5 Insider-outsider research.

As an employee of the SEDA group, some of the participants were more senior than I was and others more junior in the organisational hierarchy. In each case, I reiterated that their involvement was completely voluntary and they could choose not to participate. Some of the challenges of interviewing work colleagues are discussed in section 3.6.2. The CV staff invited to participate were contacted by telephone before sending an email inviting them to be involved in the research. All invited interviewees agreed to participate in the interviews.

Each interview was scheduled for one hour with lead-in time for preparation at either the SEDA head office or at the CV head office. At each venue we used common meeting rooms as neutral places for the interview to take place. Each interview commenced by discussing the interview protocol. This included: collecting the consent form; asking the participant whether they had any questions about information provided; agreeing that the participant was able to spend up to an hour being interviewed; seeking permission to audio-record the interview; agreeing to provide a transcript of interview to confirm accuracy of the conversation; describing how personal identity is managed in the write-up of the thesis; confirming that the interview was semi-formal; and acknowledging that I may ask questions that would appear to be obvious based on my role in the organisation but this was important to collect formally for the research.

After reiterating the overall research focus with each participant, they were asked a series of set questions and follow-up questions in response to their answers (see Appendix F). The questions aimed to illicit a rich description of the partnership formation, key players and some of the early challenges of the partnership. The interview also encouraged the staff to identify what they thought the partnership contributed to student learning and how this came about. Each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed by professional transcription services. All participating staff

were emailed a copy of their transcript and encouraged to read and make changes to the transcript as required. No changes were made to the transcripts.

While each interview created new learnings for me as a researcher, the interview with Fiona (Female Cricket Coordinator from CV) identified some of my own assumptions and reinforced the need for flexibility in the interview process. I realised soon after we started the interview that she had an operational rather than strategic understanding of the partnership. During the interview I decided to adapt the senior staff questions and encouraged her to speak freely about the CV-SDP and her role. Her interview was inspiring and motivating as she appeared to work with young people in positive ways that exemplified high quality partnership work. The interview was enhanced by complementing the interview with additional questions to those prepared for the senior staff interviews and thereby creating the space for Fiona to describe her experiences of the program. Her transcript was drawn on as part of the program staff interviews and excluded from the senior staff interviews.

3.4.1.4 Program staff interviews

3.4.1.4.1 Participants
There were five interviews conducted with program staff from CV and SEDA. The SEDA interviews included both teaching and program staff.

3.4.1.4.2 Process
The purpose of the program staff interviews was to develop a greater understanding of student experiences and to identify if and how these experiences came about through the partnership. Two SEDA program staff with responsibility for the day-to-day coordination of the CV-SDP were interviewed as key informants about the program. Using the snowball method, each SEDA staff member was asked to identify CV staff who they worked with to create these learning opportunities.

A Regional Development Manager (RDM) and the Female Cricket Coordinator (FCC) were identified as key CV program staff to follow up for interview. The students also identified teachers who had been an important influence during their time at SEDA. One of those teachers agreed to participate in an interview. A total of five program staff interviews were conducted including the interview with Fiona from CV which had been conducted as part of the senior staff interviews. As per the senior staff interviews, each

interview was scheduled for a one-hour session and commenced by discussing the interview protocol.

Each program staff member was asked a series of set questions and follow-up questions that explored their answers (see Appendix G). The questions aimed to provide additional information about the learning experiences identified by students. These were clarifying questions that sought to understand what the activity was that the student had identified, how these activities had come about and why the staff thought students appreciated these opportunities. The same interview protocol was used as per senior staff interviews.

All program staff were encouraged to supply documents which reflected either student outcomes or the partnership arrangement. Only one staff member provided additional materials. These were electronic monthly newsletters that outlined some of the activities students were participating in.

The data from the program staff interviews were used to add context and clarity to the learning experiences and outcomes identified by students. Of particular importance was to understand how these experiences came about through the partnership. The data obtained features in Chapter 6, which outlines how the partnership contributes to the learning experiences and outcomes valued by young people.

3.4.1.5 Documents

The research also employed organisational data and documents. These served as a valuable source of information for developing a deeper understanding of the information provided by other sources (Yin 2014). Together these enable an in-depth understanding of the case.

Eight organisational documents were collected as additional, context specific information to help clarify the student identified learning experiences and education outcomes of the program. These are key SEDA, CV and CA documents that formally articulate the program, its intentions and education outcomes. The documents were employed to create context in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. Table 3.2 identifies key documents accessed as part of the research.

Table 3.2: Organisational documents

Organisation	Title	Type	Purpose
SEDA	Dashboard data	Service data	Spreadsheet that tracks student outcomes in terms of retention, completion, transition to further study.
SEDA	Learning Outcomes Framework	Curriculum document	Identifies the core skills and attributes the program aims to develop in young people.
SEDA	Student Experience Framework	Program document	Identifies the core elements of each of the SEDA programs.
SEDA	Website	Organisational document	The following publicly available documents were accessed online: the SEDA strategic plan, SEDA education philosophy and SEDA Annual Report 2013.
SEDA	Interview documents	Program materials	Documents collected during program staff interviews included position description for the RDO and volunteer roles with Melbourne Stars and Melbourne Renegades and photos of primary school clinics.
CV	Website	Organisational document	The following publicly available documents were accessed online including the CV Strategic Plan (2015-2017) and CV Annual Report (2013)
CA	Website	Organisational document	The following publicly available documents were accessed online including the CA Strategic Plan (2014-2017)
CA	National female cricket strategy	Organisational document	This strategy document outlines the game and market development strategies (2014/15 to 2017/18)

3.4.2 Data analysis

The research used a thematic analysis process (Yin 2014) which built the themes of the research from the data gathered and as such did not rely on any particular theoretical propositions (Yin 2014, p.136).

This data analysis consisted of three phases. Phase one was about understanding the SEDA-CV partnership. Phase two answered the first research question – What are the

learning experiences and education outcomes valued by young people? Phase three answered the second question – How does the partnership contribute to those experiences?

Phase one used the senior staff interview data to develop a chronological sequence of events (Yin 2014, p.154) based on themes identified in the interviews. This partnership narrative provided the background context for the research as described in Chapter 4. Using each senior staff interview as a triangulation of the stories told by the others, the partnership narrative describes the commencement, success and challenges of the SEDA-CV partnership.

Phase two adopted a thematic analysis approach which commenced with what (Yin 2014) describes as 'playing with the data'. The student videos were analysed before I commenced the student interviews. I watched all nine videos in one session and was surprised at the intensity of positive emotion expressed by students. The videos were diverse in style and interpretation of the task. Students were surprisingly articulate, confident as well as shy, funny, light-hearted and honest. At times the young people also appeared to be open and vulnerable in terms of disclosure.

It was evident that students had prepared and scripted the videos with care. Some students used additional film footage and personal photos to describe their experiences. Stage two of student video analyses included the transcription of each of the videos in NVivo[7] which I undertook and then encoded the transcripts with initial themes identified from the data.

Analysis of the student interview data set commenced after conducting the first four interviews. I read and reread student transcripts using the categories approach (Merriam 1992) of looking for similarities and differences. From the first four interviews I developed an initial set of codes which reflected the key activities of the program students valued. After completing another three interviews and transcripts I combined these initial themes with the student video themes into a single set of student themes. At this point all of the data was uploaded into NVivo and initial themes were used to code all of the research data. Once uploaded, the student themes were merged and reconceptualised into higher level themes which would allow the findings to be applied in education contexts beyond this case study setting.

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[7] NVivo is a qualitative data analysis computer software package produced by QSR International.

The themes established from both student interviews and videos were then used to create a series of follow-up questions, clarifying and confirming questions for program staff interviews. These would seek to develop a greater depth of understanding of the themes identified by students rather than create new ones.

Phase three used initial themes identified in the student data (video and interview) to build context and understanding of these themes with the program staff interview data to determine how the partnership contributed to these experiences.

The following diagram outlines how data collection tools were employed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

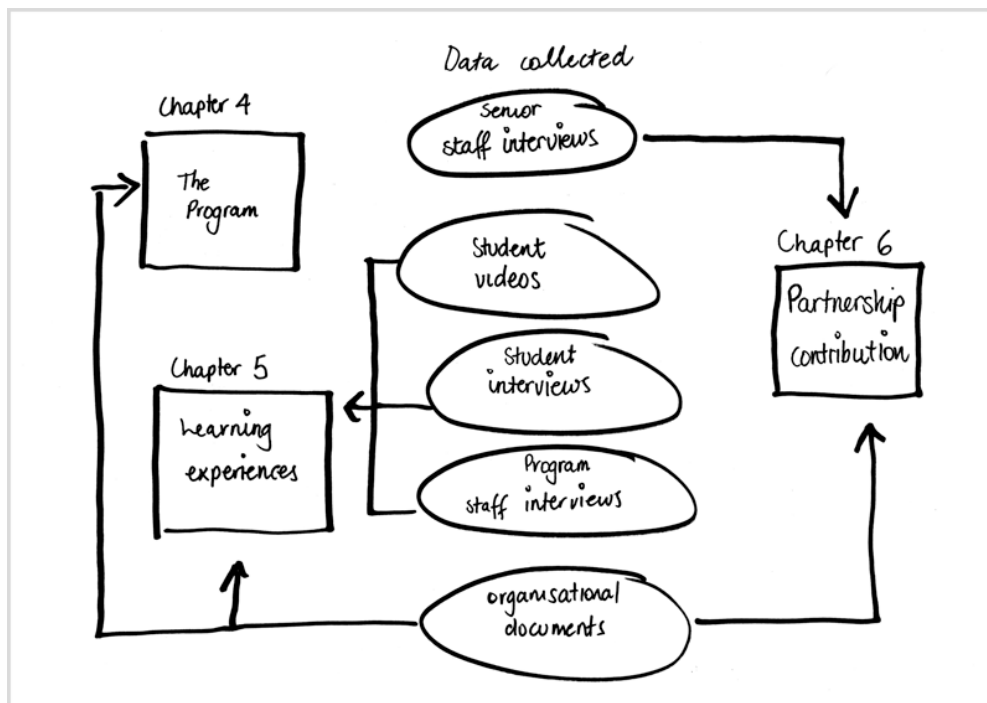**Figure 3.2: Utilisation of data collected in chapters**

3.5 Ethical research

The research was developed and conducted according to the Victoria University (VU) Human Research Ethics Committee process (VU-HREC) which is based on the *National statement on ethical conduct in human research* (Commonwealth of Australia 2015). The research was approved by the Ethics Committee on 23 December 2013 (see Appendix A).

The research design embedded the fundamentals of the national statement by considering five key questions. What is the merit of this research? How will you ensure respect for human beings? What are the other risks associated with the research and how will you mitigate against these? Who benefits from the research? Section 3.5.5 considers the challenges and benefits of being an insider researcher.

3.5.1 Merit

The research proposal was developed after undertaking a review of the educational partnerships literature in secondary education. The literature identified gaps in both the knowledge and understanding of educational partnerships from the student perspective and stood to make a unique contribution with limited potential for harm to participants mitigated through careful research design.

3.5.2 Respect for human beings

Following VU-HREC procedures, all participants (staff and students) were provided with a plain language information sheet regarding the aim, nature of the research and their proposed involvement. Participants were informed that participation in the research was completely voluntary and they could choose to opt out at any stage of the research prior to publication.

Involving students in this research was core to the success of the project, as it is their input which is of primary importance to the research question. It was therefore essential in the research design that these young people could choose to be involved. This was particularly important in this research because they were ex-students of the program being interviewed by a researcher who was a SEDA staff member. And at 18 to 19 years of age they were still relatively young. The students did not participate in interviews until they had completed their studies with SEDA. This was done to mitigate the risk of students feeling compelled to participate as a course requirement or that it might impact on their studies in a negative way.

Once the cohort was selected, individual participation was also presented as a choice. This was done through the provision of accurate information about the intent of the research including an information sheet (that identified the risks to participants) and a consent form (Newby 2010). Although they were all over 18 years of age, consideration of each young person's ability to fully consent to the process was also

determined at the individual level prior to commencing the interview. This was done through an initial conversation before starting the interview with each participant to make sure they were genuinely happy, capable of participating and clear about the purpose of the research. As part of the interview protocol each student was also provided with both written and verbal confirmation of their right and ability to withdraw their permission at any point during the research (Newby 2010).

The process of contacting students was also undertaken at arm's length from the researcher by sending invitations out to participants by post. Students were contacted by mail and followed up with a phone call by a SEDA administrator. At no time were they contacted by the researcher directly to mitigate against the young people feeling pressured to participate by a senior staff member from SEDA.

3.5.3 The risks

The risks to the students were identified and mitigated through a process of voluntary participation, informed consent, and a semi-structured interview process with a focus on the positive aspects of the student experience and partnership.

Consideration was given to the location and timing of interviews to ensure that staff and students were not identified as having participated in the research and therefore identifiable in the thesis. There was also the provision of psychological counselling as an option for staff and students who required additional support after being interviewed.

Confidentiality and loss of anonymity were also identified as a risk for participants. For staff and young people there is a risk of recognition by people familiar with the two organisations and the program. They were made aware of this risk of identification through the plain language information sheet provided with their consent form and this was discussed during the interview process. The final thesis does not identify individual students or staff, maintaining confidentiality in terms of the general public. Although as previously noted and made clear to participants, those with inside knowledge may be able to identify individual participants.

There was also a perceived risk for staff and students in how they were represented. While the research prioritised the student voice, they were not always articulate about what they wished to say. Careful consideration has gone into selecting and prioritising the use of student quotes to ensure they reflect the young person's intent as

understood from the complete transcript and they are presented in an ethical way. The student and staff quotes have also been edited to remove duplication and improve readability while respectfully presenting their voice with clarity and without removing the initial intent. Staff and students were also provided with an opportunity to edit their transcript. The single case study methodology also clearly identifies both SEDA and CV. This created a low-level risk for both organisations. Permission to conduct the research and the possible consequences of this identification was expressly conveyed in seeking both organisations' involvement prior to seeking ethics approval from the university.

In terms of participant privacy, all participant data was stored in a de-identified format on the Victoria University research drive, accessible only to the researcher and designated doctoral supervisors.

3.5.4 Who benefits?

The principle of justice in research asks the researcher to consider what the risks of the research are and who stands to benefit from the research as well as who receives these benefits and risks (Te Riele & Brooks 2013). While some key risks have already been identified above, this section will focus on who benefits.

In the main, students articulated their desire to participate as being able to acknowledge their appreciation of 'what the program had done for them' to say 'thank you' or to provide feedback on what could be improved. In their desire to create change for future groups they recognised that benefits may flow to future groups of students rather than themselves. It is clear therefore that they thought they were talking to SEDA in their interviews or at least their contribution would be read by SEDA at some time in the future.

Senior staff and program staff were also keen to participate in the research. Some declared their desire to contribute to the research as a means to documenting the SEDA-CV partnership story as they were particularly proud of this achievement. In both the student and staff interviews there was a strong sense that the benefits far outweighed the risks associated with being involved in the research. Students and staff will also be provided with an electronic copy of the finalised research report so they can see the outcomes of their participation.

3.5.5 Insider–outsider research

The combined roles of Chief Operating Officer and Director of Education at SEDA alongside my role as researcher in the organisation were identified early in my candidature as both a challenge and an opportunity for this research. Early decision making as part of the ethics process focussed on insider research and reflexivity as considerations for my study (Drake & Heath 2011).

As the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Education at SEDA, I was responsible for all SEDA students and programs nationally. The seniority of the role meant that as a researcher I had ready access to the organisation's staff, its student data, program information and other resources of significant benefit to the research; but this also meant that I had to be very clear when accessing information as a researcher that I had consent to do so. Being a senior member of staff also added multiple complexities to my role and identity as a researcher, in particular, balancing multiple roles, the power differential in interviews and the overlap between research insights, ideas and conclusions about the CV-SDP and my work responsibilities over the same program.

In terms of multiple shifting identities (Thompson & Gunter 2011), the insider - outsider binaries (p.18) do not do justice to the complexity of the identity and positioning work that took place during the research. A more realistic descriptor would be one of simultaneous insider and outsider with role identities that included researcher, student, teacher, employee, manager as well as colleague.

As a senior employee of SEDA, literature such as Drake & Heath (2011) assumes I would be deeply embedded in the organisational culture and likely to have a strong allegiance to the organisation and its mission. In contrast, at the commencement of my research I didn't particularly position myself as an insider in the organisation. Instead I frequently felt like an outsider, that is, a new member of staff still trying to make sense of the role, the organisation, its culture and values.

This experience of feeling like an outsider shifted during the duration of the research as I developed my own place and identity as an organisational leader. As a consequence, I took greater ownership of the outcomes achieved by the organisation and its programs. I experienced a growing awareness of the tensions between the role of researcher and employee and about the data being collected. The student cohort (ex-students) chosen for the research was therefore a particularly important strategy in the

design phase. This group of young people had studied at SEDA prior to my commencement in the role. Therefore, it was easier to report on their views and ideas with a certain amount of distance and perspective, as their experiences were created prior to my commencement at SEDA.

While writing the results chapters I frequently experienced the tension between researcher and manager and would find myself asking reflective questions: Am I comfortable saying that? What drives the need to say that? Does the data say that or am I saying that? In many ways I was doing identity work as a researcher alongside my identity work as a relatively new senior manager. And at times it was difficult to '…develop a critical research stance while at the same time maintaining allegiance to the institution and colleagues' (Drake & Heath 2011, p.55).

There were a number of other roles or identities that appeared during the research and the majority of these are played out in the data collection phases. In the student interviews, for example, there were occasions when it was clear students were not just working with a researcher with whom they had no prior relationship. Instead, they were blending the SEDA staff member and researcher roles. Students knew that I was from SEDA and at times they appeared to be reluctant to criticise the program. For example, Nick in his interview is direct and clear about the positive experiences in the program but hedges his words, 'kind of like' and 'possibly' when he feels the need to criticise the program and its likely outcomes. He poses his views as questions and ideas he is considering rather than stating a clear position. He seems to look for my reassurance and I play my role (this time in what would appear to be my teacher role) with the words 'that is a good question', encouraging him to share his views.

I find myself in this teacher role on more than one occasion in the student interviews. I notice that it is challenging to let go of this teacher 'way of being', catching myself guiding and encouraging the student. An example of this teacher role and how it is played out is evident in the interview with Harry. He is describing the challenges he faces with finding a job. At the end of the interview he tells me he is about to start an apprenticeship and I respond:

> You'll have to work super hard… and stand out. You know how these things
> work. But they will be looking at the very best students of that [class] for
> apprenticeship. And the very best students just get offered jobs quickly
> (Researcher).

I read back over the transcript and cringe at my response. Reflecting on the rest of the transcript, I can see that my response impacts on the remainder of the interview. The process of interviewing and the dialogue that takes place is a space created between the researcher and the participant that is shaped by both and therefore rarely without bias.

The power dynamics between researcher and participants was also identified during staff interviews. During recruitment and interview phases with staff I was particularly conscious of being more or less senior than the participants and how this impacted the research. Two of the senior staff interviews were with Directors who own the business and as such they were my employer, while other staff were part of my operational team and they saw me as a senior member of staff. Being clear about the boundaries of my role as a researcher and how this intersected with my work role was especially important when inviting staff to participate, giving them clear options to not participate and in the scheduling of interviews as well as the provision of a neutral space for conducting interviews.

The first senior staff interview with Jerry reflects some of the challenges of being a novice researcher and the impact of power relationships experienced by insider researchers (Drake & Heath 2011). This interview was particularly challenging because it was my first interview. And while I had conducted a practice interview I still found I was nervous and at times lost in my own questions. Jerry is also more senior than me and I hadn't realised this would affect me during the interview. I felt like a fraud pretending to be a researcher. He was also not particularly expressive and provided only short answers to the questions. The interview was finished in 20 minutes and I wasn't sure it would provide much data. The transcript proved to be much more worthwhile than I had given it credit for during the interview, but the experience of interviewing was more traumatic than I had imagined it would be beforehand. From this experience, I recognised the need to be much more organised for future interviews, creating pre-interview time for preparation and getting into the mindset of becoming the researcher with a more a conscious acknowledgement and recognition of power relations.

This taking on of the role of researcher was easier to achieve when meeting with CV staff off-site but more difficult with SEDA staff. At the commencement of one interview with a SEDA senior manager, which we had agreed to have in the staff member's office, I walked in and we started with a work conversation. Once we came to the end

of that conversation, we both realised it was going to be hard to shift to respective researcher/participant roles. Therefore, we agreed that I would leave the room and come in again. This time as a researcher! While initially this felt like a role play, it did allow each of us to recalibrate and change roles for the interview.

The opposite experience of taking off the researcher hat was also felt. Through the process of writing up the thesis, I became cognisant of the power of the literature on particular issues of practice. In more than one work situation I heard myself use the words… 'The research doesn't support that…' in the moment, using my knowledge and understanding of the research as a weapon to make my point and achieve a particular outcome.

While Drake and Heath (2011) acknowledge the challenges of being an insider for the research, I also became aware of the challenges and rewards of my research for my work role. In particular, the student interviews really reshaped my thinking about key areas of improvement that the organisation could focus on. For example, the interview with Sally (student) highlighted how underprepared she felt for her transition to university. This interview occurred in the midst of a review of Program 3 which I was leading. At the conclusion of the review it was decided that the program should incorporate a range of units of study from the Certificate IV in Tertiary Preparation. It is difficult looking back to resolve how much of this decision was influenced by the research interviews and what would have occurred regardless. The dual roles of researcher / manager are not separate; knowledge gained in one role is not unavailable in the other. Instead they are interlinked, each influencing the other. While I was aware I could not share the data gathered in an interview, my new knowledge had shaped my views as a senior staff member who had the ability to make changes to improve the program. Similarly, Sally may have chosen to share this information, believing I had the 'power to change' the program (Turner & Fozdar 2010), if not for her own benefit, then for the benefit of future students.

Being an insider in your own organisation also allows the researcher to have a more intimate understanding of the experiences of the relevant people (Bridges 2001). In particular, this insider knowledge was beneficial to the research in terms of knowing who to talk to, what documents were available and understanding the context of much of what was discussed. This was the main benefit of insider research that was experienced during the research.

Research with students and staff combined with the role of insider researcher provided multiple methodological implications which were managed through careful research design and reflexivity. While the process of candidature and ethics approval provides an initial guide, the ongoing process of doing research required regularly reflecting on the incidents and decisions made along the way. The utilisation of the memo journal as a means of 'self-triangulation' (Drake 2010, p.85) and regular doctoral supervision created many opportunities for reflection on the issues as they arose. Qualitative research appears to rely on this reflexivity in order to understand how the researcher contributes to the knowledge created (Berger 2015).

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodological approach underpinning the single case study. It provides a description of the data collection tools utilised and the approach taken to analyse the data collected including student videos, student interviews, senior staff interviews, program staff interviews and / or organisational documents.

The chapter tackles some of the ethical challenges of the research including insider– outsider research and acknowledges the importance of reflexivity in qualitative case study research, in particular where the researcher plays an instrumental role in data collection while working in the organisation as a senior member of staff.

CHAPTER 4. THE PROGRAM

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the operational context of the study with a detailed description of the CV-SDP, the two partner organisations (SEDA and CV), the education outcomes the program delivers and the students who attend.

4.2 SEDA

SEDA is a for-profit, registered non-school provider of senior secondary and VET qualifications. SEDA commenced operations in 2007 with a single class of 17 students who were no longer attending school. The CV-SDP was established to provide an alternative to mainstream schooling for young people who were passionate about sport, disengaged from mainstream schooling and / or preferred a more 'hands on' approach to learning (SEDA 2013).

Since 2007, SEDA has developed from the initial partnership with CV and the first intake of 17 students to a national organisation of more than 2000 students and over 100 staff (SEDA 2013). SEDA is an education organisation that delivers senior secondary and VET programs through sport with industry partners such as the AFL, Melbourne Victory, Netball Victoria and Basketball Victoria. In 2012, SEDA also commenced the Arts Development Program with industry partners such as Arena Theatre Company and the Song Room, and in 2013 commenced delivery of the SDP in Western Australia and the Northern Territory (SEDA 2013). In 2014 it launched a Building and Trades Program.

Today, SEDA in Victoria is a three-year program for Years 11, 12 and Diploma (VET) students. It provides young people with an opportunity to complete a Senior VCAL Certificate and a range of VET qualifications relevant to their industry sector to support their transition to further study or employment. Once the student has completed their Senior Secondary Certificate they can continue for a third year of the program and complete a diploma level qualification in either sport or art.

SEDA articulates its education philosophy through its vision to engage, educate and empower young people using applied learning pedagogy and embedded learning in industry and community rather than classrooms (SEDA 2015b). The education

philosophy starts with the view that a young person needs to feel engaged with their learning for learning to take place and that sport (or art) can serve as a hook to re-engage young people with learning. In terms of education, SEDA prioritises senior secondary completion because it recognised that young people who do not complete Year 12 are at a significant disadvantage (SEDA 2015b). It recognised however that young people appreciate learning that is real and relevant to their lives and provides opportunities for applying knowledge to the real world context. The third element focusses on empowerment. The SEDA Education Philosophy recognises that all young people have the capacity to learn and when appropriately engaged, they will be successful. The program encourages young people to determine their own success by engaging in a range of learning opportunities with their partner organisation (in this case CV). Empowerment in the SEDA Education Philosophy focusses on developing confident learners who feel empowered to make their own decisions about their future whether that is further study or employment (SEDA 2015b).

SEDA and its programs attract mixed ability groups of young people ranging from those who would describe themselves as disengaged from schooling to those who are not fully engaged with learning and looking for an alternative to their existing school (SEDA 2013).

4.3. Cricket Victoria

As outlined in Chapter 1, cricket is administered in Victoria by CV. This includes the men's Victorian state team, the Bushrangers who compete in the national competition for the Sheffield Shield and the Victorian Women's State team (Vic Spirit) who compete in the Women's National Cricket League. CV is responsible for the growth of grassroots cricket through fans, players, officials and local club administrator development (Cricket Victoria 2015).

The Melbourne Stars and Melbourne Renegades are both Victorian based Australian Twenty20 men's cricket teams that compete in the KFC T20 Big Bash League (Melbourne Renegades 2016; Melbourne Stars 2016). Twenty20 cricket was developed as a short form of cricket (3 hours rather than 5 days) to create a fast paced game for both ground spectators and television viewers. The home of cricket in Victoria is the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) (Commonwealth of Australia 2015). The MCG is an iconic sporting facility with access to the ground limited to officials and elite players.

4.4 The partnership

The following description of the SEDA-CV partnership has been created from the senior staff interviews with Donald (SEDA) and Stephen (CA) who initiated the partnership.

The commencement of the partnership was not only the commencement of an educational partnership but also the genesis of SEDA, the organisation. The partnership was initiated by Donald, a physical education teacher concerned about young people disengaging from education and aware of the opportunities that a highly regarded industry partner could bring to an education program. In 2006 Donald approached Stephen, the then Game Development Manager for CV. Stephen was a 'recent arrival' at CV with previous experience in training and developing young men and women to deliver sport and coaching programs in schools. In a previous job he had implemented a sport coaching program in a private school in Melbourne. This included replacing teachers and volunteer parents with a well-trained group of young coaches and team managers for Saturday interschool sport.

Donald and Stephen knew of each other through the world of cricket. Stephen knew of Donald as someone whom he had played cricket against in his younger days. The initial meeting between Donald and Stephen was the culmination of what Donald had learnt about alternative curriculums, student engagement and 'hands on' learning plus the need for a highly regarded industry partner. He recognised that programs that sit outside the school system had to be strong with a great reputation, great curriculum and plenty of opportunities for young people to access resources and experiences that wouldn't otherwise be available to them at school. One of the skills Donald brought to these early conversations was the ability to foresee how CV would benefit from the partnership.

Stephen on the other hand was experienced at training groups of young people to deliver coaching programs in schools. He understood and valued the benefits of an education program, such as that proposed by Donald, but recognised the inherent risks of putting a group of young people in the CV uniform and the duty of care associated with delivering education programs to young people who in his mind, at best, could be described as unpredictable. At the time, Donald saw the CV brand and reputation as a key factor for improving the standing of vocational training in the secondary context and

a drawcard for the program. Since its earliest inception, the program aimed to provide a program of choice as an alternative to mainstream education.

Donald's initial idea was to combine the newly developed VCAL with a high profile industry partner to create engaged learning beyond the classroom. Donald believed that CV could provide unique learning opportunities that would shape an engaging curriculum. He also realised that young people, passionate about cricket, could make an important contribution to the development of cricket, especially in delivering participation outcomes[8] for CV. These two men worked together over a number of years to develop, implement and embed the CV-SDP as an integral part of both organisations.

In 2013, Stephen moved to Cricket Australia as the National Cricket Development Manager and alongside SEDA's desire to grow the program into other states and territories in Australia, the program transitioned into a three-way partnership between CV, Cricket Australia and SEDA (Donald, senior staff interview / Stephen, senior staff interview).

4.5 The Program

4.5.1 Introduction

Since its inception in 2007, the CV-SDP has evolved in response to both changes in VCAL guidelines (as determined by the VCAA) and funding guidelines for senior secondary and vocational education. The following description outlines the program as it was experienced by the 2013 CV-SDP cohort (staff and student interviews).

4.5.2 Elements of the program

The first two years of the CV-SDP program in Victoria are designed to allow young people to complete their Senior Secondary Certificate whilst the third year (Diploma) is designed to create a pathway to university for those that wish to pursue university studies as an option. Students self-select into the program at either Year 11 or Year 12 and choose both their sport and location based on personal preference. The learning

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[8] Participation outcomes in this instance refers to the funding provided to peak sporting associations or leagues to increase grassroots participation in their sport.

experience is designed around the industries of sport and recreation with CV and CA as the industry partner.

The SEDA Student Experiences Framework (SSEF) articulates core elements of the SEDA program and the role each play in the overall structure of the program (SEDA 2014b). The key elements identified in the framework include: completing a senior secondary qualification; completing a VET qualification; undertaking an annual work placement (referred to as SWL), participating in Community Days (referred to as clinics by students and staff); undertaking community projects; organising community commitment events; and undertaking a school based apprenticeship (SBAT), partner work and a Career Action Plan (CAP).

In the CVSD program, the majority of students are enrolled in an Intermediate VCAL Certificate in Program 1 (Year 11) and a Senior VCAL Certificate in Program 2 (Year 12). The VCAL design incorporates four curriculum strands with accredited units in Literacy and Numeracy, Industry Specific Skills, Work Related Skills and Personal Development Skills. Each program is designed to incorporate accredited units from each of the strands and may include units and modules from VCE, VET and Further Education to create a complete sequence (VCAA 2016). Alongside the VCAL, students in Program 1 also undertake a Certificate III level VET qualification. In Program 2 they undertake a Certificate IV level VET qualification and the majority of students that complete Program 3 undertake a Diploma of Sport Development. The VET qualifications by SEDA staff are regarded as important to support young people to transition to work and further study.

As part of VCAL program requirements, students also undertake SWL. For one day per week students are supported to find a voluntary work placement in an industry area of their choice. This placement allows students to trial a range of industries and professions over the semester. Though many students choose to return to their old primary school for their first SWL; many progress to placements that help them explore a range of future careers. Students also undertake work placements as a requirement of Program 3.

As identified in the SSEF, clinics are a key component of the program. The students delivered cricket clinics on behalf of CV in primary schools and special schools during Program 1 (2011) and Program 2 (2012). The clinic day is usually one day per week for the entire school year (approximately 40 weeks). The SEDA teacher organises a clinic

with a local primary school where the class visits four to six times in consecutive weeks. The students design and conduct cricket activities for the primary school students and use subsequent class time to reflect on the session and redesign activities as required. Conducting clinics and completing the relevant assessment tasks contribute to learning outcomes for both VCAL and VET units of study.

At each program level students participate in a community project embedded into the curriculum which also includes units of study from both the VCAL and VET qualifications. Students in small groups design and deliver a community project. In the first year this is a simple project delivered to their peers or a local community group, and is scaffolded to be a more sophisticated project with a community outreach component in the second and third year of the program. As part of the second year of the program, students are also employed as School-based Apprentices (SBAT) with SEDA as the employer. These students are paid for one day per week to deliver clinics in primary schools. As part of their SBAT students completed a Certificate IV in Sport and Recreation.

Each student is expected to undertake both in-curriculum and extra-curricular (voluntary) work with their partner organisation. The key component of in-curriculum partner work is identified as the clinic days as discussed above. Alongside this work, students may be asked to volunteer at events such as a test match or to work alongside merchandising or membership staff at a Melbourne Stars Twenty20 match. The 2013 CV-SDP cohort were required to undertake a minimum of 20 hours of volunteering each year. This volunteering work incorporated volunteering for the partner organisation (CV) and any other volunteering that they might do in their own community such as umpiring or coaching for a local sport team. In 2014 SEDA changed the minimum requirement of 20 hours of volunteer work to a Community Commitment day. This day was intended to provide students with an opportunity to volunteer which was not compulsory. The 2013 cohort did not experience the Community Commitment day. Each student works on a Career Action Plan (CAP) during the three years of the program. In the CAP students store information about their career aspirations, their likely pathway to work or further study, and keep records of their SWLs, volunteer hours and other work experiences.

In simple timetabling terms CV-SDP students spend one day per week delivering Cricket Clinics in the community, one day per week undertaking work experience and

three days per week completing the other more theoretical components of their program to achieve their VCAL and VET certificates.

Alongside the CV-SDP SEDA also offers a Talented Player Program (CV-TPP). The CV-TPP is structurally similar to the CV-SDP but provides a group of talented cricket players the opportunity to complete their Senior Secondary Certificate and a diploma level qualification alongside additional specialist coaching and match time as part of the program. For this research the CV-SDP and CV-TP program are treated as one and the same cricket program, referred to as the CV-SDP.

4.5.3 Teachers and locations

Each SEDA teacher works with a group of 20-28 students as their single point of contact for the year. Students generally have the same teacher for the first two years of the program (Program 1 and 2) and a diploma teacher for the third year (Program 3). Program 1 and 2 classes are a combined class of Program 1 and 2 students with an approximate split of 50/50 in each class. In 2011/2012 there were 9 CV-SDP and 2 CV-TPP classes. These were located in both regional Victorian centres (e.g. Ballarat, Geelong and Traralgon) and inner city and suburban Melbourne (e.g. Carlton, Box Hill, Footscray and Seaford).

SEDA classes are generally located in local sport facilities such as council owned cricket or football clubrooms. SEDA leases these facilities from the local council or sporting club. The location of these facilities is determined by student demand and interest in the program and proximity to public transport.

4.5.4 Student outcomes

The SEDA Annual Report (2013a) saw a total of 1626 students enrolled in a SEDA program in Victoria in 2013. These students were distributed across the three years of the program and across 13 different sports and arts programs offered (The CV-SDP being one of these). In Victoria in 2013 there were 363 CV-SDP students enrolled across Programs 1, 2 and 3.

The success of a school or alternative education program is regularly measured through a range of empirical measures of student outcomes. While there is broad recognition that these are not the only way to determine the success of a program (Te

Riele 2014), quantitative data is highly regarded by the OECD, the Australian Government and education and vocational training regulators.

For secondary education, outcomes in terms of senior secondary completion, VET qualification completions, student attendance, year-on- year retention and successful transition to further study or work are highly valued. Across all SEDA Sport Programs (all sports combined) in Victoria, 95% of students who commenced Year 12 completed their Intermediate VCAL certificate in 2013 (SEDA 2015a). This compares to a Victorian Intermediate VCAL completion rate of 72.5% in 2013 (VCAA 2014) and highlights strong completion rates achieved by SEDA program students. This sits alongside a 2012 SEDA VCAL completions rate of 91% and a 2014 VCAL completion rate of 88% (SEDA 2013b) demonstrating a consistently higher than state average Senior Secondary Certificate completion rate.

Table 4.5 SEDA VCAL Completion rates

Year	SEDA Completions	SEDA Enrolled	% Completers at SEDA	% Completers Victoria [9]
2012	850	931	91%	73.6%
2013	1036	1130	92%	72.5%
2014	1115	1259	88%	75.0%

In 2013 the sports programs in Victoria averaged an approved attendance rate of 99.7% across all three levels of the program (SEDA 2015a). This is higher than the national student school attendance rate which fluctuates between 92-95% for individual states and territories (ACARA 2012). This comparison with the national school attendance rates indicates that SEDA has been able to achieve high levels of attendance.

The SEDA program has also achieved positive results in student retention. The total attrition rate across all sports programs in Victoria was 6.8% (SEDA 2013) resulting in a retention rate of 93.2%. This compares with a Victorian school's retention rate of 87.6 % in 2013 (State Government of Victoria 2015d)

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[9] VCAA 2013a, VCAA 2014a and VCAA 2014b

VET certificate completion rates are another benchmarked measure of program and student success. In 2013, 86% of SEDA Program 1 students who commenced their VET program completed their Certificate III in Sport and Recreation, 93% of Program 2 students completed their Certificate IV in Sport and Recreation and 88% of Program 3 students completed their Diploma of Sport Development (SEDA 2015a). These completion rates are considerably higher than the national average for VET completions reported by the NCVER (2015) as 38% for Certificate III and 40.9 for Certificate IV and 42.2% for diploma level qualifications (p.6).

In terms of transition to further study or employment, of the 304 students who completed the third year of the sports program, 206 students transitioned to university or further study (67%) (SEDA 2015a). The national transition rate to university for students completing a diploma level or higher VET qualification is reported as being 16.8% to university, 11.3% to TAFE and 7.1% to RTO's (NCVER 2014b); when combined these figures report a transition rate to further study and university of 35.2% which is substantially less than the 67% SEDA transition to further study rate.

SEDA does not collect or report data demonstrating the longer term trajectory of graduate students as they transition to further study or work, although this information would provide important insights into the program's ability to prepare students for positive futures. Overall, the key indicators of student attendance, retention, completion and transition identify important and positive outcomes for the CV-SDP and its students.

4.5.5 The students (the cohort)

The 2013 CV-SDP cohort (n=100) completed an Intermediate VCAL certificate and a Certificate III in Sport and Recreation in 2011. In 2012 the cohort completed a Certificate IV in Sport and Recreation and a Certificate II in Outdoor Recreation as well as their Senior VCAL. In the final year of their program (2013) they completed a Diploma of Sport Development and a Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation and Certificate III in General Education.

At the commencement of 2013, 108 students were enrolled in the CV-SDP (Program 3). Eight exited during the year. 100 students stayed until the end of the year. The cohort of 100 consisted of nine females and 92 males. In terms of the type of program

the cohort had participated in, 11 out of the 100 graduating students had participated in the TPP and 89 had participated in the SDP.

The total cohort size for the three years of the program was 146. This means that over the life of the program there were 146 young people in the program. Forty-six did not complete the full three years (32%). The destination and longer term outcomes of these young people are outside the scope of this research, but their loss (out of the program) is of interest for future program evaluations or research.

Of the students who completed the full three years, 71% were undertaking further study or had deferred their studies, 17% were working (with a 50-50 split of full-time and part-time work and 10% were unemployed and looking for work (cricket cohort data set, 2013). These transitions to work and further study rates are higher than the national average for diploma level graduates (NCVER 2014a) and recognised that the cricket cohort (Program 3) of 2013 is at least as successful as their SEDA peers in the other sport programs.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the unique features of the CV- and the students who attend and provides some initial insights into SEDA and CV as the two organisations that in partnership deliver the CV-SDP. It described the local context in which the program operates and the unique setting for the case study.

CHAPTER 5. VALUED LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND EDUCATION OUTCOMES

5.1 Introduction

The young people who took part in the research shared their learning journeys from school to SEDA and beyond. While each young person's journey is unique, the student's love of cricket permeates every student interview. Alongside this love of cricket, young people who took part in the research articulated that they had made an active, personal choice to join the SEDA program. Sometimes their choice was in response to schooling not working out and at other times young people were searching for something different to what school offered.

The two themes of *loving cricket* and *actively choosing* are applied in this chapter to convey the learning experiences and education outcomes valued by young people in the CV-SDP.

5.2 A love of cricket

The student's learning journeys at SEDA were initiated through their love of cricket and or a desire to change their current schooling situation. In the interviews students describe learning about the program through friends or family as well as receiving program materials through their Cricket Victoria membership. Each of the young people interviewed describe identify some degree of disengagement or unhappiness about school but most believe they would have completed school if they had not commenced the CV-SDP.

This leads young people to consider the CV-SDP as a genuine alternative to school. For those in the program, sport and cricket in particular is a part of their life that is enjoyable, makes sense and is meaningful to them. Even students who struggle with learning have things they are passionate and enthusiastic about, and it is this that appears to draw students like Ben to the program and shifted how he felt about learning and life in general.

> Then I got the good news, I was accepted into the program, which, from day one of the program it changed my life, for the better (Ben – student interview).

Allowing students to explore these interests in class appears to create motivation, commitment and positivity (Tomlinson 2004) that they did not always experience in school.

The employment of sport as the hook (in this case cricket) is also identified by Te Riele (2014) as one of the remarkable and distinctive features of the SEDA program in Darwin (Northern Territory), and serves as an important element of the learning experiences and outcomes valued by young people in the program. Learner interest has previously been identified as one of three essential components of a differentiated learning environment which engages students with learning (Tomlinson 2004). Similar findings have also been identified by Vickers et al. (2015) where for some students the only way to achieve engagement with schooling was to allow them 'to work intensely on projects related to their interests' (p.10). What is unique about the CV-SDP is that student interests are accommodated as sameness, described as 'we all like cricket' rather than individual interest accommodated in a classroom of learners with diverse interests.

This focus on interest-based learning, especially in senior secondary education, is not without tensions. Some educators may perceive young people are better-off putting their energy into learning the academic curriculum rather than pursuing their own interests (Vickers 2011) but this academic curriculum has led to young people leaving school early and not completing any formal education (Lamb & Rice 2008). In Victoria the introduction of VCAL with a more flexible curriculum has allowed both the achievement of an academic qualification and interest-based learning to occur simultaneously (VCAA 2013e), thereby providing more young people with engaged learning experiences to support senior secondary completion.

5.2.1 A safe place to learn

After attending the information session and interview some young people expressed they were very pleased at being accepted into the program and excited about starting something new that was about cricket. When they join the program, they appear to join a group of class mates who are just as passionate about cricket as they are. The young people interviewed particularly valued the role their friends played in shaping their learning experiences.

It took me a couple of days to start making some connections with them [friends]. Once I did we had, oh it was the most unforgettable year of my life (Ben – student interview).

This process of quickly making friends appears to come about through a shared love of cricket which creates strong bonds between the students and with their teacher. Students recall playing 'a lot of cricket' in the first few weeks of the year. They enjoy 'playing cricket together', 'learning new tips and ideas' from each other or 'trashing each other' in a casual game of cricket (Lucy, Mark, and Luke – student interviews). Lucy described the women's leadership days as being particularly important for her, especially the joy of playing cricket with other girls who enjoy cricket as much as she does. Cricket as the shared interest creates a productive connectedness amongst students as well as their teacher, which is not always easy to achieve in class.

Cricket also plays an essential role in bringing students from different cultural, social and education backgrounds together. As identified in Chapter 4, this cohort of students come from diverse backgrounds but share a love of cricket and quickly form what would appear to be a relatively cohesive group of learners. The young people interviewed described how the class had to learn to work together in preparation for delivering primary school clinics within the first few weeks of starting the school year. This included the more experienced students (who have already been in the program for 12 months) mentoring the less experienced (new) students in preparation for these clinics.

This reliance on each other seems to bring the group together through this formative stage with a common focus and genuine urgency that is created through the program's need to commence delivery of primary school clinics. Whilst the majority of students appear to have thrived in this cricket focussed environment, at least one of the students interviewed found the classroom experience isolating. Peter saw himself as different from the other students and struggled to fit in.

Whereas in high school I was in a class of 20 boys and girls and so there were different sorts of social aspects. So you'd have those larrikins, but you'd also have your music, kids, your – and this is just putting a ridiculous label on them; but that's just sort of how it seemed at the time, and so you were able to slot in somewhere else, as opposed to having to slot into this sort of – because

everyone was very similar in that sense… I suppose I was just that odd one out (Peter – student interview).

Peter's interview on multiple occasions provides an interesting apposition to the particularly positive interviews provided by other interviewees. In terms of belonging to the cricket class, he appears to have struggled with his relationship with both his teacher and peers. While he was a keen cricketer he found the lack of diversity (of thinking and interests) in the classroom frustrating. Peter would appear to have experienced his class from the outsider's perspective. In particular, his interview displays characteristics of the socially uninterested student identified by Northway (1944) who described this group of learners as having stronger personal rather than social interests. In his interview Peter describes himself as 'the odd one out' and 'more mature' than the other students, disassociating from the rest of the group who he saw collectively as 'larrikins' who would have 'dropped out of school and done trades'. While he describes his experience at SEDA as 'valuable' he sees success as a consequence of his own academic ability, maturity and commitment rather than as a consequence of the learning environment provided. Peter also indicated that he was not particularly stimulated by the academic learning tasks.

I found it way too easy, and I had a lot of conversations with John, my teacher, about it, and there was no way to be extended, really, so what would happen – and it was a consistent theme for the three years, I would finish my work and then distract everyone else (Peter – student interview).

While the program was of interest to Peter, he appears to have become an outsider in the group because many of the learning tasks did not stimulate him at the appropriate level. These point to a learning environment that caters for interest and learning preferences but may not always cater for a diversity of academic readiness (Tomlinson 2004). A challenge experienced in classrooms among students with diverse academic abilities.

For the other students interviewed, the commonalities between students and their shared love of cricket proved to be a resoundingly positive experience. Te Riele (2014) also recognised this sense of belonging in the Northern Territory, SEDA Darwin program as one of the benefits of a class with shared interests. Whilst their shared love of cricket appears to have created strong bonds for the majority of students, the interview with Peter demonstrates that this may not be the case for all students. The

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solidarity achieved in the program through mutual dependence and shared beliefs and values appears to be well aligned with the views of French sociologist Emile Durkheim in *the Division of Labour in Society* (cited in Barnes 1966) and is readily applicable to the program's learning environment.

This group of students are supported in their learning by teachers who love cricket almost as much as the students do. This shared interest (inclusive of the teacher) creates common ground that helps establish strong relationships between students and teachers, where teachers are able to be seen by the young people as someone who cares for, encourages and challenges them. In the student interviews they describe their teachers as a 'mate', 'friend' and 'father figure' and see their teacher as someone who cares for them as individuals and their future hopes. Ben describes feeling like he not only lets himself down but also his teacher when he doesn't get his class work done on time.

The group's shared interest in cricket and competitive sport also creates a shared language and set of guiding principles for the class. Students regularly use terms such as 'manning up', 'going out of your comfort zone' and 'just doing it' to describe the ways in which teachers used sporting analogies to encourage students to get their class work done.   Teachers and students also appear to be comfortable with the view that the learning environment is both competitive and team focussed, rules based and disciplined. They also utilise sport (or more accurately cricket) as the analogy for how the class should operate. For example, 'play by the rules', 'egging each other on' and 'working as a team' (Matthew – SEDA program staff interview).

The students also valued teachers who set high expectations (based on the expectations set by the cricket industry), pushed them to achieve what they were capable of and held them accountable for the outcomes with clear rules and consequences that make sense to young people. As in a sporting club, there is also time for light heartedness and banter.

> Just all the banter in class and all the stuff we used to get up to. All the mischievous things and like, and the freedom to go out and do whatever you like at lunch, providing you're back on time (Ben – student interview).

In this narrative Ben summarises the delicate balance between flexibility and clear expectations set by his teacher. This competitive, rules based high expectations

learning environment would not suit all students but appears to work and is valued by this group of young people. In particular, they valued being supported by their teacher and peers who loved cricket as much as they did.

5.2.2 Clinics

As discussed in section 4.4.2, the CV-SDP students and their teacher deliver cricket clinics in primary schools and special schools for one day per week during Program 1 and 2. The students identified that the cricket clinics are one of the most highly valued components of the program.

As part of the program, students undertake their level one cricket coaching qualification prior to commencing the delivery of clinics. The development of coaching skills is important for building a basic level of skills to deliver clinics. The program also develops the young person's cricket coaching skills as a platform for engaging students in other activities, such as volunteering and major projects, both of which are discussed in section 5.3.

The cricket clinics due to their intensity and frequency create a progression of skill and knowledge development which commences by valuing the student's interests and existing skills and knowledge and then builds new more complex skills in their area of interest (cricket). These clinics also appear to create an engaged learning environment because the skills of coaching are highly valued by the young people themselves. Not all young people would enjoy playing, thinking and being immersed in the world of cricket and sport every day, but this group of young people do and as such what the learning environment has to offer is of interest to them.

In Victoria, the VCAL as a Senior Secondary Certificate was designed to be flexible enough to work with individual student's skills and interests to achieve higher levels of student engagement (Henry et al. 2002). The flexibility provided through the VCAL curriculum helps shape learning experiences students find enjoyable. Whilst schools generally try and cater for diverse student interests the CV-SDP has grouped young people with shared interests (i.e. cricket) and developed a curriculum to meet that group's needs. For example, the flexibility of the VCAL curriculum allows the teacher to focus on both the personal development and work skills strands of the VCAL curriculum, whilst delivering the cricket clinics and therefore delivering curriculum content based on student interest. While not all students enjoyed the clinics to the

same extent, the notion of interest-based learning is also relevant to other parts of the curriculum where students are able to find and pursue their own interests within the sport context. For example, Nick describes how he enjoyed the study of Sports Psychology which delivers the literacy requirements of the VCAL program.   This utilisation of sport or cricket content to encourage engagement with learning based on interest in academic studies is a highly valued part of the program.

The students' cricket coaching skills are also valued by their teachers, staff at CV and the primary school students who respond positively to the clinic experience. Being valued for your knowledge and skills creates a highly motivating learning environment for this group of students. This is in direct contrast to how they experienced their prior school experiences and similar to earlier findings. Pomeroy's (1999) research with young people, for example, identified that students perceived their experiences, knowledge and skills as frequently undervalued in school, especially for students of low status.

The cricket clinics also appear to create a learning environment that builds on the student's existing knowledge of cricket as the context or foundation for new learning to be scaffolded. Students describe an environment where they were comfortable trying new things and extending their learning because it is about cricket. This appears to be a particularly successful strategy for this group of young people who expressed that they saw themselves as good at cricket whilst having struggled with learning previously.

5.2.3 Beyond the boundary

The young people interviewed recognised that they had progressed beyond the basics of cricket coaching to develop a series of valuable skills and attributes of benefit for their future as workers, students and community members. The primary school context provided a place to practice more advanced interpersonal skills in a way that is not too intimidating for the young person but, at the same time, provides a real (rather than simulated) and practical experience of engaged learning.

> Gaining a lot of skills and knowledge and learning how to run different coaching activities and demonstrate new skills. I learnt to speak in front of schools which was pretty easy to learn because we started off in primary schools talking to little kids (Mark – video).

They also appreciated the opportunity to contribute to other children's learning and enjoyed sharing their love of cricket with others. This allowed them to feel a great deal of satisfaction and pride in their achievements and helped them realise they could contribute to other people's learning. A number of students identified primary or secondary school teaching as their future career aspiration.

> It was teaching the kids and seeing the excitement in them and seeing them, especially the four-week clinic, seeing them grow and progress their skills over the four weeks and just knowing that you've taught them those skills was probably the best part about it…I love working with kids and seeing them happy and enjoying what they're doing (Sally – student interview).

The students valued the opportunity to extend their cricket coaching skills beyond primary school clinics into special schools and other new and more challenging settings. Students particularly valued these experiences when they had some of their own assumptions challenged, or felt the special school students enjoyed the experience provided more readily than the primary school students. Sally (student video) describes how she had her assumptions challenged when the class taught cricket at a school for blind children. Here she met a young boy who was much more capable of playing cricket than she had imagined.

> …we underestimate the capability of visually impaired people. John is just one example of how being visually impaired does not mean you are handicapped in any way.

Similarly, both Eddie and Luke identified the GloBall[10] program as a valuable extension of their love of cricket. Each was able to share their knowledge and love of cricket with international students by escorting them to a game at the MCG, something they had not imagined doing with a complete stranger previously. Sally describes the highlight of her program as the time she ran a cricket clinic in Holland for a group of Dutch high school students who spoke very little English and had never seen the game before. These cricket experiences are important for young people as they allow them to progress from foundational skills to more advanced cricket and interpersonal skills, but

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[10] The GloBall Program is a State Government of Victoria funded social inclusion initiative of the Essendon Football Club and CV which uses sport as a vehicle for introducing international students and recent Australians to aspects of life in Australia (GloBall Program, 2015). SEDA students escorted participants of the program to the game.

also create opportunities for learning from personal reflections mediated through their love of cricket.

> Well, as I said, you feel very appreciated, it re-motivates you that what you're doing is – although some kids might not express it, it could be a massive highlight for them and… when you do have a student who has some kind of a disability … you're able to deal with [the disability] a lot better and you have a better understanding and just in the wider community as well you get a better understanding of, disabilities as well, which is something that I think is really important…(Peter – student interview).

Peter explains that this learning experience has helped him adjust the way he works with students with disabilities in his current role as Sports Administrator in a private secondary school in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Cricket appears to provide the medium for this extension of learning and helps them build the capacity for more significant learning by providing a strong foundation to take on more challenging activities. Working with others (in this case special schools) also appears to be particularly rewarding for the students, especially when they are able to share their love of cricket with others.

They also valued the role Program 2 students played in mentoring them as first year students as well as the opportunity to be class leaders when they became second year students. Leadership skills were identified as one of the learning outcomes valued by the students, especially in terms of delivering cricket clinics. Brad highlights the tension created in anticipation for delivering clinics early in the year and the role Program 2 students played coaching the new students.

> My first memory was running a clinic as many of us do: we are a bit nervous right at the start and we don't really know how they run. We kind of rely on the Program 2 students who help us. I was very lucky and fortunate to get a good Program 2 student who really led me and said you know, if you enjoy it the kids will enjoy it, so I started to try and enjoy it and make it difficult for the kids who were good at cricket and try and make it fun for the ones who didn't really get involved and from there I started to love the clinics and I found that I could lead in the class (Brad – student video).

The teachers encourage this development of Program 2 students as class leaders who take responsibility for upskilling the Program 1 students. This peer mentoring is made possible due to the structure of each class which has a 50/50 split of Program 1 and Program 2 students.

Students also valued experiences that developed skills they saw as transferable or created new opportunities that supported their future aspirations. They were able to see the link between the skills they were developing in the program and their ambitions. For some students, such as Sally, this was achieved by obtaining the practical coaching skills to work at CV and for others; this was about transferable generic skills such as personal organisation, planning and public speaking (Luke – student interview). Some of the students also identified being able to use the skills developed in the clinics to springboard into other recreation industry based opportunities. Lucy describes how she utilised her coaching skills, developed at clinics, to obtain volunteering work with CV.

Lucy recognised that these skills where further developed while working in the community and saw these opportunities as important for building networks for future employment. Michael recognised that his part-time role at Kelly Sports (as a Junior Coach for after school programs) was an outcome of the coaching skills and confidence developed in the CV-SDP. He also recognises that the work placement with CV had helped him create networks that he feels he could rely on in future.

5.2.4 Exceptional experiences

Beyond the cricket clinics young people also valued a range of exceptional cricket experiences. They are exceptional in the eyes of young people because they had not seen themselves as being able to access these opportunities as part of their regular schooling or as a young person. These experiences are also only exceptional if you 'love cricket' and as such they are important for this group of young people but not necessarily so for another group.

These exceptional experiences appear to be significant for student motivation and engagement in the program. Students are motivated to learn when the rewards are carefully tailored to meet their individual interests, which can be difficult to achieve for a class of students with divergent interests. Young people are motivated to learn when they can 'reconcile the perceived value with the cost required to accomplish the

learning' (Jalongo 2007, p.400). In this case, the students identified these exceptional activities as highly rewarding and therefore motivating, where the benefits outweigh the effort required. The most frequently identified 'exceptional experiences' for this group of young people was accessing important places such as the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), meeting and working with famous cricketers and working with the Melbourne Stars and the Melbourne Renegades Big Bash teams. The other exceptional people (beyond the famous cricketers) that the students valued working with are the elite coaches and program staff at CV.

These experiences are formative as they challenge young person's assumptions in terms of what places and people they should be able to access as a young adult or school student. Young people's identities are shaped by the places they can access or not. As such these experiences of 'access' and 'privilege' seem to shape a positive sense of self (Hopkins 2010). Ben describes his experience as the Melbourne Stars mascot and how this shapes his sense of self.

> I got the opportunity to do game one of the big bash league which was at Etihad Stadium, Melbourne Renegades, Melbourne Stars, and there was about 40,000 people there and I did two laps of the ground and I just couldn't stop smiling under the suit. I was like, oh how did I get this? But the reason I got it was all the guidance I had from my teachers, it all goes back to my teachers, my friendships and all the help they gave me to get to where I was. And I felt a lot of pride that I got in myself.(Ben – student interview).

The students also appreciated being able to access places of privilege such as being allowed on the ground at the MCG or inside the 'nets' (cricket nets) because they are generally only able to be accessed by elite football and cricket players. Students saw themselves as 'lucky' to be able to access these elite player facilities and thus felt valued.

> I was taking children on tours around the MCG. I had all-access to anywhere I've ever wanted to go in the MCG. Especially on the ground. And then I had a hit on the ground, just with a plastic bat and ball but I was just looking around going – Jesus! I just couldn't believe it (Ben – student interview).

Many of the students described the 'sessions in the nets' at the MCG as a highlight of the cricket program. The nets are used by elite cricket teams such as the Victorian

state team for training. The students spend a small amount of time each year training in the nets. It is interesting therefore that nearly all students (in videos and interviews) mentioned this as a valued learning experience. This group of young people particularly appreciated that this is not the kind of experience they would have had if they had stayed at school.

As part of the day at the MCG they also participated in a session at the MCG gym, which is also frequented by elite cricket players having the six dollar meal in the dining room with the MCG staff. The students loved their access to the 'inner sanctum' of cricket. The experience of being in the gym, on the ground or inside the nets is generally reserved for elite athletes and made them feel important, special and part of elite cricket. Students described mingling with the CV and MCG staff in the dining room which allowed them to feel part of cricket at the highest level.

The young people interviewed were also very fond of their experiences working alongside or learning from 'famous people'. They defined their 'famous people' as the state and international players and coaches of CV and CA. One student describes 'learning to be cool' around his heroes, while other students appreciated that players were prepared to be involved with them (e.g. running a spin bowling clinic with Shane Warne) and also valued being coached by elite cricket coaches.

> We were lucky enough to have coaches such as Shawn Flegler, Victorian High Performance Coach who taught us wrist spin. Simon Helmot[11] (Renegades and Victorian Bushrangers one-day coach) who taught leadership and coaching and Emma Inglis, Victorian Spirit Captain who taught batting. We have also had other CV staff and premier coaches come in and help us improve our game (Lucy – student video).

Students felt lucky and privileged to have these people involved in their schooling and to be around these people, learning and developing both cricket and life experiences that they valued, especially personal skills such as leadership. Students valued the opportunity to learn from elite coaches such as Simon Helmot when he spoke about leadership. They clearly hold him in high regard and felt they could relate to him because they share the cricket context. Adam's student video dedicates the totality of his three minutes to the day they worked alongside Shane Warne conducting a spin

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[11] Head coach of the Melbourne Renegades (ESPN 2015a)

bowling clinic at the MCG. Being treated as special and important is something this group particularly valued.

The program also offers a range of cricket opportunities that are not accessible to all CV-SDP students but are considered rewards for hard work and reserved for the best students. Working hard, being up to date with your class work and being reliable are some of the things students identified as being part of the criteria for getting these opportunities. Whilst there are no formal criteria documented by the program, the views expressed by the students are also reflected in program staff interviews.

Students described the opportunities they received and the concept of additional opportunities as a positive experience. They felt they had been given the opportunities they wanted during the program. What is unclear however is whether other students in the program felt the same about opportunities they could access. Nick describes how he felt he put himself 'out there' for the opportunities but recognised other students had not done 'as much' and didn't receive the same kind of benefits from the program. In his terms, they hadn't 'got as much' out of the program (Nick – student interview).

The program seems to promote merit based access to the best opportunities. Student interviews and videos express a culture or dominant narrative: 'there are many opportunities; if you work hard (at your school work) and you do a good job (particularly at clinics) you will get many opportunities'; and 'these will help you in the future'. These narratives need to be tempered with the perspective that the students who participated in the research each accessed multiple, highly valued opportunities but they also indicated this was not the case for all students.

The best opportunities are recognised by students to be those offered through the partnership with CV. This merit based selection of students is not particularly different to traditional schooling that values hard work (particularly academic study) and rewards and recognises this effort. What appears to be engaging for this group of students however is that the rewards are valued by the young people because they love cricket. They also seemed to appreciate the merit based approach because it appears to align well with their understanding of the competitive nature of sport – if you want to win you need to work hard. This process of subjectification whilst providing positive rewards and motivation for those willing to subscribe and succeed appears to threaten or marginalise those less able or willing (Bye 2012). The 'other student' is therefore silent in this dialogue.

Students also valued the work experience and volunteering opportunities with CV. These experiences are also offered to the best students with most describing these experiences as enjoyable but challenging. These included the work placement positions of Regional Development Officer (RDO) and Female Participation Development Officer (FPDO) as well as volunteering work at home games with the Melbourne Stars and the Melbourne Renegades. The students appear to strive hard to access these opportunities with CV because they worked alongside people that were important to them, it provided access to important places (like the MCG) and students believed that doing a work placement with CV would be a positive for their curriculum vitae and future aspirations. Students described themselves as 'lucky' and 'privileged' when they were given these opportunities.

The research highlights real tensions in the program between the limited opportunities on offer, the culture of good students getting the best opportunities and students feeling lucky when they were given these opportunities. This appears to be either a reflection of a dominant merit based culture that the students have completely subscribed to, or a belief (by the young people) that the opportunity is genuinely limited and valuable. The extensive use of the word 'luck' (by the students) also points to lack of control or agency in determining access to opportunity, which acknowledges that the students may not always understand how the rewards are distributed. It was clear from the interviews and videos however that these young people felt positive about the opportunities they accessed.

Students also valued being able to volunteer at large sporting events like the Twenty20 Big Bash League games. They are involved with something that matters and making a valuable contribution is important to them.

> Working for the Melbourne Renegades for the first season of the Big Bash League made me feel really excited to be helping out a brand new team start… I felt very nervous because I didn't want to do anything that would harm the reputation of the brand new team. I wanted to do a good job, to make sure they asked me to come back to help them with more home games in the future seasons (Daniel – student video).

By being allowed to participate, students also developed a range of work-readiness skills. They identified that if you wanted to be invited back you needed to 'do the right thing'. In their eyes, doing the right thing in this environment included: being on time,

doing as you were asked, doing the task well, and being professional as you were representing the CV brand.

To be involved with the Melbourne Stars and the Melbourne Renegades is seen as a privilege that is earned through hard work and by doing a good job. This experience is important because it is about cricket at an elite level, provides them with access to places of privilege and allows them to interact with famous people whom they regard as their heroes. These experiences helped the students develop work-readiness skills in a high interest environment, whilst providing cricket with a highly motivated volunteer workforce. The value of volunteering, to both the student and the partner organisation, is explored in Chapter 6 as part of the contribution young people make to the CV-SEDA partnership.

Cricket based rewards are also used to motivate students to complete their more academic written assessment tasks. Lucy (student interview) describes how 'as a reward for finishing all of our work, Mathew (teacher) would take us to the MCG to watch the Bushrangers play. It was always a great way to finish the day at SEDA'. Due to their love of cricket, students also valued the small tokens of appreciation provided by CV such as tickets to the game or free food in recognition of volunteering on behalf of CV or the Melbourne Stars/Melbourne Renegades. These small gifts allowed them to feel recognised for their contribution to cricket.

Brad summarises the collective view of being valued through cricket in all of these ways in his video:

> I also continued my experience with CV which then allowed me to do things like the Big Bash League and get free tickets and free food at the game and really an experience, when you are handing out posters and seeing the kids' faces and smiles and things like that, where you get to go on the ground and be part of the half-time show you are really involved and that's what really motivated me to continue in the course (Brad – student video).

5.2.5 Confident players

One of the strongest education outcomes described by the students in their interviews and videos is the development of confidence. Confidence is displayed by these young people as situation specific (Norman & Hyland 2003) rather than a personal trait. In the

student interviews, confidence is something they had not always experienced at school but had been able to develop in the program. As such, the provision of learning contexts that are initially familiar (cricket) for the development of coaching skills, with opportunities to transition to more challenging and unfamiliar coaching contexts, appears to be a successful model for developing confidence, especially when this can be supported with exceptional rewards for effort and personal recognition of their individual contributions.

Beyond the clinics, the students also valued their major projects as an expression of their individual interests and as an opportunity to develop confidence. As part of their major project, small groups of students were required to plan and coordinate a public event which delivered outcomes on behalf of a community group. These events were generally about cricket or sport. When students discussed their projects they expressed feeling proud of the contribution the project made to a community group or to cricket participation. For example, Sally and her classmates organised the Smashing Sixes Girls Super Clinic for more than 200 girls in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. She had identified that very few girls play cricket in this region because soccer is the preferred sport. She confirmed that CV saw this area as a priority for promoting cricket programs for girls and therefore a great location for their project. Sally describes how she received support and advice from her teacher and the staff at CV in terms of planning for the event, but that it was 'up to them' to deliver on the project.

The young people interviewed articulated they enjoyed their major projects because they were about cricket and contributed to a worthwhile cause, but their greatest satisfaction came from the new challenges these projects presented. In particular, this resulted from the need to 'work with adults' in the community (e.g. the local council or groups of Physical Education teachers from the local primary school) and coordinating real events which helped them develop pride and confidence.

The use of project based learning is identified by Jones, Rasmussen and Moffitt (1997) as an important way to engage young people with authentic learning. What appears to be most important for the CV-SDP students is the public event serving as the peak experience. Blumenfield et al. (1991) refer to this as the creation of important 'artefacts' or end products.

Due to the community nature of these projects, students were required to meet and discuss their ideas and seek advice from adults within the community including local

council staff, primary school teachers, and local cricket club committees. While the students described this as 'hard' or 'challenging' in the first instance, they realised that doing these tasks developed their interpersonal skills and allowed them to feel more confident. The connections between confidence and learning beyond the school gates, is also reflected in the VCAL curriculum (VCAA 2015b) and FLPs (Myconos 2014; Te Riele 2014).

The confidence developed by the young people in the program helped them to envisage a future beyond finishing Year 12. A dominant theme expressed is the consistent focus on future aspirations. A number of students interviewed admitted they were not really sure what career they wanted to pursue beyond Year 12 before joining the CV-SDP.

> I was a bit less confident than what I probably am now because at the time when I left to go to SEDA I was just like really flat and not enjoying school that much. Like nothing was wrong with school, like the people, but I was just really tired of – because I had no direction then so I was kind of like, "Why am I coming?", like I was almost just getting sick of coming to school when I didn't know what I wanted to do. That's why SEDA helped me. It gave me a pathway (Nick – student interview).

In his interview Nick identifies the correlation between feeling confident and being able to see the purpose of his academic pursuits. Of particular interest in Nick's case was his discovery of Sports Psychology (an area of study covered as part of the VCAL Literacy program) that led him to pursue tertiary studies in Psychology beyond the program. With Nick as an example, the program seems to be able to cater for the pursuit of individual interests with sport (or cricket) as the shared context with opportunities to pursue personal interests in a broad context to help establish a career focus or future aspiration.

5.2.6 Loving the program

The student's love of cricket seems to have an all pervasive impact on their overall experience of the program. The interviews are full of stories from passionate young people expressing their 'love' for the program, their teachers and many of the learning experiences. Their stories highlight just how connected these young people felt to the program as an extension of their love of cricket. Ben said that he wished he was 'just

coming out to visit me' for his interview and then he could go 'straight back to class' but he realised the program had come to an end and he 'couldn't go back even if he wanted to' (Ben – student interview).

Sally (student interview) wishes she could have completed her university degree at SEDA because she had enjoyed it so much, whilst Michael articulates his love and connection to the CV-SDP through his consistent attendance.

> For me personally, I loved it. I loved the program. It was probably the best three years of my life. I loved it, every minute of it. I think I missed two days in the three years. So I couldn't wait to go to class. So I loved it and thanks SEDA for setting it up (Michael – student video).

During the interviews (more so than in the videos) most of the young people articulated some form of not being seen to be good enough for school. This included not being interested, well behaved or good enough at exams or essays. The learning experiences offered in this program appear to provide multiple opportunities for young people to redefine themselves as a successful learner whilst building skills they see as valuable for their future. They were able to build on skills they already possessed (playing cricket) and developed new skills in an environment that values their new and developing skills as cricket players, volunteers, coaches and officials. Kirk and MacDonald (1998) identified that this type of 'legitimate peripheral participation' with cricket as the 'community of practice' (beyond just playing cricket) allows young people to become part of the sport community of practice, which they referred to as the cricket (or sport) industry. In this case, CV as the peak body for the sport of cricket provides them with a place of belonging and future prospects.

5.3 Active choices

The second driver that shapes the learning experiences young people value in the CV-SDP is the active choice they make in joining the program and how this impacts on their engagement with learning. This active choice is generally described as either a reaction against schooling, described by Lamb et al. (2004) as the 'hating school effect' (push) or a searching for something different that they feel is lacking in their schooling to date (pull effect).

To enter the program a student needs to choose to join the program through the online application, information night and interview process. In the interviews, the students identify that in general it is them (rather than parents or teachers) who lead the decision to join the program.

> My parents weren't overly keen on me leaving. I was at [metropolitan] Grammar, so obviously we put a fair bit of money towards the education to the point … I really hated school and it was just sort of that clichéd story from kids that end up in SEDA that school wasn't working. I was very disengaged, I wasn't motivated, I couldn't really see the point, something that I think's probably pretty common, particularly amongst the younger males, it was just, I was very disengaged with the whole thing and it just seemed, sport was sort of my really big focus. … I took my dad to the information session, and he was sort of taken aback and surprised at how professional [the staff were] and how the pathways to university worked. It really impressed him and I think that was sort of the thing that got it over the line for them to sort of go, "Okay, you can do this," and so, yeah, I just jumped into it from there (Peter – student interview).

Not all of the young people interviewed described themselves as disengaged from learning. Instead, most of the students recognised that if they had stayed at school they would have 'done okay'. Each described some aspect of school that wasn't working out for them. They expressed this in terms such as 'school wasn't really for me'; 'I didn't really like exams' or they acknowledged their own behaviour was 'not particularly acceptable'. When they described this behaviour it was in past tense, as something they left behind when they came to the program, such as 'I was a larrikin' or 'I was a bit of an idiot' (Ben and Peter – student interviews).

There is a sentiment expressed about their decision to join the program that is frequently silent in their description of their schooling prior to SEDA. 'I decided to do SEDA because 'I wanted to take my cricket further' (Harry – student interview); 'I love sport…so I thought that's just perfect for somebody like me' (Michael – student interview); 'So I could come to SEDA and just sort of focus in on what I wanted to do' (Luke – student interview). In comparison, some of the students described schooling as something that had been chosen for them or a place they had found themselves where they had very little control about these decisions. Other students like Luke experienced school or at least some of the subjects they undertook as something they were required to endure: a situation they had ended up in with very little choice.

[At my previous school] I enjoyed, you know the fun classes, PE [Physical Education] and Chemistry and that. But things like R.E. [Religious Education] and Maths and all of them sort of bored me a little bit; but I guess you sort of just had to cop it for a few years (Luke – student interview).

This ability to choose the CV-SDP rather than have school imposed on them, appears to be part of the change in the learning-engagement dynamic for the young people interviewed. The program is seen by them as a way to do learning differently and once decided effort and commitment provides its own rewards.

For this group of young people, choosing the CV-SDP appears to have encouraged them to a higher level of personal commitment to learning than they had previously displayed towards school. Students described how leaving school and starting the program required some of them to move out of home while others chose to travel long distances each day to attend the program. They were also proud of their levels of attendance and acknowledged that their parents had commented on their personal drive and responsibility once they started the program, which had not been previously present. These young people confirm that when appropriately motivated and provided with choice they are capable of meeting high expectations. This is not dissimilar to research conducted by Fan and Wolters (2014) who proposed that 'students who are confident in their learning abilities and are intrinsically interested in the learning activities are more likely to have higher expectations for obtaining desired academic goals' (p.24).

When young people chose the program, they specifically chose a cricket program but they also chose a more 'hands on' learning program. They particularly valued the practical, physical and beyond the classroom experiences over and above all other learning experiences. As identified in Chapter 2, this 'hands on' approach to learning is one of the key principles that define the applied learning pedagogy promoted by the VCAA (VCAA 2015a). Alongside this approach, the other elements identified by the VCAA as important for an applied learning pedagogy are the connection with communities and real-life experiences; experiences that build confidence and self-worth and consider the whole person and learning activities that value experiential, practical and 'hands on' ways of learning (VCAA 2013e). These elements are also valued by the young people in their interviews and videos.

Key learning experiences valued by the students that highlight these elements is their work placements and major projects. Although both have been discussed previously they are relevant in this section from an applied learning perspective. Students regularly cited their work placements and major projects, especially those at CV as some of the most valuable learning experiences in the program. They provided young people with a practical, 'hands on' experience of working with and connecting to their local community and to the world of work.

The majority of students interviewed had the opportunity to work (volunteer) as a RDO or FDO with CV as part of the final year of the program. This would appear to reflect the calibre of the students who agreed to be involved in the research rather than every student in the program having had this opportunity. These particular opportunities are used as rewards and recognition of the best students in the program.

> I think they see it as one of the best work placements you can get, because of that connection with CV, and the top students that get those opportunities (Robert – program staff interview).

The RDO role is described by the students as a prestigious opportunity to work for CV independently, conducting clinics in primary schools. The skills for this role build on those developed in the first two years of the program but require the student to work independently in the industry alongside CV staff. Students describe contacting primary schools and coordinating clinic times with Physical Education staff as well as designing and running clinics on their own.

These types of opportunities are also valued by young people because they have a sense of ownership and control over their work. For some young people being able to control their own pace was important.

> My RDO role, like that was actually – it was tiring – but I looked forward to running my clinics and for me I planned them all really close together, really early on, so I was like, 'All right, I'll go get them out of the way now and then just relax a little bit' (Nick – student interview).

The following is a description of how the Female Cricket Coordinator (FCC) at CV worked with the students on their individual projects. The FCC is responsible for increasing female participation in cricket across Victoria. She selects and supervises

CV-SDP students who wish to complete their work placement during their final year of the program. In 2013 she supervised 14 CV-SDP students for their work placement. Supported by Fiona, the students work with a local cricket club to establish female cricket teams.

During her interview, Fiona (CV – program staff interview) describes a student project. In this example, the student was responsible for establishing a junior girls' cricket competition in one of the outer Melbourne suburbs. With support from Fiona the student was put on the local junior cricket association committee so that he could engage the committee and members of the club to become 'female friendly' and establish a girls' team. The student was responsible for every aspect of establishing the girls' competition. This included creating the fixtures, administrating the competition and entering the results on the *MyCricket* website.[12] He had to register the students, organise *Come and Try* days, get the local primary schools involved, encourage them to join the local club and work with the committee to share the workload in setting up teams including team management and coaching.

This type of learning experience is particularly valued by young people interviewed because they felt part of CV and were supervised in a way that allows them to work autonomously on a project. They valued that they were trusted to work independently, could set their own pace and build on new skills they had previously developed in the program.

The other learning experiences particularly valued are those initiated through a curriculum subject called Major Projects. In each year of the program students work on an event or major project to achieve learning outcomes for both their VCAL or VET qualifications. In the first year these are usually minor events students arrange for their classmates; but by the third year these can be significant projects that aim to build sport participation especially junior development, build community capacity or raise funds for a charity. These experiences appear to be particularly important for young people on a number of levels. Students enjoyed the scale of some of these events (e.g. 500 children attended a Gala Day) and they are proud of project outcomes. They valued the contribution their event or activity made to their chosen community group (i.e. fundraising for a particular cause) and recognised that these events further developed their planning and organising skills.

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[12] MyCricket is the national cricket management system for Cricket Australia. The website allows Australian Cricket organisations to perform their administrative tasks.

What seems to have the biggest impact however is that they were committed to the projects they undertook because they chose the project and the community group.

> During the diploma year with our major project, that was something that I enjoyed the most because that was obviously something that was meaningful to me (Sally – student interview).

Mark describes his major project as running the Auskick[13] program for a local football club that wanted to re-start their junior football teams. This group of students coordinated every aspect of the Friday night Auskick program. Again, Mark's comments highlight that he got to work on aspects of the project that worked well for him.

> I was running the AFL Auskick program every Friday night from 6 to 7pm and it was pretty good...my major role was coaching the junior kids which was also pretty good because I like the younger ones rather than the older ones, just a bit more fun to coach I guess, they don't think they are all superstars at cricket (Mark – student video).

This differentiation of learning experiences to accommodate individual abilities (Tomlinson 2004) through pace, level of challenge and personal choice is an important element of the program valued by the young people interviewed.

5.3.1 New challenges

The CV-SDP graduates also valued the adventure based learning opportunities provided through the outdoor education elements of the program. As part of the program students participated in a range of co-curricular outdoor activities (surfing and sailing) in Programs 1 and 2 and also undertook a Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation as part of their Program 3 year. The surfing and sailing program is delivered to the cricket students by other groups of SEDA students who are in either the Surfing Victoria or Aquatics SDP. Just like the cricket clinics are delivered by cricket students, the surfing and aquatics students teach surfing and sailing skills to the CV-SDP students. The other outdoor activities described by the students are those undertaken as part of their Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation. These include rock climbing, alpine skiing, and canoeing.

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[13] Auskick is an Australian Rules football program for primary school age children coordinated by the Australian Football League.

Students commonly discussed the outdoor activities as one of the learning experiences they particularly remembered about the program. Their opinions about these outdoor activities sat at either end of the spectrum in terms of valued learning experiences. Some described these activities as the 'best part of the program' whilst others were challenged by them.

> My favourite thing in SEDA all up was probably the outdoor recreation activities this year, we got to go surfing and we got to go to the snow which I loved doing, I learnt how to abseil and rock climb and I found out I was alright at it, so that was pretty fun (Mark – student interview).

Other students found outdoor activities to be the most challenging aspect of the program. Many of these young people were able to articulate that although they didn't always enjoy these experiences at the time, upon reflection they could see they were worthwhile in developing personal skills of benefit to their future. These skills were rarely the practical skills of skiing or rock climbing but more often skills such as 'perseverance' and 'challenging yourself', which the students saw as important for their personal growth and development. For example, in Ben's interview he articulates 'hating surfing and not being a beach person' and how on the day he 'didn't want to be there' and previously would have chosen to stay at home. He claims he 'took a pretty poor attitude' but recognises that after giving surfing a go he had gone 'outside of his comfort zone and still tried it'. He goes on to say that he learnt that you can 'push yourself in other aspects of life … like meeting new people' (Ben – student interview).

In the interviews students comment in particular on the unfamiliar environments, the challenge of the activities (e.g. capsizing in the middle of the lake), their success (at overcoming fear), opportunities for reflecting on the experience in class and the support (or 'egging on') they received from their classmates during these activities. These elements are recognised as key to a strengths based approach to an adventure education program that supports personal growth (Passarelli, Hall & Anderson 2010); in particular, adventure and outdoor education programs have been shown to develop 'life effectiveness skills' which 'builds a person's capacity to adapt, thrive and survive' (Neill 2008, p.47) and students were able to recognise these benefits from their own outdoor experiences.

5.3.2 Valued life skills

In contrast to their experience of school prior to joining the CV-SDP, the students identified they could see the value of the skills or knowledge being developed in the program. This group of young people appear to have become interested in what was being taught when they saw the learning as relevant to them now, or at least of benefit to them in future.

Students like Ben identified that he could learn a lot from learning experiences like surfing, that this learning was about life and this learning could be applied more broadly.

> I don't think I would've done very well at school. I don't think I would've learnt that much, as much as I did at SEDA about life as well, and how much things like this really mean for your future and like, you know, just all the little things (Ben – student interview).

Students also commented on the supporting role of peers and teachers when they found these activities challenging. Luke places a particular focus on the role of peers in helping him get through these activities.

> Being put out of my comfort zone while being on water was something that I was extremely scared of, but I got through with the support of my classmates and I am happy that I was able to do it (Luke – student video).

Others felt pushed by their peers, stepping very much outside their 'comfort zones' and realising that these were particularly powerful experiences. Ben describes these as opportunities he would have handled less well previously.

> All my classmates were egging me on. They knew I didn't want to be there, and because I didn't want to be there, I took a pretty poor attitude. Which wasn't great but I'm kind of glad I did it in the end because I, yeah it was just out of my comfort zone again and I actually tried it…I wouldn't have done that back in school, I would've gone, no I'm not coming. I'm staying home today (Ben – student interview).

Choosing how you respond to physical or academic challenges is something that both Ben and Luke discuss as an important life skill. In his interview, Ben described how he was encouraged by his teacher to take responsibility for himself and 'man up' to the challenges that life presented. He was able to identify that he had the ability to choose his response and could see that this was a valuable skill for the future. Similarly, Luke was unable to participate in the activity to the extent that he would have liked, but in the end was pleased that he had tried. In both cases the young people involved identified that they had choices, were responsible for their own actions, and were supported by others when making these choices.

5.3.3 Opportunities

In this program, the theme of choice runs alongside the theme of opportunity. Learning experiences such as surfing and canoeing or working as a RDO are presented to students as opportunities that help shape their futures.

In every video and interview, whether it is a director, manager, teacher or student, the word 'opportunity' is a constant. In general, the concept of opportunity goes something like – 'there are many opportunities – you as a student have access to all of them – it is up to you which ones you want to choose to participate in'. The concept is further extended with, 'if you work hard and you do the "right thing" there will be even more opportunities'. Ben further expresses his understanding of this concept.

> Yeah. I learnt that the harder you work, the more opportunities you get and that's plain and simple, that's what happened. I worked harder and I got that opportunity and that opportunity I took with both hands and I performed really well at, and I've now got contacts with CV, and then because I did so well that year they got me back for a few events this year, so I did this summer as well (Ben – student interview).

The students are well aware of these opportunities and see themselves as having choices in terms of what they participate in. They recognise that the opportunities are enjoyable because they are about cricket and often relate to their future careers. And as such they are encouraged to choose opportunities that help them achieve desired outcomes. From student interviews it is clear that the program encourages them to believe that there are many opportunities, and they have the personal power and autonomy to achieve the outcomes they desire. While the students recognised this

personal power and acknowledged they felt they had received and taken up a fair proportion of opportunities, they also showed concern for and disappointment in other students who may not have benefited as much. They acknowledged that some students were just 'looking for a bludge' not wanting to 'make the most of the opportunities' and had therefore not benefited as much as they could have from the program.

> I thought if I'm going to go to SEDA I might as well put in 100 per cent. And I've always said to a lot of people that have asked me, "How's SEDA, is it worth it?" and I think – I had to make sure I said this in this interview, if you're going to go it's only as good as what you want it to be. Because a lot of people that I've seen, they go and they don't do it to the best of their ability and you just think if you tried it as hard as you can then it's as good as you want it to be. Because I know that I made it good for me but I could have quite easily have just gone though, not asked about doing work experience, not volunteered, not done anything like that, and I just would have not had the skills and experiences I've had and this would probably have been reflected in a lower standard of work and just probably lack of enthusiasm (Nick – student interview).

Nick articulated concern for his peers whose voices are not present in this conversation. It would appear that some young people lacked the ability or willingness to make the most of these opportunities. In Nick's narrative he reinforced the importance of this issue by making sure he said this in the interview. He was concerned because he felt they missed out on something important, by not subscribing to the idea that taking up opportunities would provide future benefits.

It is difficult to comment on the reluctance of other students to participate at the level promoted in the program, especially since these young people did not choose to participate in the research. What can be said however is that some students chose not to participate in all aspects of the CV-SDP or were unable to participate at a level which offered them access to the most valuable opportunities. This places a great deal of responsibility on the individual young person in a context where not all young people have access to the same personal resources. This was a concern previously identified by Stokes (2012) who recognised the focus on personal responsibility, choice and agency and the need to balance this with the perspective that many young people are managing complex family, school, part-time work and community lives.

5.3.4 The teacher as coach

In the interviews students recognised that their teacher played a pivotal role in creating the specific learning environment of choice and opportunity. While it helps that this group of young people and their teacher shared a passion for cricket, the young people particularly valued teachers who were caring, listened to their concerns and showed flexibility in their approach to them as individuals, and encouraged them to seek out the best opportunities for their future aspirations.

Students regularly compare their SEDA teachers with their previous teachers and said that this is one of the key reasons the program is 'better than school'. Of particular importance is the desire to be cared for by the teacher. Wentzel (1997) identifies the importance of being cared for by teachers in terms of assisting young people with motivation towards their learning. When students identified this 'care' in their CV-SDP teacher it was in contrast to their prior experiences of teachers.

> The difference between high school teachers and SEDA teachers is that SEDA teachers care for you so much. Like they're just so, yeah, they just care for you and it's just amazing. It's amazing to feel that care from a teacher, 'cos I'd never felt that before really. At school I just felt like I was another student that, look, yeah, we're going to have to help you out 'cos it's my job. (Ben – student interview)

What is important for Ben and other young people like him is that he acknowledges that he was 'difficult' at school, which would have made it a challenge to be generous with him all of the time, but in the program he found teachers that cared about him. As a teacher, it is easy to care about a student who is able to self-regulate, stays on task and is clear about what they want to achieve from his or her learning. Young people like Ben provide the real challenge for teachers in every setting and often find they are unable to connect with their teachers.

Later in his interview Ben describes how this caring is played out in the teacher-student relationship.

> …but that's the best thing about SEDA. It's never insulting the way they spoke to you, the way they treated you. It was kind of, it's up to you. We leave it to you. It's up to you. Like, you do what you feel is necessary or you do what you can or

what you want. We're going help you, we're going to guide you, but at the end of the day it's like university, it's up to you (Ben – student interview).

The narrative describes the teacher's ability to provide Ben with both autonomy and guidance throughout the learning process. Autonomy is developed as young people transition from childhood to adulthood and occurs in the emotional, behavioural and values domains (Fleming 2005). Behavioural autonomy occurs when young people start to make decisions independent of their parents, and to follow through on these decisions and actions. This behavioural autonomy appears to be the focus of the autonomy practiced in the SEDA classroom. It is encouraged by teachers in an explicit way. It is not 'you can do whatever you want' (which could be expressed without care). Instead it is expressed as, 'there will be many opportunities, you can choose which ones you will take up, they all help you shape your future and I can provide you with advice and support if you want it'.   Ben's comments identify that in his mind the teacher serves as a coach and a guide, encouraging him when it is needed and pointing him in the right direction. Creating a learning culture that encourages student responsibility and autonomy has previously been identified by Lamb and Rice (2008) in their research identifying interventions to improve engagement in Victorian schools.

CV-SDP teachers also seem to use the construct of 'opportunity' to create a constant dialogue with students about what learning they might take on ('here is an opportunity you might take up'), retaining student autonomy ('it is up to you if you do this') and encouraging them to make choices about what they might do in the future. In the student interviews, there is a richness of opportunity that the students recognise as a reward for hard work. Lucy (student video) captures the relatedness between hard work, reward and opportunity in the following way.

> For me it was about excelling in SEDA … opened up many great opportunities for me … I have always had a great work ethic and I was given the opportunity to volunteer to as one of the Melbourne Renegades crew at the big bash games.

There appeared to be a constant dialogue between the teacher and the students as new opportunities arose, with the teacher encouraging the student to consider the opportunities in terms of what they wanted to achieve in the future.

Students also identified that it was important for them to talk to their teachers about issues beyond the classroom. This need to integrate what is happening for each young

person beyond their learning in the program and their ability to negotiate this with their teacher was expressed by a number of students as important. For some students the teacher's flexibility made coming to class achievable when a more stringent environment may have led to confrontation and class avoidance. For example, Mason would arrive to class late every day because of the limited public transport arrangements between home and the program. He felt he had a personal agreement with his teacher which allowed this to occur. The teacher's capacity to be aware of each young person's personal situation and have the ability to accommodate it appears to be made possible structurally with each teacher only teaching the one group of 25 to 28 students. This is unusual in a secondary school setting where teachers would normally teach five to seven different classes of students but more common in alternative education settings (Te Riele 2014).

5.3.5 Future aspirations

A focus on their future aspirations is a core theme observed from student interviews. In contrast to their experiences of previous schools, they identified that what they learnt in the program was relevant today and useful for their futures. The learning the students undertook as part of the program, seemed (in the main) to make sense to them in contrast to the experience of school and learning, which appeared pointless, boring and irrelevant.

> Nothing was wrong with what was going on at school, like the people, but I was just really tired of – because I had no direction then so I was kind of like, "Why am I coming?", I was almost just getting sick of coming to school when I didn't know what I wanted to do. That's why SEDA helped me. It gave me a pathway I guess (Nick – student interview).

The group of young people interviewed had clear aspirations about their future at the end of Program 3. They described how the program helped them focus on what they wanted to do and provided them with opportunities to experience and learn more about a range of sport related jobs. The students identified that the best learning experiences of the program were those that were either relevant to their future aspirations or helped them develop into the adult they wanted to be. Therefore, these experiences were seen as purposeful by the young people. Luke described purposeful learning in the following way.

…like you understand that everything you do has a purpose and, you know it might seem a bit boring at the time but you know it's either going to give you some knowledge that you're going to need later on in life or it's going to help you lead on to an experience later on. So everything – I don't know, everything plays a role, I guess (Luke – student interview).

Students frequently mentioned how they used their networks to create opportunities for themselves and described how they developed networking skills. These skills seem to be encouraged in the program as a way to create future job opportunities. Michael articulated that these networks could serve as a future plan B, recognising that his first ambition (to run an indoor cricket centre) may not be achievable and may require him to call on these networks.

Students also relied on these their networks to develop a better understanding of job roles and pathways within the industry.

So learning how to network with people is like when you meet new people in the industry, you chew their ear off, talking, asking thousands of questions. How did you get here? What did you do to get here? Did you struggle getting to this point? Are you happy? Things like that, just, hearing all that information being fed back to me has given me a better understanding for the industry (Ben – student interview).

SWL as part of the VCAL program also plays an important role in helping young people identify the kinds of careers they wish to pursue. The availability of peak or highly sought after work placement opportunities with partner organisations such as CV and CA creates a classroom culture of sustained effort to access the best possible work placements. That this placement is one day per week for the year (which is a considerable commitment of time) also seems to motivate students to seek out the best possible placement.

The students also recognised they have been able to develop clearer career aspirations and pathways because of their SWL and industry experiences presented by the program. In particular, they valued meeting adults in a variety of job roles. Some of which they had never even heard of before, thereby increasing their career options.

The young people interviewed also appear to have shifted their focus as they transitioned from school to the program. While they describe finishing school as being about completing Year 12 and getting a good ATAR (university entrance score) this focus changed during the program. At some point, some students realised they could choose to go to university by completing a Diploma qualification at SEDA and that Year 12 is not the only option available to them for transitioning to university. By offering the third year of the program, the young people appear to have lifted their academic focus on to completing a Diploma level qualification and they articulate that Year 12 (or a Certificate IV qualification) is no longer sufficient to achieve the kind of employment outcomes they desire.

Whilst it is important to acknowledge that only diploma level graduates were interviewed and as such there is no data about what the young people valued who left the program at the end of Year 12, the young people interviewed also expressed real concern for their classmates who had left at the end of Year 12. (Approximately 19% of this cohort left the program at the end of Year 12 (n=23)). Some of the students interviewed, recognised there was very little prospect for getting a job without a post-secondary qualification. The students also believed that it was much more challenging to go to university without completing a diploma level qualification having completed their VCAL rather than the VCE. This is also reflective of the intent of the VCAL qualification designed to offer young people a senior secondary certificate for transition to work rather than further study (VCAA 2015b).

The young people interviewed were all at different stages of discovery in terms of the realities of finding the 'job they love' in sport. They spoke about friends in the program who had struggled to find the right job or had dropped out of university. While this ambition to find a 'job you love' is commendable and aspirational, it is not always achievable with youth unemployment at 14% (Brotherhood of St Laurence 2015, p.1) and may be unrealistic for an entry level role in the job market. It would appear to be important therefore to balance the building of high aspirations (and the high level of motivation and engagement achieved through this) and not setting young people up to fail with unrealistic expectations of the perfect job. It is worthy of note however that the transition data (to work or further study) for this cohort of students (CV-SDP Diploma graduates, 2013) is at least commensurate with the national average of diploma completion, with 88% of students transitioning from diploma to work and further study compared with 87.3% of diploma and above graduates from the Service Skills Industry sector (NVCER 2014, p.15).

While nearly all students interviewed had been able to successfully transition to work or further study within six months of completing the course, Harry provides an interesting case of other student outcomes alluded to by interviewees. Harry moved from regional Victoria and lived with a family member in Melbourne to be able to participate in the CV-SDP. He describes himself as a good cricketer who wanted to improve his cricket skills and play at a Melbourne cricket club. He wasn't really sure what career he wanted to pursue when he started the program. In the third year of the program he got the opportunity to work as a RDO with CV and really enjoyed this experience. Having completed Program 3 he applied for one of the full-time roles as a Cricket Development Manager at CV. He didn't get an interview. Six months later, he was still looking for a job but started manual labouring work. He was still keen to work in sport but had decided to go back to study and undertake a Certificate III in Electrical Engineering, because he has heard there are jobs with Powercor and he has a friend who has been able to get a job with them.

> Yeah, so that's kind of a problem now. Like, after doing all that placement stuff, it hasn't really still got me a job yet, which is kind of annoying like when you give up your time and you don't get paid for it and you don't get anything. So at the moment, I'm still applying for those jobs. Just kind of waiting. Because my family doesn't live down here, I have to support myself as well. So volunteering – yeah, it'd be good, but I can't live off volunteering (Harry – student interview).

When asked if he feels like he has learnt anything in the program that might prepare him for this new career, he says he wasn't sure. While Harry's story is far from the norm amongst the young people interviewed, it is important to recognise that not all young people experience the program and the transition beyond the program in the same way. The group of young people involved in the research were particularly positive, acknowledged they had benefited from the opportunities provided in the program, and made relatively smooth transitions to further study and work, but not all young people experienced this level of success.

Much of the career education literature supports the program's focus on future aspiration as a powerful way to engage and motivate young people with their learning (MEETYA 2008). At times, the program staff and students appear to idealise doing the 'job you love' with little awareness of the employment market context in which this occurs.

The youth literature supports the view that young people are being encouraged to make individualised choices assuming that choice exists (Woodman 2009) and that there are no barriers to achieving these choices. Young people's transitions to work and further study are however neither linear nor smooth (Stokes 2012). And in reality these transitions have become more complex and less clear-cut over the last 30 years (Smyth, Robinson & McInerney 2013). Youth transitions have been described as high risk where the long-term outcomes are still regularly defined by socio-economic background (Stokes 2012) and the realities of the current youth labour market (Brotherhood of St Laurence 2015). While there are some examples of students in the program having developed risk minimisation strategies, the staff and students convey a 'can-do', 'anything is possible' 'as long as you work hard' approach, which can be disempowering and unrealistic for some young people who do not have the resources or capacity to achieve these aspirational goals.

Most of the students interviewed had successfully transitioned to tertiary studies. These students identified they were more 'confident' and 'mature' and less 'stressed' compared with their first year university peers (Sally and Nick – student interviews). This did not mean that this transition was seamless for them. Some had struggled with the academic rigour required of them in their university course, particularly academic referencing and the initiative required to find their own reference materials. The transition to tertiary studies from vocational education has been identified by Griffin (2014) citing CSHISC (2012), particularly in terms of the inherent differences between the two sectors where students are shifting from a competency based practical approach to learning to a more academic curriculum based approach. It is not unexpected therefore that these students would find the transition challenging. Sally articulated that they would like to see future students have access to more preparation for this transition.

> It's hard to explain but I think just maybe in [the] diploma year, if they focus a bit more on the university side it would help students lead into it. Because I was shocked [in] my first semester, I was like oh, wow, this is so different to SEDA, you have to find everything yourself (Sally – student interview).

Sally highlights some of the differences between the two learning environments. In her interview she acknowledges that although she had learnt about taking responsibility for herself, she was not prepared for the academic independence required at university. While her comments highlight the previously identified challenges of transitions

between vocational and tertiary studies; there may also be an opportunity for the program to build the student's capacity for independent academic learning where students wish to pursue a tertiary pathway.

The skills identified by students as being important for their future and developed during the program included: organisational skills, confidence, leadership skills, networking skills, respect and responsibility, professionalism, and public presentation skills. These skills are reflective of *SEDA's Learning Outcomes Framework* and the *Core Skills for Work Development Framework* (Commonwealth of Australia 2013) as part of the *Australian Blueprint for Career Development* (MCEECDYA, 2010). In particular, they reflect the skills areas of 'working within roles', 'rights and responsibilities', 'connecting with others' and 'communicating for work'. And each is identified as essential for underpinning successful participation in work (Commonwealth of Australia 2013, p.1).

As referred to earlier, the students in the program also appeared to have shifted their initial focus from finishing school to transitioning to work or further study. The students valued their Diploma of Sport Development qualification more so than completing Year 12. For many of the young people interviewed, completing Year 12 was seen as not sufficient to achieve the long-term outcomes they aspired to. They also articulated concern for the students who dropped out of the program after Program 2 (Year 12), as they felt these students would struggle to find work. The students interviewed talked about the experiences they valued as being those that provided them with the skills and attributes for their future careers in combination with the VET qualifications gained over the life of the program that would assist them to achieve their intended job outcome or transition to university.

In multiple ways, the students also articulated that the program intentionally and explicitly mirrors the demands and expectations of the workplace / industry rather than school or university. For example, students talked in terms of 'being professional' rather than well behaved or well mannered. The partnerships with CV and CA appear to provide young people with experiences that encourage understanding of the industry reinforced by their teacher who encourages the need for personal responsibility to live up to the expectations of the industry.

A challenge for the program and indeed other programs that have a strong focus on personal aspiration and agency is the reality that young people will be motivated by

individual choice, control and agency, but not all of them will have the personal resources and opportunities to implement them (Thomas, Bell, Holland, Mc Grellis & Sharpe, 2002). For young people looking for work, the youth labour market is particularly challenging and good outcomes are not an automatic right for those with clearly articulated aspirations. The student interviews and themes identified above, highlight prioritising development of the 'entrepreneurial self' (Kelly 2006), with a strong focus on career outcomes, networking, volunteering, developing work readiness skills and positioning oneself against others in a quest to achieve the best outcomes for your future. While this provides the program with some of the features most valued by the student, such as meaning and relevance, this entrepreneurial self as the only viable personhood is limiting and they are not the only markers of who it is young people should (or could) become.

5.4 Conclusion

The student interviews and videos highlighted the important role their love of cricket played in shaping their most valued learning experiences and education outcomes. Student interest drove their engagement with learning in multiple ways. Their love of cricket created many opportunities for the students to feel connected to their peers and teacher. It also serves as an important building block for the development of foundational and more advanced work readiness skills. In particular, their love of cricket helped students to develop confidence as learners and allowed them to consider a range of future career possibilities.

The chapter also highlights the importance of learner autonomy. Beyond choosing study subjects of interest, the research highlights a multitude of ways in which autonomy is experienced by the students. In the first instance as a choice to join the SEDA program. As the student progresses through the program, there are opportunities for choosing and owning their own decisions, behaviours, learning and future options. The chapter identifies a strong connection in the CV-SDP between choosing the learning, taking up new opportunities, building career aspirations and working towards doing a job you love.

The learning experiences and education outcomes identified in this chapter will be used in Chapter 6 to consider how the SEDA-CV partnership contributed to these valued outcomes.

INTERLUDE

One of the challenges experienced during the research was the discovery that whilst using thematic analysis to interpret the data created insightful themes and ideas critical for developing new understandings, it appeared to sacrifice the richness of the individual student's story.

From the student interviews it became apparent that young people wanted to share their story. These stories were about their personal journey from school to SEDA and beyond. The following interlude attempts to recreate this journey from student stories shared in the interviews. The interlude is a compilation of common experiences shared by the young people in the research, drawing on the phrases and language they used. It has been written in the first person to highlight the personal nature of this narrative.

A letter arrived in the mail addressed to me. That doesn't happen often! Mum left it for me to open. It was brochure for the Cricket Victoria Sports Development Program. I had heard about SEDA from other kids at school.   They seemed to think it was pretty cool. I looked it up on the internet and you can apply online.

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I spoke to mum about it after cricket practice. She didn't seem too keen. She is pretty committed about me doing VCE. Dad thinks that I should go to university and it is important not to get too distracted with sport. He says you can't feed yourself on sport unless you are really good. I'm not that good.

I did a bit more searching online; mum thinks I haven't been this excited about anything other than cricket in years. I love the idea of studying cricket instead of school. School is so boring. I'm not bad at it, it just doesn't interest me. I like P.E. and Science isn't too bad but I hate Maths and History and R.E. is just a drag.

I convince dad to go to the information session with me. I know I have to get him on board if I have any chance. I wear my school uniform and we head to Hawthorn for the information session. Dad is a bit grumpy at first but he seems to warm to the idea. They talk about the program and it seems like it would be fun. Dad is more relaxed

because you can still get to university and I even heard him say 'I would have liked that when I was your age.'

I was invited for an interview; I think it went pretty well. I tell them I love cricket and my report is pretty good too. They ask about my attendance at school. I have missed a few days but I think my reference from my cricket coach is pretty good. He thinks I have leadership potential which helps I think.

The offer comes two weeks later, I am in the program and I am stoked.

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I have been in the program now for six months. I was a bit nervous at first, leaving behind my old mates. Day one, a whole class of new people but they all like cricket! I like wearing the Cricket Victoria uniform. People on the train think I am from Cricket Victoria; they look at me like I might be a player! I even signed a little kid's autograph. That never happened in my school uniform!

We have been running clinics at Nashville Primary School for the last few weeks. I was really nervous when we first started running the clinics. I love cricket but I had never really spoken in front of people before. We did our level 1 Coaching Certificate where we learnt some tips about how to run a good session. But it was much harder when you are facing these little kids; they seem to run everywhere and don't listen.   The Program 2 students are really good at running clinics. They are our leaders and give us tips on how to stay cool when the little kids get frustrating. I like the grade 3s the best. They seem to want to have fun and they smile a lot.

We also do SWL (work experience) every year. From day one we had to choose where we wanted to do our work experience. I didn't really know what I wanted to do so I did my work experience at a primary school. That seemed kind of easy but I didn't really enjoy it too much. I don't think I want to be a teacher. By second year I knew that I needed to be much more organised to do a good SWL. I wanted to get work experience in Sports Marketing. Our teacher encouraged us to use our networks. I don't think I knew about networks before SEDA but now I do. My dad had a friend who worked at Nike and I asked him whether I could ring him and see if they would let me do work experience with them. It worked! He said that I could work with them one day a

week at their city office. Work experience goes for the whole year but you can change over mid-year if you are not enjoying it.

I loved my work experience at Nike. They got me to work on a real project. Not like the primary school one where I just did boring work that they didn't want to do themselves. At Nike I had to do a whole lot of work looking at which sports players were sponsored by Nike and which ones were not and how I thought we might be able to get them to join up with Nike. I really liked this work experience because the people treated me like an adult and they even ended up using some of my ideas. It wasn't like school and I really got to know the people.

The primary school clinics start to get a bit boring near the end of Program 2, and sometimes I think the kids are not all that grateful that we are here running this program. What has been really cool is running the clinics at the special school. At first I was a bit scared of the kids. They make funny noises and I didn't really know how to get them to do what I wanted them to do. All of the normal tricks don't work on these kids! The teacher from the special school helped us out a bit and explained some of the problems the students have. They told us not to touch the kids on the head and to show the kids how to do things rather than talk too long. I feel like I can talk to all sorts of people now.

The classroom work is OK too. It is not too hard and the teacher makes sure we have some fun as well. Sometimes we have to do boring stuff like OHS but he is pretty relaxed and you can just chill out when you are up to date with your work. Sometimes it gets a bit full on but our teacher always creates rewards for us. If we get our work done, he takes us to the MCG for the last session of the Bushrangers (Victorian Team) playing. It makes it worth working hard if you know you will get other time to relax. I also like it when we go to the MCG for the six dollar lunch. This is great and sometimes you get to see some of the players.

At SEDA you often get to see famous people so you learn to be cool with it. You don't say 'hey there goes such and such', you just kind of be cool with it because you know them. Our class is also part of the Melbourne Stars. When the competition first started we got to volunteer and help out with the games. It was great to be able to be part of this. I got to be on the ground with the mascot and make sure they were OK as they went around the ground and waved at all the little kids. We handed out bags of giveaways and I like that the little kids really enjoyed it. Their big smiley faces and

making them happy. I also got to go into the change rooms at the MCG with the players and I got to sit near the player's bench and hear what they talk about. I wanted to be a famous player once but I know my cricket isn't that good.   I never thought I would get to be on the MCG but I did.

<p align="center">*~~~~~~~*</p>

So then I did the diploma year. My parents were always keen for me to do the Diploma so I could go on to university. The diploma year was OK. As I said I did my work placement at Cricket Victoria and I worked with Fiona who is the female cricket development person. She asked me to work with the Donhill Cricket Club where I play cricket. I had to develop a plan for how we were going to start a girl's cricket team at Donhill. I was on the club's committee of management as the girls' cricket person.

Cricket Victoria helped us get started by training us about how CV works. We were told that we were staff now and not students and how it was up to us to make the project work but we would get help if you need it. I worked with Ron from the club and we invited the girls from the local schools to come to a gala day and then we invited them to play cricket with the club. I was their coach and we trained on a Wednesday night.   It was good but it was hard to get enough girls together for a team. Some came for a few weeks and then never came back.

<p align="center">*~~~~~~~*</p>

From my work experience at Nike I decided that I wanted to work in Sports Marketing. I got into Victoria University and am doing a double degree in Sports Management and Marketing. I have found the exams hard. SEDA didn't really prepare you for that. I haven't really written an essay for a while and at the end of the semester we had to write five essays in one exam. I also didn't really know how to do the referencing when I first got to VU. I found that hard but there are a few SEDA students in my class and we kind of help each other out. I am doing pretty well and got some distinctions. I think I am more mature than the other kids at university. They have come straight from high school and they get a bit freaked out when the work gets hard. At SEDA you have to be independent. You travel all over the place and have to get yourself to things. My mum says I have become much more responsible and organised from being at SEDA.

CHAPTER 6. THE SEDA-CV PARTNERSHIP

6.1 Introduction

This chapter responds to the second question posed by the research. It considers how the SEDA-CV partnership contributes to the learning experiences and education outcomes valued by young people in the program.

The chapter borrows from the partnership theory of joint value creation (Austin 2000a) as a foundation for educational partnerships and expands on this construct by considering the unique role young people play in joint value creation. The chapter also recognised that when young people (or students) are seen as valuable contributors and value creators a new space is created which allows for the development of three-way partnerships between school-business and young people.

Section 6.2 describes some of the unique features of partnering with young people in the SEDA-CV partnership and associated implications for both students and the partnership. These implications are explored through the themes of *the typical student*, *the good student* and *malleable futures*.

Section 6.3 considers how each of the partners (SEDA, CV and students) make individual and collective contributions to the partnership by exploring some key components of the CV-SDP, in particular those valued by students. These include *exceptional opportunities*, *volunteering, clinics, work experience, the CV brand* and *staff collaboration*. The chapter concludes by considering who contributes to these components, who benefits, at what cost and to whom? It draws on data from interviews with staff and students, student videos, and documents publicly available or made available by SEDA and CV.

6.2 Educational partnership and joint value creation

> Typically, the greatest value is generated when partners combine their capabilities synergistically, rather than simply transfer or exchange resources (Austin 2000b, p.104).

As discussed in Chapter 2, educational partnerships are generally recognised as occurring between an education entity and a business or community organisation. Partnerships have become increasingly important for secondary schools, particularly as a way to increase or diversify income streams. This is taking place in an environment where schools are experiencing greater autonomy, a scarcity of funding and increasing student diversity demands (Bentley & Cazaly 2015).

Schools look to partner with business to help provide a broader range of engagement programs to support retainment of young people to Year 12. Schools also recognise that business organisations may be able to support them to become more business-like (DEEWR 2010). These educational partnerships are generally focussed on improving student outcomes, in particular student retention and Year 12 attainment (Clerke 2013b). In the main, these relationships could be described as 'philanthropic' with an exchange of resources being the key focus (Austin 2000a). For example, a school partners with a local business that provides financial support for a reading program for Year 8 students. This could be described as a linear process of value flow from business to school with a learning experience as the outcome.
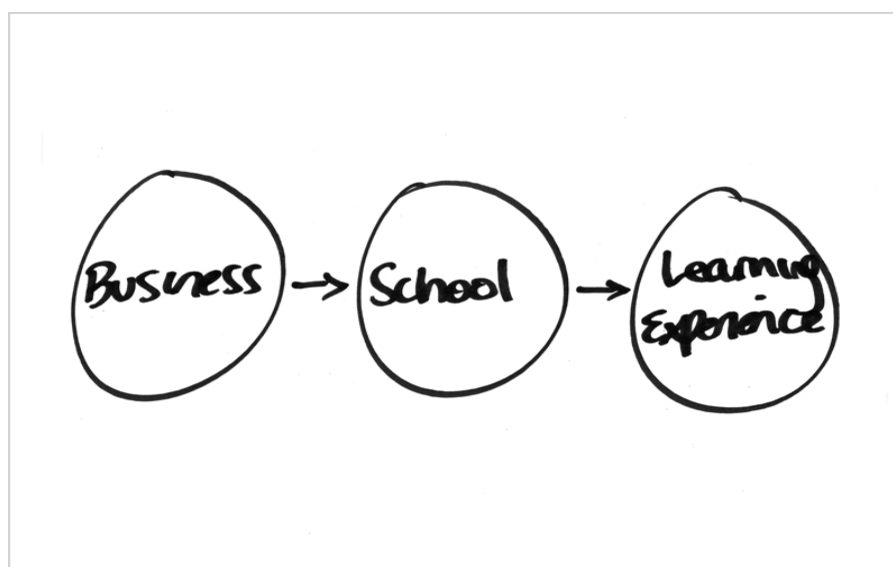
Figure 6.1: Linear value flow in philanthropic partnerships

Business or community organisations have received some benefits from these relationships in non-core ways, such as increased awareness of challenges facing schools and increased staff morale (DEEWR 2010), but rarely have they contributed to the core outcomes of the business. Where businesses have been able to achieve financial benefit from partnering with schools it has been through initiatives, such as

soft drink vending machines in schools which has increased customer support (Boyles 2005), but not providing direct education benefits for students.

When placing the SEDA-CV partnerships on the partnership / collaboration continuum created by Austin (2000a) the partnership appears to be further along the collaboration continuum when compared to more traditional school–business partnerships (DEEWR 2010). The majority of partnerships reside in the philanthropic category where the SEDA-CV partnership appears to deliver 'non-replicable benefits' to both partners (i.e. one could not deliver these without the other and vice versa) and thereby creating joint value (Austin 2000a).   Austin's continuum was created with business and not-for-profit partnerships in mind but this continuum would also appear to be applicable to this and other educational partnerships.

The interview with Donald (senior staff interview) identifies that this joint value creation came about initially because he, like many school principals, was responding to an unmet student need. He saw that many young people in schools were under-engaged in their learning and unlikely to complete Year 12.

The unique opportunity for the partnership was the ability to create a new program to address this student need, which need not be tailored to any existing school's structures, demands, needs or concerns. Donald wanted to take young people out of existing structures of timetables and classrooms to create new ways for young people to succeed in education.

The program was able to be developed by SEDA and CV as partners who would leverage their respective capabilities to deliver benefits to both organisations and deliver important outcomes to students. And as such the partnership reflected the characteristics of 'joint value creation' termed by Austin (2000a) where value flows in both directions. This can be represented in the following way.
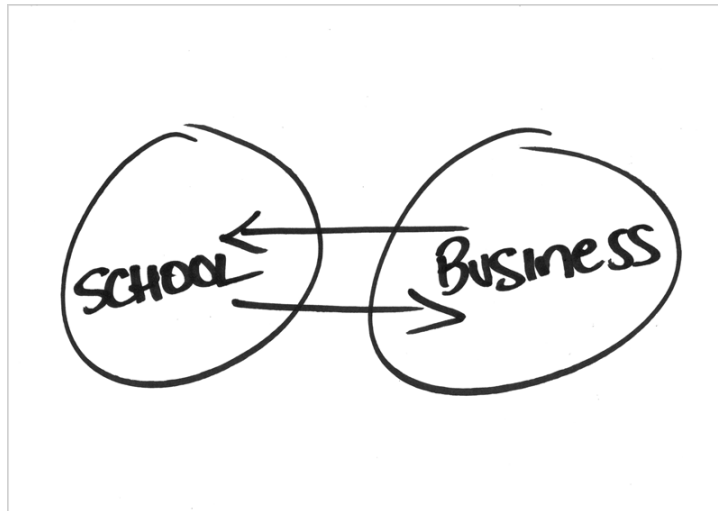
Figure 6.2: Joint value creation between SEDA (School) and CV (Business)

As Donald described in his interviews, there was no urgency to fix an existing school's problems; instead it was born from a desire to create a new and unique program that would engage young people through applied learning.

One of the key themes across interviews with staff from both organisations is the provision of valuable, tangible and measurable benefits for business.

> So if you're going to build a partnership, you need to be really able to put that on the table and say "This is what the benefit can be to both parties who are involved in this" and I think that that's something that SEDA does well in terms of being able to negotiate what both parties are going to get out of it (Phillip – SEDA, senior staff interview).

One of the greatest challenges for schools or education institutions developing educational partnerships is that schools rarely provide business with more than altruistic benefits (DEEWR 2010). Whilst for many business or for-profit organisations there is an inherent value in partnering with schools that builds social capital, their investment of time and energy is limited unless partnerships can produce measurable outcomes for core business. Interviews with managers at both CV and SEDA identify that the question of core business was regularly discussed in both organisations from the start of the relationship. CV incorporated education as a new core business and a key strategy for embracing the partnership. Prior to the commencement of the CV-SDP, CV core business was the development of elite cricket talent.

Stephen and Donald believed both SEDA and CV could play a critical role in creating engaged learning for young people and also recognised the possible benefits for CV. Whilst this may have been the case for these two initiators of the program, most CV staff were reluctant to get involved. Staff could not understand why CV would be interested in the delivery of an education program and some articulated this was 'not core business' (Stephen – CV senior staff interview). These internal discussions took place during a time when cricket was predominantly focussed on elite player development rather than increasing community participation. Over the last five years this has changed with cricket and sport more generally, increasing their focus on community participation and junior player development. In the last few years the Australian Sports Commission (2015) has also encouraged all sports to diversify participation to 'hard-to-reach groups such as recent arrivals' (Joe CV – senior staff interview). SEDA has been able to support CV to deliver on these changing priorities especially through the delivery of cricket clinics. Clinics are one of the aspects of the program described in section 5.2.2 that provide measurable outcomes for CV as the partner as well as positive outcomes for SEDA and the young people.

6.3 Students as partners

While joint value creation (Austin 2000a) as a theoretical concept, considers partnerships between two organisations, of interest in this research is that young people also play an integral role in the partnership and as such can be described as the third entity or partner. Figure 6.3 conceptualises this three-way partnership by locating the student's learning experience in the centre of this three-way partnership.
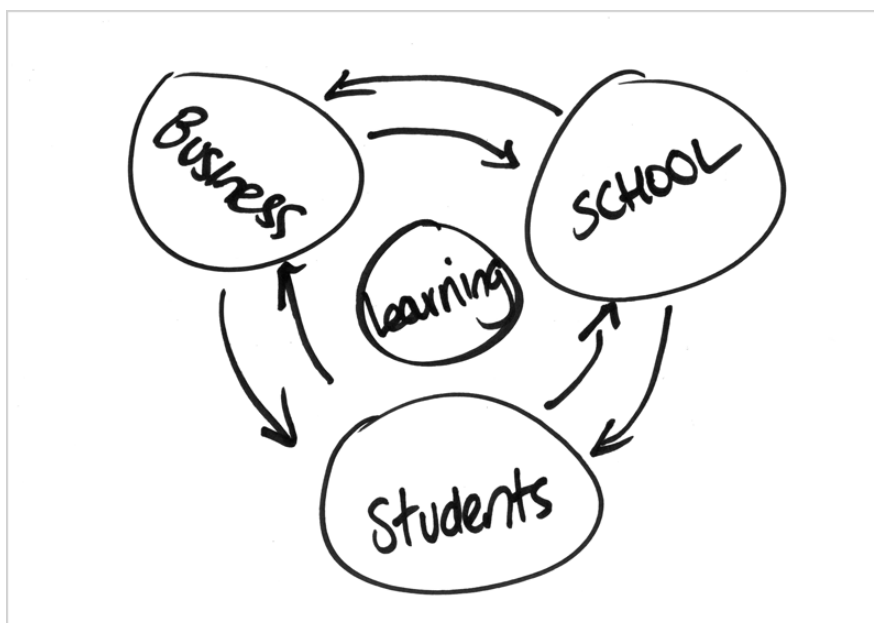
Figure 6.3: Three-way partnerships

The students are the main focus of the SEDA-CV educational partnership but over time
young people have been recognised as making a unique contribution that is valued by
staff from CV and SEDA. This genuine valuing of young people's contribution appears
to be subconscious rather than an explicit strategy of either organisation; but in many
ways it is what makes the partnership unusual.

Interviews with staff from SEDA and CV describe a clear focus on students and their
learning as the fundamental shared interest of the partnership. From commencement,
both SEDA and CV agreed that learning experiences and education outcomes for the
young people in the program were their number one priority (Stephen – senior staff
interview). They realised that if the student experience was valuable from a student
engagement and learning perspective then cricket would benefit. This is succinctly
articulated by Stephen.

> The message has always been this is an education program first and foremost,
> and then sport benefits, but if you want the sport to benefit, you've got to tailor
> what you need within that education program, and they [students] will go out of
> their way to tailor it for you, and that's how it works, it's a true partnership in every
> sense of the word (Stephen CV – senior staff interview).

Staff also identify that both organisations have developed a shared understanding of
the outcomes they are working to achieve for young people through the telling and
retelling of student stories (not dissimilar to that outlined in the interlude). These

stories at first appear to be about the same student but upon closer inspection they are about the typical SEDA student.

6.3.1 The typical student

> I'll just use one student as an example: John—who at school was not a bad student, but just not engaged—came into the program and excelled, like just excelled because the way the program was delivered suited his learning style to the point where he loved the coaching aspect and working with children, so much that he wanted to become a teacher and went to university. He has just completed his four years and wants to teach in the SEDA program (Phillip SEDA – program staff interview).

A similar story was told by a number of staff from both organisations. This storytelling of appears to be an important element of the partnership that helps sustain a shared understanding of the outcomes of the partnership which prioritises young people and their interests.

Generally, the typical student is a young man, disengaged from both school and learning. He loves sport, especially cricket. He is a 'hands on' learner who takes a little while to realise that if you work hard you will be provided with many opportunities that inspire you to want to work in the sport and recreation industry. He has positive experiences in the program that point him towards a career or job he had never before imagined or aspired to. He realises you need to study hard, finish school and go to university or get a job. He learns to be on time, he is proud of his uniform, confident and capable of anything he puts his mind to.   The typical student is able to access great opportunities with CV and is appreciative of these opportunities because he can see how this will contribute to his career goals. In each of the student stories shared by staff, young people exceed all expectations set by their previous schools, their families and themselves.

Thus the typical student concept is a very positive shared vision held by both SEDA and CV. It articulates both the intent and outcomes of the partnership and creates a base upon which the partnership builds the student learning experience. It also highly values young people for the potential they bring when they enter the program, as it assumes they are capable and willing to learn when the learning environment is engaging. This shared vision sets high expectations for young people that appear to

have resulted in students feeling motivated and challenged by learning activities that match their interests.

This shared understanding has led to the development of a range of learning experiences that places trust in young people and tells them they are capable of meeting high expectations. This partnership approach also appears to place responsibility for disengagement on the institution and not the young person, which is particularly important for this cohort, who have accumulated some negative experiences of schooling. Young people do not appear to join the SEDA program 'at risk', as young people are often described (Te Riele 2006). In fact, they appear (through the typical student narrative) to arrive full of undervalued potential that can be 'switched on' through their love of cricket (Stephen – senior staff interview).

One of the questions not explored in this case study is what impact this typification of students has on students who are not typical. Moreover, the student interviews demonstrate that none of the young people particularly fitted the partnership's expectation. Instead the typical student serves the purpose of creating hope and vision for the student and the program rather than being the reality for the majority of young people in the programs.

Whilst this shared vision has provided the partnership with a strong student focus it could limit opportunities for some students to thrive in the program or set unrealistic expectations for others. For example, is there room in the program for a young man who never really 'switches on' because he has so much else happening in his life that just attending every day is all he can manage? This is a real challenge for any program that aims to create a clear student focus with high expectations whilst catering for diverse groups with different levels of learner readiness.

What is also evident is that the partnership has moved beyond making students the focus of their collective work to valuing young people as an essential element of the partnership's success. This valuing of young people has shaped the student experience in ways which are worthy of further exploration. Whilst the role of educational partnerships is well documented to serve the interests of the student (Clerke 2013b), the literature is underdeveloped in terms of the role students can play in contributing to the partnership. In this case study, the detailed analysis of staff and student interviews identifies the deep valuing of young people and their contribution

delivers rich learning experiences and education outcomes and appears to be central to the success of the partnership in multiple ways.

Staff at SEDA and CV recognised that young people are not just passive recipients of the partnership or learning experiences. Instead young people can be described as an integral member of the partnership. Young people actively engage with the learning experiences provided by the partnership; and because the experiences are authentic with genuine outcomes and consequences, the students have a real impact on the partnership.

The interviews identify a number of ways the program values young people. These contributions have both benefits and consequences for the partnership and young people's learning. They generously contribute their 'youthful enthusiasm' to the partnership. In contrast, being young is often described in youth literature as a 'risky period' of transition to adulthood (Spence 2005, p.48). Youth and youthfulness is regularly viewed as a negative construct where young people would appear to contribute very little to a cohesive society (Martin, Hart, MacLeod & Kinder 2010). In the SEDA-CV partnership, being 'young' and 'enthusiastic' is identified by staff as a valued element of the partnership and its ongoing success. This is particularly evident in terms of positive outcomes described by CV staff. Stephen describes how from very early in the partnership he appreciated the student's youthful enthusiasm in the CV office.

> I think it created a really nice vibe in the office too, this young energy, bright eyed, "what's the world got ahead of me", "how lucky are you guys to be working at cricket", "I want to be like you" (Stephen CV – senior staff interview).

This appreciation for young people's enthusiasm is also recognised in the cricket clinics that students deliver. The CV-SDP students are seen by the staff as able to deliver a much more enjoyable primary school clinic compared with a more mature Cricket Development Officer.

> The power of 18, 19, or 20 year olds, as opposed to a 35 or 40-year-old, with kids, is enormous, and this is what these students bring. They bring the power of youth to a 10 or 12-year-old boy or girl; it's far more powerful if it's done well than if it's an older person. Because it's a human thing, particularly when you put young

people together, it's amazing what they can achieve (Stephen CV – senior staff interview).

The staff from both organisations identify that young people are also well placed to deliver these clinics as junior sport coaches because the role of the junior coach is to encourage fun and participation and as such they do not need to have highly technical coaching knowledge or experience (Fraser-Thomas & Cote 2006). When you combine their love of cricket with this youthful enthusiasm the job of junior cricket coach is well matched to the student's strengths and interests. The partnership appears to have recognised youthfulness as a strength or benefit to the partnership.

The student's youth combined with the authentic nature of the learning experience also creates challenges for the partnership. The unpredictable nature of some young people and the need for positive outcomes for both SEDA and CV appear to have led to the development of a culture where the best students get the highest value learning experiences with CV. Staff from both organisations refer to these young people as the 'good' students where the 'good' student gets the best opportunities as a direct consequence of the valuable role that young people play in delivering real and highly valued outcomes for the partnership.

If the experiences were less 'real' (e.g. a simulation) and therefore the success or failure of the outcome of little consequence to either organisation or the partnership, there would be a reduced need to ensure the outcomes were predictable. However, by reducing the consequences of the activity it would also reduce student interest. Students identified how important 'real experiences' with 'real consequences' were in terms of maintaining their level of interest.

6.3.2 The good student

The concept of good or 'ideal student' is identified in education literature, as a measure against which each student is described as one that can be taught or not (Freund 2009). The 'good' student also appears in the SEDA setting although they are required to display attributes reflective of the world of work rather than whether they can be taught and these attributes are not just valued by their teacher but also CV staff. The required attributes are summarised by staff as 'being professional' and 'meeting the expectations' set by industry (Robert SEDA – program staff interview). However, this typification of students as either 'good' or 'not good enough' could place some young

people at risk of missing out on the most powerful and highly valued peak learning experiences, especially some of the exceptional experiences valued by young people in Chapter 5.

SEDA staff articulate that 'good' students are most likely to provide a positive outcome for CV but they are less clear about whether the 'good' student is likely to benefit the most from the learning experience. Staff do however express that the students chosen for the learning experience have 'earned the opportunity' or 'deserve it' (Tom – program staff interview). Again, this typification of students is not unusual in secondary education (Freund 2009; Wortham 2004); what is of interest is that this need to be a 'good' student, although different to what is expected in schools, may be exacerbated in the partnership context where students deliver valuable outcomes on behalf of a partner organisation in the community.

This notion of the 'good' student is expressed by staff rather than students. While the sample was relatively small, each student had experienced some of the best opportunities and could be described as a 'good' student. They expressed, on numerous occasions, that when they got these opportunities they felt lucky and privileged. While most had not seen themselves as 'good' at school they were clearly able to participate as 'good' students in the SEDA context.

> From running clinics, I got the opportunity to be a part of CV and to get my work experience through them [CV] which was an amazing opportunity, and if you had asked me at the start of the year would I get it with them I probably would have said are you joking (Brad – student video).

Brad is clear that he worked hard for the opportunity to be involved with CV and that this opportunity was limited to a small number of students. Interestingly, he tried hard to access this opportunity even though he hadn't imagined it would become a reality for him. Whilst in some ways he may not have fully understood what would be valued by the staff in terms of the 'good' student, he acknowledges that 'running good clinics' was one way in which he was able to access this opportunity and clinics are an activity undertaken by all students.

The student interviews also point to the possibility that not everyone (referred to as 'other' students) made the most of these opportunities. Nick expressed that some of the 'other' students had not 'tried hard enough' and therefore 'did not make the most of

their time at SEDA'. In his own words Nick seems to have understood the value or benefit of being a 'good' student to his future aspirations. This limitation is also recognised by senior staff at SEDA as work that needs addressing in future. Jerry (senior staff interview) identifies that his current role had a strong focus on creating a minimum baseline of exceptional CV learning experiences in the curriculum to ensure all students were able to access them.

> My focus is about meeting a lot of our SEDA strategic objectives and one of them is student focussed; which also in turn will get better outcomes for cricket… but linking things more closely to the curriculum (Jerry – senior staff interview).

Jerry's work, to integrate more exceptional learning experiences into the formal curriculum and make these available to all students, starts to address some of the issues highlighted through the 'good' student without intending to lose some of the unique incentives created by the exceptional experiences.

The need to provide 'good' students for CV is a belief that appears to be held more firmly by SEDA than CV staff. SEDA staff clearly value their relationship with CV and see the provision of 'good' students as one strategy for maintaining a satisfied partner, but also allows them to reward students who demonstrate effort and hard work and encourages other students to try harder.

Whilst extrinsic rewards (as a motivator for learning) can be seen as a mechanism of control through seduction (Deci & Ryan 1985) this is not how the 'good' students appear to have experienced these rewards. Instead they experienced them as valuable rewards and opportunities which they could choose to engage in. The autonomy created through choice and rewarding experiences are positively related to their future aspirations which seems to reflect previous research about 'performance contingent rewards' and the 'effects of autonomy supportive influences' on motivation (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan 1991, p.10).

6.3.3 Malleable futures

Staff from both organisations articulated that students deliver significant immediate benefits to the sport of cricket and CV through their participation. Of particular interest is the recognition that young people are also seen as 'malleable', with the potential to deliver future benefit to cricket.

Staff recognised that young people are particularly malleable future employees, volunteers and ambassadors for the sport. This extends CV's interest in the students well beyond their time in the program.

> We are able to use those learning activities to actually pretty well develop them into what we need in cricket in our sport… (Stephen CV – senior staff interview).

Stephen is describing here how the students can be trained up in very particular ways to coach cricket, conduct clinics or represent CV at events. He is also talking more broadly about the program's ability to shape young people to become the 'future of cricket', that is, developing the next generation of volunteer officials and coaches for local cricket clubs.

This shaping of young people suggests a clandestine working approach that positions them as vulnerable youth, easily led and moulded for a purpose they do not value. This does not however appear to be the case as students articulated a genuine interest in being involved in creating the future of cricket and valued these opportunities. These valued opportunities are different for each student. Eddie expressed this in terms of coaching the next international batsman (or woman) whilst Sally described it in terms of getting a job at CV to help promote cricket to girls.

Fiona (CV – program staff interview) also sees students as having future potential. She describes how she sees current students being her ambassadors for female cricket in the future.

> Most of them are playing club cricket and they enjoy that administrative side of it, so they're going to be the ones that are going to be presidents and secretaries. They're going to be saying, "hold on a minute we need girls". That's hopefully where it all leads so it's; nurture the present harvest the future and hopefully we'll harvest all these great things that they'll do later on.

Fiona is talking in specific terms about young people being involved in cricket clubs developing female participation. She also highlights CV's ability to see young people as not just young people for today but of future benefit to CV and the sport of cricket. This deep valuing of young people beyond their current status provides CV with multiple incentives for investing time and energy in both students and program.

The creation of future value has previously been acknowledged in the educational partnerships literature. The literature recognised business benefits in partnerships with schools when young people are viewed as a potential future workforce (Clerke 2013b) or a future consumer of products (Boyles 2005); but students are not recognised as partners in these arrangements.

6.4 Three-way partnerships

The complexities of this three-way partnership can be better understood by exploring some of the key components of the program valued by young people and how these impact on both the student experience and partnership. Standout themes identified from the data include exceptional learning opportunities, volunteering, work experience, brand value and collaboration.

Each of these themes were considered in terms of the following questions. Who brings this aspect to the partnership? How does it impact the learning experience and education outcomes of young people? What impact does this have on students? Who else benefits and what are the associated costs?

6.4.1 Exceptional learning opportunities

What is evident is that the success of the program is highly reliant on the learning opportunities developed in collaboration between SEDA and CV, especially the exceptional opportunities identified in Chapter 5. The use of the word 'opportunity' recognises the esteem in which these experiences were held by the students. They recognised these experiences as unique and highly valuable and saw themselves as lucky to have been offered these opportunities. The young people interviewed recognised that these learning opportunities helped them develop confidence and clearer future aspirations.

As discussed in Chapter 5, young people value the exceptional learning experiences or opportunities that come about through the CV partnership. Students particularly loved the opportunity to be around people that mattered to them: famous cricket players, elite cricket coaches and the staff that work at CV and CA. They also appreciated being able to access venues such as the MCG and work at public cricket events including Twenty20 Big Bash League games with the Melbourne Stars and the Melbourne Renegades.

Some of these exceptional opportunities are available to the whole class (e.g. going to the MCG) whilst other opportunities are only available to a select few previously identified as good students. These opportunities have been developed progressively over the life of the SEDA-CV partnership. From CV's perspective, time and energy was invested because learning opportunities deliver valuable strategic outcomes for CV (Stephen – senior staff interview). They are valuable to SEDA because they appear to be particularly important for maintaining student motivation and engagement with learning. Learning opportunities also help teachers to achieve strong student engagement and retention. This is important for SEDA as it is for any school. And even more so when attracting young people who have already experienced a level of disengagement or disillusionment with mainstream education.

It is clear from the program staff interviews that SEDA staff are constantly working to achieve more exceptional opportunities to reward the best students. Opportunities appear to have been developed initially with the first group of 16 students in mind and then scaled up to meet the increasing student demand for the program over the next 6 years as the program grew from 16 to 150 to over 300 students between 2006 and 2013 (Phillip – senior staff interview). These interviews highlight a collaborative approach to developing new opportunities. Robert (SEDA staff), for example, describes working out of the CV office on a regular basis, chasing down staff that might be able to take some students (for work experience) and encouraging them to find new ways to take more students. This is a process of trust building where the CV staff might initially only take one student. However, if Robert provides a good student who works out well, next time the CV staff member is prepared to take more students, slowly building opportunities.

Robert describes how in the first year of the Melbourne Stars and the Melbourne Renegades competition the approach to utilising student volunteers was ad hoc but by the second year the SEDA and Melbourne Stars and Melbourne Renegades staff had got together and agreed on what roles students could play and thus created a schedule of opportunities. Robert also describes his absolute willingness to help support CV at short notice, particularly when the new Melbourne Stars and Renegades teams were being established.

> The first year they would say, "We need 25 students at the MCG tomorrow, do you think you can help us?" And we're like, "Tomorrow is a Saturday, student's finished a week ago, like how are we going to get students there? That's

impossible." And then they'd say, "Okay, just send as many as you can," and you'd get four or five, and then they'd go, "Oh, those guys are great, can we have them down on Monday?" I'm like, "Okay, we can send them" (Robert SEDA – program staff interview).

Robert understood that helping the Melbourne Stars and Renegades achieve the outcomes they needed would create more opportunities for students in the future. He describes how the following year the staff from both organisations planned opportunities together.

And we had a bit more lead in time …and by August, they'd listed all these events, all the things they were doing. It got big in that year, there were so many things they wanted our students to do, and it was great, because there were so many opportunities for our students. The Melbourne Stars wanted 20 students to work at every game, plus they needed 10 in at memberships, and all of a sudden we went from having 25 at [the] last minute to 30 locked in by September, for all these events all the way through the session. And some really good events, running clinics, on the G [MCG] and getting involved with the team, and students getting on the ground in games, and things like that (Robert SEDA – program staff interview).

He recognises that responding to CV at short notice wasn't always in the student's best interest but he appears to work at balancing what CV needs today with creating better experiences for the students in the future.   There is a sense of 'can-do' in the way SEDA staff respond to meeting the needs of CV. They see it as a vital component of their role to continuously improve the range and volume of learning experiences available to students.

The interviews and videos demonstrate that exceptional opportunities are important for students as well as SEDA and offer benefits to CV, particularly when it allows them to develop a junior volunteer workforce for Melbourne Stars and Melbourne Renegades games. These exceptional opportunities frequently require students to volunteer their time on weekends and after class.

6.4.2 Volunteering

Alongside their 'youthful enthusiasm' and 'malleable futures' young people also make a valuable contribution to the partnership as volunteers, either directly for CV or indirectly through their local cricket clubs. Students might umpire, score, coach a local cricket team or volunteer for one of the many CV programs (e.g. the *milo in2cricket*, the *milo T20 Blast* or the *Born to Play* girls' cricket program). All students are required to complete 20 hours of volunteering per year for three years. They are able to count all types of volunteering, including some of the exceptional opportunities they might participate in with CV, as long as they are completed out of class time.

SEDA staff interviewed recognised that volunteering is a positive part of the program and in the student's interests, as it helps them develop future networks and develop citizenship while improving their work readiness skills (Bruce – program staff interview). SEDA also promotes positive community engagement. The 2016 SEDA program guide promotes the program using the work SEDA and the students undertake to address 'inequality and promote social cohesion' (SEDA 2015, p.5).

Whilst referred to simply as volunteering at SEDA, the literature describes it as service learning, where the outcomes benefit both the volunteer and the provider and the learning is linked to the curriculum (Cnaan, Handy & Wadsworth 1996). Service learning as a concept accurately captures both the unpaid aspect of the work as well as the intended beneficiaries of the volunteering. When the CV-SDP students volunteer they achieve both the community benefit and the student benefit (Cnaan, Handy & Wadsworth 1996).

By volunteering young people contribute their time as an essential ingredient to the SEDA-CV partnership. They work for 20 hours to gain experience in the sport and recreation industry. This compulsory volunteering, completed as part of the CV-SDP, also makes a significant contribution to the sport of cricket and CV. Through their partnership with SEDA and the students, CV has access to over 300 young and enthusiastic cricketers who take on an active role in their local cricket club or volunteer at CV events.   All sports recognise the need to develop the next generation of coaches, office bearers and umpires and that sport participation at grassroots level is highly reliant on volunteers (Nichols, Taylor, Barrett & Jeanes, 2014).

Students interviewed recognised they needed to register initially for low key events (referred to as chores) to receive the 'exceptional' rewards and this was generally considered reasonable. At times, young people expressed concerns about how much time they volunteered for unpaid work and/or the expectation to become a volunteer to access the sport and recreation industry for future employment.

> …by the end of it, by the end of doing my work experience and the volunteering, I was getting a little bit tired of it because I wasn't getting paid… but – I mean, you learnt things and it was good experience because I can always say that I've done work with CV and you always have that. So yeah, it was good, in the main part, but by the end of my work experience, doing a whole year, and even as I finished the diploma and was still doing my work experience I was getting a little bit tired of it (Nick – student interview).

Nick captures the tension between the volume of volunteering and the outcomes and value of that experience as perceived by the student. While he appears to express that he had become tired of not being paid, he is clear that it was a good experience for him. This perception that volunteering is seen as worthwhile for students like Nick is because they develop valuable networks in the process (Michael – student interview).

Harry on the other hand is frustrated at the lack of employment outcomes regardless of the voluntary time he contributed.

> Like, after doing all that like placement stuff, it hasn't really still got me a job yet which is kind of annoying like when you give up your time and you don't get paid for it and you don't get anything. So at the moment, I'm still applying for those jobs and that. Just kind of waiting (Harry – student interview).

Harry realised that if he wanted to gain employment with a high profile sport organisation like CV he needed to continue with volunteer work. Harry, like many other young people, may not have a choice to prioritise volunteering. In his interview he summarised this tension: '…so volunteering – yeah, it'd be good, but I can't live off volunteering'. Tom (CV – program staff interview) highlights some of the employment challenges for students with aspirations to work at CV or other high profile organisations by identifying that no SEDA student has yet been employed on a full-time basis by CV over the last nine years of the program. This is not necessarily surprising

as CV is a relatively small employer of permanent staff and the job roles identified by the students as particularly appealing are highly sought after with low turnover.

There are a number of divergent perspectives identified in the literature with regard to compulsory volunteering (Helms 2013; Keeping Volunteering Voluntary 2014). Of particular interest to this case study are the findings that high school students that volunteered are more likely to do so in the future (Planty, Regnier & NCES 2003). When this volunteering is mandated however it is more likely to have an adverse, negative effect and reduce future volunteering (Helms 2013). Where volunteering and the outcomes achieved match the life stage of the young person (e.g. a young person volunteers because it will help him or her access job opportunities) there are benefits (Haski-Leventhal, Ronel, York & Ben-David 2008). It is important therefore to match both student expectations and opportunities provided, which the CV-SDP appears to strive to achieve in its volunteer program.

The student interviews thus highlight that young people need to be able to see how voluntary work will help them achieve their goals. Where this is not the case and young people's expectations are either not managed or not met, volunteering can be seen to be in the interest of others (e.g. CV or SEDA) at the young person's expense.

There appear to be some challenges for the partnership in balancing student needs and expectations with those of the SEDA-CV partnership. SEDA staff recognise that students doing voluntary work for the partner is an important service for CV that SEDA provides. In particular, this involves the supply of good students which leads to them being required to volunteer more often. As a consequence, there would appear to be a risk that some of the good students who frequently volunteer may have developed unrealistic expectations about their potential employment at CV.

A number of students did however speak about working at CV during the cricket season as casual employees. The students viewed this as a worthwhile opportunity to supplement their university studies (Sally and Ben – student interviews). But this may be a less satisfactory outcome for a young person like Harry who needs to achieve full-time employment.

In terms of volunteering, no doubt the students make an important and valuable contribution to CV, the sport of cricket and the partnership. This needs to be carefully

balanced in terms of the value for the young person in contrast to the expectations and needs of each of the other partners.

In 2014, SEDA decided to remove the requirement to complete 20 hours of volunteering from the program. SEDA decided that genuine volunteering can only be achieved if students are encouraged to participate without being required to, allowing each young person to contribute their time based on their personal interests and capacities.

6.4.3 Clinics

Chapter 5 identifies that the cricket clinics conducted by the students and their teacher are a particularly valuable component of the program for young people. The clinics also appear to be a fundamental aspect of the partnership because they deliver valuable, tangible and measurable benefits for CV. One of the many challenges for schools or education institutions developing educational partnerships is that schools struggle to provide the business with more than altruistic benefits (DEEWR 2010).

One of the key benefits for CV identified by all stakeholders is the contribution SEDA students make to increased participation in the sport of cricket through the delivery of clinics. Each class and their teacher deliver cricket clinics in primary schools one day per week. These clinics are designed in partnership with CV to deliver a four-week sequential program of participation. This four-week experience is recognised by the Australian Sports Commission as part of their commitment to increasing participation in sport and aims to provide a talent pathway for international sporting success (Australian Sports Commission 2015) from participation at school to club cricket and beyond.

Whilst this is seen as an essential element of the program from which CV benefits, students also benefit. In particular, students develop confidence with increasing levels of challenge throughout the year with more diverse and challenging client groups (e.g. special needs students). This benefit works hand in hand with the outcomes for CV. Improving participation in the sport of cricket is a key priority and more recently such priorities have been expanded to include hard-to-reach groups such as special needs and recent arrivals.

That program now has around 16,000 participants throughout the year solely connected to the SEDA students and teachers working in those schools. These participants would not normally have been seen by CV (Joe – CV, senior staff interview).

Joe's understanding of the actual, measurable impact the SEDA-CV partnership has on his participation numbers highlights the real benefits for CV. SEDA appears to have taken responsibility for delivering this outcome for CV. Joe understands that students benefit from clinics and this is one of the central learning experiences of the program.

SEDA also uses clinics as the centrepiece of its messaging in marketing material. Clinics are seen as reflective of the 'hands on', applied learning pedagogy SEDA promotes (SEDA 2015b), providing benefits to SEDA, CV and students alike.

6.4.4 Work experience

Beyond the delivery of cricket clinics, CV also benefits from student work experience (also known as SWL) which is an important component of the VCAL program. The SEDA-CV partnership has been able to deliver valuable outcomes by valuing young people and work experience.

In Chapter 5 the students identify work experience at CV as one of the key valued outcomes of the program. They value the work experience because it is at CV but also because they can do meaningful work (Nick – student interview). Work experience in secondary education is seen as an essential way to connect classroom learning to the real world, prepare young people for the world of work, and make connections for young people between their current study and future aspirations (ACER 2001). Very little however is written about how business can genuinely benefit from work experience.

Business partner benefits from work experience are often identified as being altruistic, building social capital, or building positive regard for the company's brand and when organisations do work experience well, for developing future employees (DEEWR 2010). It is unusual however for organisations to recognise that secondary school students on work experience can play an important role delivering valuable outcomes for core business.

The CV concept of work experience (fostered through Fiona the Female Cricket Coordinator (FCC) in partnership with SEDA program staff) is a positive example of what might be more broadly applied work experience in educational partnerships when young people are seen as uniquely valuable and capable. Fiona supervises 10 SEDA work experience students who attend one day per week. This means supervising 2-3 young people every day. She has developed the concept into an efficient system of work experience supervision to deliver the key outcome of her own job role, which is to increase female participation in cricket. She describes how this model has come about gradually over a number of years, slowly building her capacity to supervise students and that of the organisation to incorporate students into CV as valuable staff.

> With the help of Bruce (SEDA) and Robert (SEDA) we got a couple of students to work with [us] and I started with one student Kate, and then George who was fantastic the second year, then I got a couple more. Last year I had eight and this year I have ten, but I've identified them as working on major projects rather than working in the office (Fiona – CV, program staff interview).

Fiona identifies the importance of collaboration between SEDA and CV staff that has developed the work experience program, gradually building a program that provides real opportunities for authentic work experience. Currently she links each student to a regional cricket club and supports the young person to develop and implement a strategy which will lead to the establishment of a female cricket team.

She describes inducting the students to working at CV, providing them with guidance and opportunities to experiment, 'working outside of the dots' and using their intuition and creativity.

> Giving them autonomy and giving them the chance to have a go, I don't know everything and they're up to date with what's happening out there so I would rather have them telling me some great ideas. … give them that voice knowing that they're respected and their opinion counts (Fiona – CV, program staff interview).

Her approach is not dissimilar to the research findings of Kenny et al. (2015) who recognise the importance of good work based learning supervision; quality work relationships, including a manager who manages the work environment for the student; the student's background; and someone who sees themselves as a developer of young

people. In return she describes having learnt 'resilience' and 'humility' from young people as well as the ability to manage staff.

> I've learnt how to manage people through all their different personalities and their different excuses and their different ways of doing things and the frustration or excitement that comes with it (Fiona CV – program staff interview).

From a partnership perspective, the most valuable contribution she had made to this learning experience is the dedication of time beyond what would normally be invested into a work experience student. This would appear to be possible because she has been able to integrate her work outcomes with those of the students. Her supervision of work experience students is an excellent example of joint value creation in educational partnerships that values young people's contribution. As she says in her interview, she did not have a budget for staff, so working with SEDA students allowed her to make the most of limited resources to get her job done.

This ability to deliver valued student experiences whilst creating positive outcomes for CV is one of the key features of the SEDA-CV partnership.

6.4.5 A valued brand

What stands out from the interviews with both SEDA staff and the students is the valuing of CV and CA brands, in terms of the benefits for both. The use and valuing of brands in educational partnerships is underdeveloped in the discourse of educational partnerships. Brand and business reputations are discussed more frequently as a risk for schools or a negative component of school–business partnerships where schools are reluctant to partner with corporate brands (e.g. soft drink and fast food) (Boyle 2015). However, there are some previous examples of highly valued brand utilisation in educational partnerships. For example, the *Apple Schools of Excellence* program provides expertise to support teaching and learning needs at schools such as Aberfoyl Park High (Aberfoyl Park High School 2014). Although there is no sense of how this brand is experienced by the students, it is realistic to assume that this brand brings prestige and value to the school.

At the commencement of the SEDA-CV partnership Donald recognised that the CV brand could add value to the program from multiple perspectives. As a previous provider of Community VCAL, he knew that VCAL and VET were frequently seen as a

program of last resort for the most disengaged young people. He believed that to build a successful VCAL program, you had to utilise well regarded brands like CV to attract young people with a wide range of learning abilities.

At the commencement of the partnership, one of the key concerns was student's behaviour and how this could put the brand at risk.

> The risks were going to be to the brand, my thing is what happens if a student falls off a bus or does something stupid in a CV uniform, or another student, sending them out to schools, something happens to another child (Stephen CV – senior staff interview).

The SEDA program staff interviewed are particularly cognisant of the concern expressed by Stephen and have set high expectations in terms of student learning and professional conduct to mitigate this risk. Research conducted by Trouilloud, Sarrazin, Bressoux and Bois (2006) points to the effectiveness of high expectations in classrooms, but in this case these high expectations are valued by teachers, students and the partner organisation. Students value the CV brand and recognise that not meeting those expectations may have real consequences for CV and their own future aspirations. This environment shaped by the CV brand appears to infiltrate many of the learning experiences identified by the students but, in particular, when individuals step outside the classroom.

> SEDA also taught me presentation skills and taking pride in what organisation you're representing (Ben – student interview).

This representing CV is expressed particularly well by the students in terms of the SEDA-CV uniform. The uniform utilises the colours and logos of CV and more recently CA to create affiliation and recognition for the students and the program. The students interviewed articulated that due to the partnership there was the need to do the right thing in public, especially when wearing the CV or CA uniform.

Obviously the students are proud to be associated with CV and CA. They are particularly proud of the uniform and recognise it is a privilege to be associated with both organisations.

From day one, like I was extremely proud to wear the tracksuit and everything. Like people look at you everywhere you go, no matter where. You're on a bus, you're on a train, and you're just walking down the street. Everyone gives you a second glance 'cos you're in a CA uniform (Ben – student interview).

It is hard to imagine how you might convince a class of seventeen-year-old young people to consistently wear a uniform unless they feel a sense of pride and connection. Students recognised they represented CA when they wore the uniform and some commented that the general public assumed they worked for or played cricket for Australia. The uniform appears to help the teacher set high expectations that are meaningful for the students in terms of public behaviour (referred to as 'professionalism' by both staff and students) and the students appear to understand the need to self-regulate whilst in uniform.

You could see it in their body language and their eyes, we always, some of the key things we stressed were you're in the uniform and you are accountable, you're like us. People see you as part of us, and there are some privileges with that, but there are also some responsibilities (Stephen CV – senior staff interview).

There is agreement between CA, SEDA staff and students that being able to wear the CA logos and uniforms is a privilege valued by all involved. SEDA utilised the value of the partner brand for the benefit of the program in terms of reputation by association, as well as creating a student and staff culture of high expectations present in the learning experiences described by the students. In this case the brand of the partner is valued as much (if not more) by students.

Pride is a particularly positive emotion for young people, especially those who have previously had negative experiences with learning. Emotions are recognised as having either an enabling or constraining impact on learners. Positive emotions, such as pride, tend to result in engagement rather than avoidance behaviours (Titsworth, McKenna, Mazer & Quinlin 2013). And as such the pride achieved through the uniform is a positive element of the CV-SDP.

The utilisation of a positive and powerful brand would appear to be a challenging but worthwhile goal to pursue in developing educational partnerships. However, identifying the unique nature of each organisation's brand, how the students experience the

brand, and what it brings to the partnership (both positive and negative) cannot be underplayed in the establishment of educational partnerships.

This utilisation of the CV or CA brand was further developed with SEDA's approach to student recruitment. The program was designed to provide young people with an alternative to mainstream schooling but the intention from the beginning was to attract young people to the program with high value brands and experiences that regular school was unable to deliver. The program was intentionally called the CV-SDP because Donald wanted to create expectations of quality and reputation through the use of a well-recognised brand. The intention was to provide an alternative to schooling that was not going to be a 'dumping ground' for the disengaged. He imagined that young people would actively choose the program because they loved cricket and preferred to learn in a more 'hands on' way.

SEDA markets the program directly to young people through the cricket membership data base (Phillip SEDA – senior staff interview). This direct marketing to young people is highly unusual in secondary education in Australia. The majority of marketing to secondary school students is generally done through parents and particularly mothers as the key decision makers about schooling in families (Aitchison 2006). This direct approach has led young people to choose this program for themselves. The benefits of 'choosing' their education have previously been articulated in Chapter 5. The role CV and the brand play in attracting young people to a program cannot be underplayed, especially when students choose the program and therefore redefine their approach to learning.

Attracting students to a school or program through the utilisation of high value brands could be regarded as highly emotive as well as placing young people at risk of making the decision to change schooling without education substance. Phillip (SEDA – senior staff interview) identified this as an issue for the program in its infancy where stakeholders regularly asked 'what happens to all of these young people when they finish?' The student outcomes data in Chapter 4 does however point to students engaging with the program and their learning, with higher than average VCAL completion rates and low student attrition rates.

6.4.6 Collaboration

A key aspect of the partnership is the ability to sustain joint value in the partnership. In Jerry's words this is about continuing to engage staff from both CV and SEDA with the key outcome of the partnership, which he sees as learning experiences for students.

> Maintaining the momentum that we've built up, maintaining the relationships with people is always important; people come and go in these environments but a big challenge for us is to keep engaging CV with these students in the program so that it lasts. That's giving students opportunities, you know, for years and years ahead (Jerry SEDA – senior staff interview).

It would appear that staff from both SEDA and CV work effectively across organisational boundaries. The notion of cross boundary enablers is derived from O'Flynn, Blackman, and Halligan's (2014) research which focusses on addressing sustained social issues that transgress departmental silos in government agencies. There are two key enablers of cross boundary relationships reflected in the SEDA-CV partnership: the role of leadership and the need for staff with skills to work across both organisations (O'Flynn et al. 2014).

To sustain value in the partnership staff with the necessary skills need to continuously work across organisational boundaries to manage complex relationships. Based on the interviews conducted, the partnership would appear initially to have been highly dependent on a few key individuals but as the relationship expanded, beyond the first 16 students, the program required input from more staff. This transition to multiple points of connection is also identified in the cross-sectoral, for-profit–not-for-profit partnership literature (CCC 2004) as a key to partnership success. This CCC (2004) research identifies the need for 'senior champions' as senior executives, and 'torchbearers' as middle managers and front line operators (p.17).

The SEDA-CV partnership is also managed across these three organisational levels. The highest level relationships are managed between the CEO's and board members of each organisation and CA. This level of management seems to focus on maintaining strategic alignment. Jerry (SEDA – senior staff interview) describes regular meetings with CA and CV to ensure the program continues to help deliver the outcomes prioritised by cricket, and to build more student opportunities into the curriculum so they are experienced by all students.

The next level of relationship is managed by program staff who work on the development and redevelopment of student experience (e.g. the Melbourne Stars and Melbourne Renegades opportunities). With clearly negotiated structures created by staff from both organisations, staff are able to create worthwhile experiences for the students and, at the same time, provide the new teams with valuable volunteer staff (Robert SEDA – program staff interview).

At the classroom level, SEDA teachers work with their program manager to allocate the most appropriate students to one-off opportunities. Robert describes this as a process of not always rewarding the best students but finding opportunities to recognise all sorts of student success. For example, Robert uses the student opportunity to bowl to the Australian Women's team at the MCG this week to reward a student in Anthony's class, who generally struggles to get his work done, but is currently up to date. At the same time this reinforces to the whole class that you cannot take time out from class to participate in these one-off opportunities unless you are up to date with your work (Robert SEDA – program staff interview).

The classroom teacher also works in collaboration with the Regional Development Manager (RDM) to deliver events on behalf of CV. Each classroom teacher is allocated to a region managed by the RDM. The RDM regularly visits the class and encourages students to help out with events in the region. Sometimes the whole class and at other times just a few students will be involved. The class is also responsible for delivering regional Gala Days. The RDM and classroom teacher also conduct interviews for the selection of work placement students to work with the RDM one day per week. The RDM utilised the work placement students to do all of the lead up work to the Gala Day. In this model, the RDM could have a work placement student (or two) with them every day of the week. The student takes on a leadership role during the Gala Day with the rest of the class participating through coaching and officiating. This local level collaboration allows all students to be involved with CV staff and programs and also delivers more cricket participation outcomes in each region than a RDM manager could achieve by themselves (Tom CV – program staff interview).

The classroom teacher also works with the local cricket club at their classroom venue. Each classroom is located in a local cricket or AFL sports club. For example, there is a group located at the Box Hill City Oval and the Merv Hughes Oval in Footscray. The classroom teacher works with officials and coaches of the club to deliver benefits to the club in exchange for hosting the SEDA class in their clubrooms. For example, the

teacher and students might coordinate the Best and Fairest Night for the club. The teacher is also always on the lookout for good learning opportunities for students to be involved in the club, especially supporting the development of junior teams, local events and fundraising activities (Robert, SEDA – program staff interview).

This multi-levelled approach to partnership development is identified in the literature as essential (CCC 2004), but is often difficult to achieve in schools with many partnerships highly reliant on individual teachers (Henry et al. 2002). In the SEDA-CV partnership it appears to work because each member of staff, whether it be senior, program or teaching staff, sees it as a core component of their role.   Of particular interest is the sense that teaching and program staff enjoy the opportunity to build these relationships and do not see this as an additional burden. Instead staff see this as some of the benefits of their job, with particular flexibility to be creative and pursue student interests through opportunities provided by the clubs (Robert SEDA – program staff interview) and to work alongside staff from CV and CA.

This level of collaboration is challenging to achieve in schools where relationships are generally managed at one or two levels but rarely at all three levels, particularly in VCAL programs (Henry et al. 2002). The multi-levelled approach has also secured the relationship beyond the early phases of relationship development where the partnership was highly reliant on one or two individuals. SEDA's role as the education provider appears to be one of constantly balancing student learning priorities with the interests of CV. What is clear from the interviews is that SEDA staff at all levels value the relationship with CV and work hard to ensure CV's needs are met whilst ensuring the learning experience is a positive one for the student.

The creation of learning experiences and unique opportunities in the SEDA-CV partnership reflects Austin's (2000a) joint value creation theory. Examples of learning activities discussed in this chapter attempt to balance the student and partner needs and aims to provide worthwhile outcomes for each. While this is not always possible to achieve, the partnership seems to work at creating new jointly valued experiences (such as work experience and clinics) that offer benefits to all. In each case staff from each organisation can articulate how both the student and the partnership benefits.

This joint value creation is different to previous conceptualisations of educational partnerships which can be described as been philanthropic and transactional (Austin 2000b) with schools relying on business for the provision of resources and expertise to

resolve local school based issues (DEEWR 2010). The SEDA-CV partnership places high importance on achieving genuine and sustained value for both partner organisations. The research also provides insights into what might be achieved in terms of learning experiences and education outcomes when educational partnerships genuinely partner with students.

6.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to identify how the SEDA-CV partnership contributed to learning experiences and education outcomes valued by young people in the program and previously outlined in Chapter 5.

The findings demonstrate that the SEDA-CV partnership is able to deliver unique learning experiences and valuable outcomes by approaching educational partnerships in new and innovative ways. This chapter identified that educational partnerships between education institutions and business and community organisations have generally been conceptualised as philanthropic in nature.

The chapter identifies two key ways that educational partnerships are reconceptualised through the research. In the first instance, using Austin (2010) as a framework, the research recognised that the SEDA-CV partnership, like other cross-sector partnerships, has moved beyond philanthropy to provide genuine value for both organisations. This concept of joint value creation would appear to be a challenge for education institutions that can, at times, still be reluctant to see business benefit from education, but this has allowed SEDA and CV to create a robust and valuable partnership.

The research into the CV-SEDA partnership has also highlighted the valued contribution young people can make to educational partnerships. In this research, young people are recognised as an asset to CV, and an asset as current contributors to the sport of cricket (as a young person) as well as future potential employees and volunteers. Beyond being young, these students are also recognised as making an important contribution through their volunteering and engagement in work experience. These student learning experiences support CV to deliver on its strategic objectives, in particular, by increasing grass-roots participation in the sport of cricket.

This recognition of the valuable contribution young people can make to educational partnerships demonstrates the potential value of reconceptualising educational partnerships as three-way between school, business and young people. As identified in the chapter, such a three-way partnership brings both challenges and benefits to students which need to be considered carefully.

The chapter also identifies the important role a valued brand plays in the partnership and the unique contribution it makes in setting a climate of high expectations. The concept of valued brand in educational partnerships is also not yet fully explored in the educational partnerships literature.

The final theme the chapter explored was the role of collaboration in delivering valuable learning experiences and education outcomes. In particular, it has emphasised the success of a multi-levelled approach to partnership management sometimes missing from the VCAL partnerships managed by individuals in schools.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The research

The research set out to explore how the SEDA-CV partnership shaped the learning experiences and education outcomes valued by young people in the CV-SDP. Young people who had completed the program were asked which experiences and outcomes they valued the most. Whilst the CV-SDP prioritises Year 12 completion and learning that supports successful transition to further study or work the research identified a number of other outcomes valued by young people.

Further, the research explored how the partnership between SEDA and CV contributed to these valued learning experiences and education outcomes.

The research is located in a policy context that prioritises Year 12 completion as part of a national agenda to increase education attainment to remain competitive internationally, and in response to the research which highlights the personal and social costs associated with low levels of education attainment (Brotherhood of St Laurence 2015; Cassels et al. 2012; Lamb et al. 2015).

A review of the early school leaving literature (Finn 1989; Lamb & Rice 2008; Lamb et al. 2004) identified that whilst a number of strategies have been implemented to improve Year 12 completion rates, policy development has predominantly focussed on mandating participation rather than offering strategies for improved engagement with learning (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler 2015). The introduction of VCAL in Victorian schools as a senior secondary qualification and the growing importance of the flexible learning sector stand out in the literature as making an important contribution to improving Year 12 attainment in Victoria. These strategies change the focus of Year 12 completion from mandating participation to engaging young people with learning.

The types of learning experiences promoted through the VCAL curriculum, especially those undertaken in the community, require schools and programs to establish partnerships with local community groups and businesses. The ability to develop and retain partnerships was therefore recognised in the research as essential to the success of these learning programs. Whilst a number of educational partnerships have been documented the literature review highlighted a lack of research in the types of

learning experiences valued by young people in VCAL programs and how these came about through educational partnerships.

The research utilised a single case study methodology using qualitative data from student videos, student interviews and interviews with senior and program staff from both SEDA and CV augmented with organisational documents and statistical information. Based on the research data collected, chapter 4 provides a detailed description of the CV-SDP, each of the partner organisations and the SEDA-CV partnership as the unique case investigated. The chapter provided a rich description of the CV-SDP context and the education outcomes achieved, demonstrating that young people who completed the program have been successful in terms of completing Year 12 and gaining VET qualifications as well as their transitions to further study and work.

The data analysis phase of the research utilised a thematic approach which, in the first instance prioritised the student voice. Chapter 5 identified that young people in the CV-SDP valued learning experiences that engage them through their love of cricket.   The chapter also identified the importance of learner autonomy. Beyond choosing cricket as study subjects of interest, the research highlights a multitude of ways in which autonomy is experienced by the students. In the first instance, as a 'choice' (to join the SEDA program) and as the student progresses through the program, there are opportunities for choosing and owning their own decisions, behaviours, learning and future options.

Based on the findings in Chapter 5, the next chapter identified how the SEDA-CV partnership contributed to these experiences and outcomes. Chapter 6 identified two key ways that educational partnerships are able to be reconceptualised through the research. In the first instance, with the works of Austin & Seitanidi (2012) as a framework, it recognised that the SEDA-CV partnership unlike the majority of educational partnerships in Australia (Clerke 2013b; DEEWR 2010) is not one of philanthropy but instead is one that provides genuine joint value for both organisations. The research findings in Chapter 6 also reconceptualised the SEDA-CV partnership as a three-way, where young people are recognised as value creators in the partnership.

Section 7.2 will focus on the key findings of the research; shared interest-based learning and learner autonomy from chapter 5 and three way partnerships from chapter

7.2 Key findings

7.2.1 Shared interest-based learning and learner autonomy

The research highlights the importance of student interest, choice and autonomy as key features of the learning experiences young people value. Those who participated in the research identified their love of cricket and autonomy over their own learning as two of the most valuable aspects of the program. In particular, they valued learning experiences based on cricket with other young people who are as passionate about cricket as them.

The research demonstrates that young people value learning experiences that are interest-based and this provides them with a range of highly engaged learning experience. The utilisation of interest for re-engagement supports previous research findings by Te Riele (2014) and Te Riele, Plows and Bottrell (2016) in flexible learning programs, Blake and Bowling (2011) in VCAL programs and Tomlinson (2004) in learning more broadly, and reiterates that engaged learning programs are those that allow students to pursue their personal interests.

What is unusual about the CV-SDP however is this interest or love of cricket reaches far beyond curriculum / study content encompassing all aspects of the learning experience and education outcomes. In the first instance, SEDA delivers programs to students with a similar interest in cricket as a class group. This collective approach to interest-based learning brings together young people and their teacher with similar interests into a collaborative learning environment. In this context, their shared interest supports their relationship with their teacher and peers for learning to occur. Overall, the research highlights the strong sense of belonging created through interest-based learning with teachers, peers, the local community and Cricket Victoria.

Students and staff also utilise their love of cricket as the medium, context and foundation for learning. In particular, cricket clinics delivered as part of the program are fundamental to interest-based and personally relevant learning experiences. The research highlights the value students place on cricket clinics in primary schools, initially as a place to develop confidence and basic coaching skills and later as a foundation for more advanced coaching skills.

The students recognised that these cricket skills developed transferable skills such as work readiness and interpersonal skills as they transition to teaching more difficult learner groups. Their interest in cricket also allows them to become involved in community projects and part-time work and this involvement serves as a vehicle for building personal and professional networks. All of these learning experiences take place with their love of cricket as the context, where their new found confidence as learners allows them to start to contemplate a future career within cricket or the broader sporting industry.

The young people's love of cricket also means they appreciated a range of exceptional opportunities that were able to be delivered in the program through the partnership with CV. These are seen by the students as exceptional as they are about cricket and not normally available to them at school. In the main, they valued opportunities such as going to the MCG, playing in the nets, meeting famous cricket players and working alongside the CV staff. While not all students would appreciate this type of learning experience, it is their love of cricket that makes these experiences exceptional and as such allows students to feel special and important. These exceptional experiences also served as motivation and reward for getting the less appealing classroom work done.

The students' interest in cricket also led them to value work experience opportunities offered by Cricket Victoria including the RDO role, working with the Melbourne Renegades and Melbourne Stars and work placement at CV as a FDO. Students saw these opportunities as highly prized because of CV's reputation. Therefore they felt motivated to work hard to try and access one or more of these opportunities. Exceptional opportunities clearly serve as an incentive in this program driven by their interest in the sport.

The research supports previous findings confirming that interest-based learning is important for engaged learning in VCAL (Blake & Bowling 2011) and FLPs (Te Riele et al. 2016), but also considers that interest-based learning (when it is shared with the whole class and teacher) can influence many other aspect of the learning experience. In the CV-SDP this learning was experienced in multiple ways. In particular, it created: a collaborative learning environment between peers and with their teacher; opportunities to share their interest with others through conducting clinics; powerful incentives and rewards for hard work; and building future aspirations through exceptional opportunities offered through the partnership with CV.

Interest-based learning in this setting appears to be supported in the program by learner autonomy. By choosing cricket and the CV-SDP the students appear to have taken responsibility for their learning. The research identified that the young people in the program value being able to make their own choices in terms of what interests they pursue in their learning and appreciate learning that encourages this autonomy. In particular, the work experience and major projects they undertake allow them to work relatively independently on projects of personal interest (i.e. cricket) in their local community.

Of particular interest is the finding that students chose to leave school and join the program. This choosing is seen as an important element of engagement for this group of learners that was not present for them at school. And this is reinforced by the staff in creating a culture of many 'opportunities' that the young person can choose to participate in, depending on their own future aspirations. The research highlights a strong connection in the CV-SDP between choosing the learning, taking up new opportunities, building career aspirations and working towards doing a job you love. This aspect is not really spelt out earlier in the work.

Students also identified that the program is strongly focussed on their aspirations in contrast to their experience of school. The learning is seen as relevant with many opportunities to investigate career options and meet the people who worked in the industry. The research identifies that SEDA has been able to bring together interest-based learning, autonomy and future aspirations to support young people to complete school and transition to work and further study.

Through this case study of the CV-SDP, FLPs can be seen as much more than a 'dumping ground for the disengaged' or 'second chance education'. In the CV-SDP young people are actively choosing to pursue their interests in learning environments that value their knowledge, skills and abilities in ways not matched by their previous school. The CV-SDP repositions FLPs as education of choice rather than second chance education and recognises the important role educational partnerships can play in supporting interest-based learning.

7.2.2 Three-way partnerships

The second key finding of the research reinforce previous findings that educational partnerships can make a valuable contribution to delivering learning outcomes in secondary education (Bentley & Cazaly 2015; Clerke 2013a), particularly for young

people who leave mainstream schooling early and choose an alternative setting like the CV-SDP (Crump & Slee 2014; Myconos 2014; Te Riele 2014; Te Riele et al. 2016).

The research also demonstrates the importance of the partnership between SEDA and CV in creating valued learning experiences and education outcomes for students in the CV-SDP, in particular, places of privilege and exceptional learning such as volunteering at a Twenty20 Big Bash Game and work experience at CV.

Furthermore, the research incorporated contemporary partnerships theory from the not-for-profit–business partnerships literature (Austin 2010; Austin & Seitanidi 2012) to reconceptualise educational partnerships beyond the current frame of problem based, philanthropic partnership to one of genuine, joint value creation.

Utilising the theoretical framework of joint value creation, the research identifies the SEDA-CV partnership as unusual in its ability to create value for both the education institution and the business partner. One of the unique features of this educational partnership is the ability for the business partner organisation (CV) to obtain genuine benefit from this collaboration. The cricket clinics are not only important for the students as a valuable and valued learning experience; they are also very important for CV. These students and their teacher deliver clinics which create measurable, valuable outcomes that contribute to the core business of CV.

This is not particularly uncommon in the broader cross-sector partnership literature where not-for-profit and business partners regularly work together to create shared value (Austin & Seitanidi 2012). This however is highly unusual in the educational partnership literature and research that is still predominantly focussed on a philanthropy model (Austin 2010). As such the SEDA-CV partnership is a unique study of joint value creation in the secondary school education sector.

Importantly, this research goes beyond joint value creation and recognises the valuable contribution young people can make to an educational partnership. It builds on the work of Austin & Seitanidi (2012) and articulates the value of three-way educational partnership between school-business and young people. In the SEDA-CV partnership students are recognised as much more than recipients of learning experiences and serve as value creators. Here, young people play an important role and deliver important benefits to the three-way partnership and receive value (through valued learning experiences) in exchange.

The program and partnership between SEDA, CV and students is created and sustained through a shared valuing of young people, their current and future potential as well as their unique contribution (being young). Firstly, it has achieved this through a shared understanding of the transformative nature of an engaged learning program. The research demonstrates that staff from both organisations have a transformational narrative in mind when they work with young people. Staff understood that the story of the typical student was not about a real student. Instead it offered an idealised view of what is possible for students in the program and this helped keep both organisations focussed on the importance of the partnership work.

Secondly, staff at SEDA and CV both realised that young people contribute their youthfulness (being young, enthusiastic and passionate about cricket) to the programs they deliver, especially the cricket clinics. This contribution is seen as important to both partner organisations and also delivers genuine value to CV through the delivery of cricket clinics in primary schools. The research also shows that CV staff particularly value young people's contributions through work experience and volunteering at events and staff recognise that young people also offer future potential that is worth investing in today. These contributions help CV achieve their business objectives of increasing cricket participation and the development of a group of future administrators, coaches and players.

While this three-way partnership delivers engaged learning experiences for young people and genuine benefits for SEDA and CV there are also challenges. The research identified that the reliance on the positive contributions made by young people also created some unique program cultures. In particular, the concept of the 'good student' is a direct consequence of the need for positive outcomes for the partner organisation and the SEDA-CV partnership, and the authentic nature of the learning.

The 'good' students as identified in section 6.3.2. were able to access the most exciting and engaged learning experiences as a reward for being a good student. For the young people interviewed this was a very positive construct because they were rewarded for their efforts and received the benefits of these powerful learning experiences; but one can only assume that the students whose voices were not heard, (as they did not participate in the research), who missed out on these experiences, may hold different views. The research acknowledges that this three-way partnership is highly reliant on young people volunteering their time and youthful enthusiasm. While in the main this volunteering is for exciting events and exceptional opportunities there is

a sense that volunteering can become a chore and their time and effort does not always translate to the kinds of outcomes they expected. The research found that at times young people felt duty bound to volunteer more than they would have liked.

Beyond the genuine valuing of young people this unique partnership also demonstrates an unusual valuing of the partner brand. Whilst it is not unusual for School Principals to want to align themselves with highly valued brands (such as Apple schools); what is unusual in this partnership is that these young people, because of their passion for cricket, highly value the CV and CA brands and this draws them to the program. This has led to a culture of actively choosing the program for themselves rather than this decision being one made by parents. Chapter 5 highlighted some of the benefits this choosing culture has on young people when they start to take personal responsibility for their learning and future aspirations.

7.3 Significance and contributions of the study

The research has important implications for both educational partnership theory and practice, and for the valued learning experiences able to be delivered as a strategy for improving Year 12 attainment.

7.3.1 Contributions to and implications for scholarly practice

Whilst the research identifies two new findings for educational partnerships, research about a single unique case study can be seen to be limited. Further research into educational partnerships that considers 'joint value creation' and 'three-way partnerships' are essential for understanding the transferability of these findings to other settings. In particular, settings where there is a demand for engaging learning and an appetite for learning experiences closely linked to community and business.

The research reconceptualises educational partnerships between two organisations to a three-way partnership that includes the students. The SEDA-CV partnership highlights a valuing of the unique contribution young people (or students) make. This finding was implicit in the interviews with staff from both organisations and not an explicit strategy implemented by the staff. This valuing of students / young people, especially in educational partnerships, may be a feature of other programs that utilise partnerships but are not yet explicitly identified in the literature or in practice. By bringing this new lens of three-way partnerships to the literature, future research may

improve the understanding of educational partnerships by considering the important contribution young people (or students more broadly) can and do make to these partnerships.

Research and theory building is also needed to fully understand the challenges for educational partnerships when they are reconceptualised as joint value ventures. As identified in the literature (Bentley & Cazaly 2015; Boyles 2005; Williams 2014) there are genuine concerns about the commodification of young people and their education and this is a possible consequence of returning value to the business partner. However, the identified challenges and concerns will need to be overcome or contained to achieve the types of joint value outcomes achieved in the SEDA-CV partnership, but this research points to important benefits that can be obtained from these types of partnerships.

7.3.2 Contributions to and implications for practice

In the first instance the research reinforces the previously identified and ongoing need for learning experiences that are interesting, engaging, rewarding and relevant to the young person and their career aspirations. This is particularly so for those young people who have become disengaged from mainstream schooling.

The bringing together of students with similar interests into a single class has also been demonstrated as a powerful technique for expanding interest-based learning to every aspect of the learning experience, which may be able to be applied in other FLPs and more traditional school contexts.

Moreover, the research confirms that educational partnerships can make an important contribution by creating valued learning experiences, particularly when these are based on student interests. This is important in both the VCAL and flexible learning context. A strategic, senior management focus on the development and maintenance of these types of high value / prestigious partnerships is essential to attract and retain them. As highlighted in the research, this cannot be done by one teacher working alone. Instead, it requires a multi-levelled strategic approach to partnership creation and maintenance. The research demonstrates that educational partnerships can make a positive contribution to the creation of these types of learning experiences but to leverage all that partnerships have to offer; education institutions will need to move beyond a philanthropic understanding to genuinely joint value creation with partner organisations.

This requires education institutions to pose two important questions: 'how will the student benefit?' And a new secondary question: 'how will the business benefit?'

The research identifies students as important contributors to this educational partnership. The reconceptualising of students as important partners - in what way are they partners? Establish this earlier… would suggest that education institutions could benefit from incorporating young people in partnership conversations.   In practice, this means involving them in every aspect of partnership development. What will be required of students? How will they benefit? Will it be compulsory? Will they value this experience? What value will young people bring to this partnership? And further, what are the consequences of this value?

As highlighted in the research three-way partnerships come with challenges that can be overcome by making explicit the important role young people can play and ensuring they have a voice in matters that affect them.

7.4 Conclusion

Educational partnerships can and do make an important contribution to the learning experiences valued by young people in secondary education. Whilst defined by some researchers (Apple 2010; Williams 2014) as an extension of neoliberal values that have reshaped the intent of education and in contrast by policy makers, as the answer to all resourcing problems experienced in schools (DEEWR 2010), their contribution to valuable learning experiences and education outcomes has been undervalued to date. In particular, educational partnerships can make a positive contribution to learning experiences that are interest-based and provide engagement through learner autonomy as demonstrated in the SEDA-CV case study.

Through the utilisation of young people's stories, the research has reconceptualised educational partnerships as joint value ventures and three-way partnerships. The power of such partnerships in terms of delivering sometimes 'exceptional' valued learning experiences can only be summed up in the words of the students. The following are two young people's experience of the program.

Ben

I got the opportunity to be the star mascot at game 1 of the Twenty20 Big Bash league which was at Etihad Stadium, Melbourne Renegades versus Melbourne Stars, and there were about 40,000 people there. I did two laps of the ground and I just couldn't stop smiling under the suit, I was like, oh how did I get this? But the reason I got that was all the guidance I had from my teachers; it all goes back to my teachers, my friendships and all the help they gave me to get to where I was. And I felt a lot of pride that I have in myself, but I felt proud that, I was so proud of them for helping me, like it was, yeah. It was just superb (Ben – student interview).

Sally

During my time at SEDA I have had many different experiences that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

One of the most memorable moments that I have was when I was in my first year at SEDA completing my Certificate III. Our SEDA Bendigo class was conducting blind cricket clinics in partnership with Vision Australia. It was amazing to see the different levels of ability that each individual had. I was paired up with a person called Rex for the different activities that we had planned for them. He was completely blind in one eye and only had half his vision in the other. Even though Rex only had around 25% of his vision left he was running around like he could see everything. He could bat and bowl just like any vision capable person and he was lightning in the field. I think the reason that this particular experience has stuck with me is because we think of people who are vision impaired simply as blind. We underestimate the capability of visually impaired people. Rex is just one example of how being visually impaired does not mean you are handicapped in any way (Sally-student video).

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Appendix A: Ethics approval confirmation

Dear ASPR KITTY TE RIELE,

Your ethics application has been formally reviewed and finalised.

> Application ID: HRE13-291
> Investigators: ASPR KITTY TE RIELE (Primary CI); MS Adriana (Jo) Van Son, DR VICKY PLOWS > Application Title: Education partnerships - shaping the learning experiences and outcomes of young people in an innovative education program.
> Form Version: 13-07

The application has been accepted and deemed to meet the requirements of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)' by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee. Approval has been granted for two (2) years from the approval date; 23/12/2013.

Continued approval of this research project by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee (VUHREC) is conditional upon the provision of a report within 12 months of the above approval date or upon the completion of the project (if earlier). A report proforma may be downloaded from the Office for Research website at: http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php.

Please note that the Human Research Ethics Committee must be informed of the following: any changes to the approved research protocol, project timelines, any serious events or adverse and/or unforeseen events that may affect continued ethical acceptability of the project. In these unlikely events, researchers must immediately cease all data collection until the Committee has approved the changes. Researchers are also reminded of the need to notify the approving HREC of changes to personnel in research projects via a request for a minor amendment. It should also be noted that it is the Chief Investigators' responsibility to ensure the research project is conducted in line with the recommendations outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).'

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you all the best for the conduct of the project.

Secretary, Human Research Ethics Committee
Phone: 9919 4781 or 9919 4461

Appendix B: Literacy task (video)

Diploma Video task – 2013

<u>Topic</u>: An experience or experiences that I had at SEDA <u>related to one of our sporting partners</u>

(E.g. Cricket Australia, Melbourne Heart)
Length: 3 minutes

Students need to explain:
1. why they remember that experience
2. what effect it had on them

Criteria	Base level	Medium level	High level
Content	A basic narrative with some details of an experience. Of some interest.	A reasonable narrative with a number of relevant examples to communicate an experience Reasonably engaging	A detailed and engaging narrative with a range of examples that vividly brings the experience to life for the viewer. Very engaging and interesting.
Use of language	Basic language used to recount the experience.	Reasonable language used to recount the experience.	Very effective language used to recount the experience.
Voice	Satisfactory, audible voice. Little or no variance in pitch, tone or volume to add interest or emphasis to parts of the presentation.	Clear voice. Some variance in tone, pitch or volume to add interest or emphasis to parts of the presentation.	Very clear voice. Suitable variance in tone, pitch or volume to add interest or emphasis to parts of the presentation.
Eye contact and facial expressions	Basic eye contact to engage the viewer Little or no use of facial expressions.	Reasonable eye contact and facial expressions to engage the viewer.	Professional eye contact and suitable facial expressions to engage the viewer.

Appendix C: Information sheets

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

INFORMATION TO STAFF

You are invited to participate

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: Education partnerships – shaping the learning experiences and outcomes of young people in an alternative education setting.

This project is being conducted by a student researcher Ms Jo van Son as part of a Professional Doctorate study at Victoria University under the supervision of Associate Professor Kitty te Riele from The Victoria Institute for Education, Diversity & Lifelong Learning at Victoria University.

Project explanation

The project aims to find out more about the learning experiences and educational outcomes valued by young people in the SEDA – Cricket Victoria Sports Development program.

What will I be asked to do?

We would like to invite you to attend a one-hour interview at SEDA head office / or Cricket Victoria head office so we can better understand the SEDA – Cricket Victoria partnership and how the learning experiences created through the partnership contribute to the experiences valued by young people in the program.

What will I gain from participating?

There will be no immediate personal benefit to you but you may be interested to be interviewed about the SEDA – Cricket Victoria partnership and how the partnership contributes to the learning experiences and educational outcomes of the students.

How will the information I give be used?

The information you provide (along with other staff and student information) will be used (anonymously) to develop a better understanding of how Cricket Victoria contributes to the development of learning experiences valued by young people. This information will form part of a Doctoral Thesis and may be published an academic journals.

What are the potential risks of participating in this project?

For this research we value your contribution as someone who has expert knowledge that we can learn from. Nevertheless, the research has two minor risks. Any research that involves asking people to speak about their experiences has the potential for emotionally upsetting issues to arise. However, the focus of the interviews and observations is on the partnership, not on you as an individual. There is unlikely to be any need for you to discuss personally sensitive issues. If you are upset at any time, you will be free to ask for time-out from the interview or ask us to stop the interview. If you find yourself distressed by the

research after we have left, you can use the free and confidential counselling services at Victoria University, provided by Harriet Speed (registered psychologist) who can be contacted by phone 9919 5412 or email harriet.speed@vu.edu.au

In addition, it is not possible to promise you complete confidentiality. By using pseudonym for you and removing any identifying information (such as your job title) we can make it unlikely that an outsider would recognise your identity from our publications. However, an insider (like a colleague or student) may well recognise you, for example through the use of a typical turn or phrase that we quote in a publication. To ensure that such identification would not cause you any harm, you are welcome to choose not to answer any questions, or to ask us not to quote you on a particular answer.

How will this project be conducted?

The project will be conducted as three phases

- The first phase includes interviewing senior managers and directors from SEDA and Cricket Victoria to better understand how the partnership was established and what it aimed to achieve.
- The Second phase looks at a student literacy task completed in 2013, the task asked students to describe a significant learning experience they had during their three years at SEDA. These students will also be asked to participate in a one-hour interview to improve our understanding of the learning experiences and outcomes they valued whilst in the program.
- The third phase of the research works with program staff from Cricket Victoria and SEDA to look at the themes created in phases one and two and confirm whether these experiences can be attributed to the SEDA / Cricket Victoria partnership.
- During each phase of the research participants (Ex-students and Staff) will be provided with an opportunity to review interview transcripts to ensure we have correctly understood what was said.

Who is conducting the study?

Ms Jo van Son
Student Researcher
Victoria University
Mobile: XXXXXXXXX
Adriana.vanson@live.vu.edu.au

Supervisors:
Associate Professor Kitty te Riele
9919 4132
Kitty.teriele@vu.edu.au

Dr Vicky Plows
9919 1841
Vicky.plows@vu.edu.au

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chief Investigator listed above. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email researchethics@vu.edu.au or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461.

INFORMATION TO EX-STUDENTS

(VIDEO LITERACY TASK)

You are invited to participate

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: Education partnerships – shaping the learning experiences and outcomes of young people in an alternative education setting.

This project is being conducted by a student researcher Ms Jo van Son as part of a Professional Doctorate study at Victoria University under the supervision of Associate Professor Kitty te Riele and Dr Vicky Plows from The Victoria Institute for Education, Diversity & Lifelong Learning at Victoria University.

Project explanation

The project aims to find out more about the learning experiences and educational outcomes valued by young people in the SEDA – Cricket Victoria Sports Development program and the role of the partnership between SEDA and Cricket Victoria.

What will I be asked to do?

We would like to access and review the short video you created for the final Literacy task completed as part of your Diploma year at SEDA.

What will I gain from participating?

There will be no immediate personal benefit to you but the information you provided in the video will be used to help us better understand how SEDA's partnership with Cricket Victoria shaped some of your learning experiences.

How will the information I give be used?

The information you provide (along with other students' information) will be used to develop a better understanding of how Cricket Victoria contributes to the development of learning experiences valued by young people. This information will form part of a Doctoral Thesis and may be published in academic journals. SEDA will also get a report about the research. In any publications about the research, your name will be replaced with a pseudonym (fake name) to protect your identity. We will not publicly show your video as part of the thesis.

What are the potential risks of participating in this project?

For this research we value your contribution as someone who has experienced the SEDA program. Nevertheless, the research has one minor risk. We are genuinely interested in the views you express in the video. We will not judge you and the views you expressed will not have a negative impact on your connection with SEDA and Cricket Victoria, now or in the future.

It is however not possible to promise you complete confidentiality. By using a pseudonym for you and removing any identifying information (such as your class group) we can make it unlikely that an outsider would recognise your identity from our publications. However, an insider (like your SEDA teacher or a fellow student) may well recognise you, for example through the use of a typical turn of phrase that we

quote in a publication. You will not be personally identified in the project and personal information you provide will not be shared with staff from SEDA or Cricket Victoria, or anyone else outside the project team

How will this project be conducted?

If you are happy to allow us to access your Term 4 Video Literacy Task you can contact Jo on the phone number or email address listed below. You can also just return the signed permission form provided in the pre-paid envelope.

Jo will also be conducting interviews with graduate students. Interview will be audio recorded, and the recording will later be transcribed (typed up). If you provide Jo with permission to use your video literacy task you may also be invited to attend an interview.

In addition to the interviews with graduates, like yourself, Jo will also interview staff from SEDA and Cricket Victoria. She will also collect the Term 4 Literacy Task from all graduates who agree to this as well as documentation from SEDA and Cricket Victoria including graduate destination survey data. Jo will use all the information to develop a case study of the SEDA-Cricket Victoria partnership. SEDA will get a report with the findings from the research.

Who is conducting the study?

Ms Jo van Son
Student Researcher
Victoria University
Mobile: XXXXXXXX
Adriana.vanson@live.edu.au

Supervisors:
Associate Professor Kitty te Riele
9919 4132
Kitty.teriele@vu.edu.au

Dr Vicky Plows
9919 1841
Vicky.plows@vu.edu.au

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the student researcher or her supervisors listed above. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email researchethics@vu.edu.au or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461.

INFORMATION TO EX-STUDENTS
(Interview)

You are invited to participate

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: Education partnerships – shaping the learning experiences and outcomes of young people in an alternative education setting.

This project is being conducted by a student researcher Ms Jo van Son as part of a Professional Doctorate study at Victoria University under the supervision of Associate Professor Kitty te Riele and Dr Vicky Plows from The Victoria Institute for Education, Diversity & Lifelong Learning at Victoria University.

Project explanation

The project aims to find out more about the learning experiences and educational outcomes valued by young people in the SEDA – Cricket Victoria Sports Development program and the role of the partnership between SEDA and Cricket Victoria.

What will I be asked to do?

We would like to invite you to attend a one hour interview at SEDA head office (or an alternative location that suits you) so we can find out more about what kinds of experiences you valued in the program and why you valued these. This interview will take about one hour.

What will I gain from participating?

There will be no immediate personal benefit to you but you may be interested to be interviewed about your experiences at SEDA and you will help us to better understand which experiences you valued and how this has impacted on you.

How will the information I give be used?

The information you provide (along with other students' information) will be used to develop a better understanding of how Cricket Victoria contributes to the development of learning experiences valued by young people. This information will form part of a Doctoral Thesis and may be published in academic journals. SEDA will also get a report about the research. In any publications about the research, your name will be replaced with a pseudonym (fake name) to protect your identity.

What are the potential risks of participating in this project?

For this research we value your contribution as someone who has experienced the SEDA program. Nevertheless, the research has two minor risks. Any research that involves asking people to speak about their experiences has the potential for people to become uncomfortable. We are genuinely interested in your views. We will not judge you and we will not ask you to discuss personally sensitive issues. Your answers will not have a negative impact on your connection with SEDA and Cricket Victoria, now or in the future. If you do get upset at any time, you can ask for time-out from the interview or ask us to stop the interview. If you find yourself distressed by the research after we have left, you can use the free and confidential counselling services at Victoria University, provided by Harriet Speed (registered psychologist) who can be contacted by phone (03) 99195412 or email Harriet.speed@vu.edu.au

In addition, it is not possible to promise you complete confidentiality. By using a pseudonym for you and removing any identifying information (such as your class group) we can make it unlikely that an outsider would recognise your identity from our publications. However, an insider (like your SEDA teacher or a fellow student) may well recognise you, for example through the use of a typical turn of phrase that we quote in a publication. To ensure that such identification would not cause you any harm, you are welcome to choose not to answer any questions, or to ask us not to quote you on a particular answer. You will not be personally identified in the project and personal information you provide will not be shared with staff from SEDA or Cricket Victoria, or anyone else outside the project team

How will this project be conducted?

If you are happy to take part in the interview, you can contact Jo on the phone number or email address listed below. She will then set up an interview with you at a time and in a place that suits you both. If you have some questions first, you can also contact Jo before deciding to take part or not.

The interview will be audio recorded, and the recording will later be transcribed (typed up). If you prefer, Jo can take notes instead of recording the interview.

In addition to the interviews with graduates, like yourself, Jo will also interview staff from SEDA and Cricket Victoria. She will also collect the Term 4 Literacy Task from all graduates who agree to this as well as documentation from SEDA and Cricket Victoria including graduate destination survey data. Jo will use all the information to develop a case study of the SEDA-Cricket Victoria partnership. SEDA will get a report with the findings from the research.

Who is conducting the study?

Ms Jo van Son
Student Researcher
Victoria University
Mobile: XXXXXXX
Adriana.vanson@live.vu.edu.au

Supervisors:
Associate Professor Kitty te Riele
9919 4132
Kitty.teriele@vu.edu.au

Dr Vicky Plows
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Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the student researcher or her supervisors listed above. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email researchethics@vu.edu.au or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461.

Appendix D: Consent forms

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
M E L B O U R N E A U S T R A L I A

CONSENT FORM FOR EX-STUDENTS
(Video Literacy Task)

RESEARCH PROJECT: Education partnerships – shaping the learning experiences and outcomes of young people in an alternative education setting

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS:

We would like to invite you to participate in a research project conducted by Jo van Son, a doctoral student at Victoria University. The project aims to find out more about the learning experiences and educational outcomes valued by young people (such as yourself) who have been in the SEDA – Cricket Victoria Sports Development program.

The research involves accessing and reviewing the literacy task (Video) you created as part of your diploma year. The research is low risk. We will not use your video for any other purpose than to listen to your views about the SEDA program. You will not be required to do anything else. Please read the information sheet for more details or let us know if you have any questions.

CERTIFICATION BY PARTICIPANT

I,   _____   [write your name]

of   _____   [your town/suburb]

certify that I am at least 18 years old and that I am voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study: *Education Partnerships – shaping the learning experiences and outcomes of young people in an alternative education program,* being conducted at Victoria University by Jo van Son (with supervision by Kitty te Riele and Vicky Plows).

I certify that
- the research has been fully explained to me by Ms Jo van Son
- I freely consent to having my Literacy Task accessed by the research team.
- I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered, and
- I understand that I can decide to stop taking part at any time before the research results are published and that this will not have any negative consequences for me.

I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential through the use of a pseudonym instead of my real name. I understand that it is possible that someone who knows me well nevertheless may recognise my identity from a quote in a publication about the research.

Signed: …………………………………………………..

Date: …………………………………..

Please feel free to contact Jo or her supervisor Kitty with any questions about this project.

Jo van Son	Associate Professor Kitty te Riele
Adriana.vanson@live.vu.edu.au	kitty.teriele@vu.edu.au
XXXXXXX	(03) 9919 4132

If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email Researchethics@vu.edu.au or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461.

CONSENT FORM FOR EX-STUDENTS
(Interviews)

RESEARCH PROJECT: Education partnerships – shaping the learning experiences and outcomes of young people in an alternative education setting

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS:

We would like to invite you to participate in a research project conducted by Jo van Son, a doctoral student at Victoria University. The project aims to find out more about the learning experiences and educational outcomes valued by young people (such as yourself) who have been in the SEDA – Cricket Victoria Sports Development program.

The research involves a 60-minute interview. The research is low risk because it treats you as an expert who we can learn from. However it is possible that you may find the interview process upsetting. Please read the information sheet for more details or let us know if you have any questions.

CERTIFICATION BY PARTICIPANT

I, _____[write your name] of _____[your town/suburb]

certify that I am at least 18 years old and that I am voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study: *Education Partnerships – shaping the learning experiences and outcomes of young people in an alternative education program,* being conducted at Victoria University by Jo van Son (with supervision by Kitty te Riele and Vicky Plows).

I certify that
- the research has been fully explained to me by Ms Jo van Son
- I freely consent to take part in an interview (approximately 60 minutes) which will be audio recorded
- I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered, and
- I understand that I can decide to stop taking part at any time before the research results are published and that this will not have any negative consequences for me.

I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential through the use of a pseudonym instead of my real name. I understand that it is possible that someone who knows me well nevertheless may recognise my identity from a quote in a publication about the research.

Signed: …………………………………………………….. Date: …………………………………………..

Please feel free to contact Jo or her supervisor Kitty with any questions about this project.
Jo van Son   Associate Professor Kitty te Riele
Adriana.vanson@live.vu.edu.au   kitty.teriele@vu.edu.au
XXXXXX   (03) 9919 4132
If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email Researchethics@vu.edu.au or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461.

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH (Staff)

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS:

We would like to invite you to participate in a research project entitled: Education partnerships – shaping the learning experiences and outcomes of young people in an alternative education setting.

The project aims to find out more about the learning experiences and educational outcomes valued by young people who have been in the SEDA – Cricket Victoria Sports Development program.

The research involves a 60 minute interview. The research is low risk because it treats you as an expert who we can learn from. However, it is possible that you may find the interview process upsetting or that someone may recognise your identify from a quote in our publications (even though we will give you a pseudonym). Please read the information sheet for more details or let us know if you have any questions.

CERTIFICATION BY SUBJECT

I, …………………………………………………..(name)

of ……………………………………… (suburb)

certify that I am at least 18 years old* and that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in the study: *Education Partnerships – shaping the learning experiences and outcomes of young people in an alternative education program,* being conducted at Victoria University by: Jo van Son and Supervised by Associate Professor Kitty te Riele and Dr Vicky Plows.

I certify that
- the objectives of the study, together with any risks and safeguards associated with the procedures listed hereunder to be carried out in the research, have been fully explained to me by: Ms Jo van Son (Research student - Victoria University)
- that I freely consent to participation involving the below mentioned procedures (please tick box):

☐	To participate in an interview (approximately 60 minutes) to take place at SEDA head office or Cricket Victoria head office (whichever is more convenient for you).

I certify that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.

I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed: ……………………………………………………Date: ……………………………………..

Ms Jo van Son   Associate Professor Kitty te Riele
Student Researcher   Chief Investigator
Victoria University   Victoria University

Mobile: XXXXXXX   9919 4132
Adriana.vanson@live.vu.edu.au   Kitty.teriele@vu.edu.au
If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email Researchethics@vu.edu.au or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461.

Appendix E: Student interview protocol and questions

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

Ex-student interview protocol and questions

How educational partnerships shape the learning experiences and educational outcomes of young people in the SEDA/ CV program

Which learning experiences are valued by young people in the program and why

How does the partnership contribute to these?

☐ Consent form – signed.

☐ Did you have any questions about the information you were provided?

☐ Approx. 1 hour - have you got that much time to spend on this?

☐ Agree what time you will finish at the latest, might not take that long.

☐ Permission to record interview.

☐ You can ask me to stop the recording, not quote you on something you have said or stop the interview all together.

☐ You will get to see a transcript of the interview to confirm that it is reflective of what you have told me. Your transcript will not be shown to anyone else other than the researchers.

☐ Materials might be used in a publication but you would never be personally identified although others might identify you in the materials because of a particular phrasing or words you might use.

☐ The interview is more like a conversation and is semi-formal in nature.

☐ Today is about finding out from you which learning experiences you valued the most in the program and how this shaped your decisions about continuing with school, continuing with studies or what work / career you have chosen to pursue so far.

Questions

1) Which program were you in at SEDA?
   - What class and how long for? (Location and Teacher)
   - Was this a Talented Player Program or SDP?

2) What made you decide to join the SEDA program?

       o   Did you decide this for yourself or was it something someone else suggested?

3) How were you doing at school when you decided to come to SEDA?
       o   Do you think you would have finished school if you had stayed at SEDA?
       o   If NOT what about the SEDA program helped you finish school?

4) What made you decide to go on to the Diploma Year?

5) What were some of the best experiences you had at SEDA? (valued)
       o   What did you learn from this experience?
       o   What were some of the worst or hardest experiences you had at SEDA?
       o   What did you learn from this experience?
       o   How were these different to the things you think you would have done at school?

6) Did they make a video at the end of the diploma year? Show student the video – if they made one …
       o   Why did you choose this particular experience /s as your key SEDA experience to record?
       o   What did you think you learnt from this experience?

7) So you were in the Cricket Victoria program, what things did you do with Cricket Victoria that you really valued? What do you think you learnt from those experiences?
       o   Was there anything you didn't enjoy?
       o   What did you learn from this?

8) Did any of the Cricket Victoria experiences make you consider or reconsider the kind of career or work you wanted to do? Or definitely not do?

9) What there any other experiences during the program that helped you think about what you wanted to do after SEDA?

10) What are you doing now?
       o   How has what you are doing now been influenced by your experiences at SEDA?
       o   Where do you imagine you would be now if you had stayed at school?

Appendix F: Senior staff interview protocol and questions

Stage 1 - Senior Staff Interviews

- How educational partnerships shape the learning experiences and educational outcomes of young people in the SEDACV program

- Which learning experiences are valued by young people in the program and why

- How does the partnership contribute to these?

☐ Consent form - have this been signed?

☐ Did you have any questions about the information you were provided?

☐ Approx. 1 hour - have you got that much time to spend on this?

☐ Agree what time you will finish at the latest, might not take that long

☐ Permission to record interview

☐ You can ask to stop the recording at any time, not quote you on something you have said or stop the interview all together.

☐ You will get to see a transcript of the interview to confirm that it is reflective of what you have told me. Your transcript will not be shown to anyone else other than the researchers

☐ Materials might be used Ina publication but you would never be personally identified although others might identify you in the materials because of a particular phrasing or words you might use.

☐ The interview is more like a conversation and is semi-formal in nature

☐ Since I know you already, sometimes I will have to ask you questions that you would assume I already know but unless we record them in an interview or as part of documents collected I cannot use it.

Director question

1. Can you describe your current role as a director / manager?

2. How did SEDA the organisation start? What did it set out to do?

3. Can you describe how you first got involved with cricket Victoria? We're you already working at SEDA then?

4. How did the cricket Victoria /SEDA partnership start?

5. Who were the key people involved? What roles did they play?

6. Why do you think it was important for SEDA to have CV as a Partner?
7. Do you think it was/is a successful partnership?

8. What do you think makes it successful? Do you think SEDA is particularly good at partnership development and why?

9. What do you think we're the challenges for the partnership initially?

10. What do you think are the challenges now?

11. What do you think are the benefits for SEDA in having a partner like CV initially/ now? What do you think are the benefit for CV to have a partner like SEDA - initially/ now?

12. Do you think there are some negative consequences or risks associated with the partnership?

13. How do you think the students benefit from the partnership?

14. What learning experiences provided by the partnership do you think the students value the most? And why?

15. Do you think there are other learning experiences that the students value that are not provided by the partner? Which ones do you think?

16. Do you think the experiences provided by the partnership help their long term educational outcomes? how?

17. How do you see the partnership developing in the future?

18. Was there anything else you would like to say? Any questions?

19. From here I will be interviewing some more directors, SEDA and CV staff and SEDA students if I need to come back to you with some more questions would you be prepared to do that?

20. Are there any documents that you would be prepared to share about the CV/ SEDA partnership? That highlights some of the things you have shared today?

21. Is there anyone else from either CV or SEDA that you think I should be talking to as well?

Appendix G: Program staff interview protocol and questions

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

Program Staff interviews protocol and questions

> *How educational partnerships shape the learning experiences and educational outcomes of young people in the SEDA/ CV program*
>
> *Which learning experiences are valued by young people in the program and why*
>
> *How does the partnership contribute to these?*

☐ Consent form – signed

☐ Did you have any questions about the information you were provided?

☐ Approx. 1 hour - have you got that much time to spend on this?

☐ Agree what time you will finish at the latest, might not take that long

☐ Permission to record interview

☐ You can ask me to stop the recording, not quote you on something you have said or stop the interview all together.

☐ You will get to see a transcript of the interview to confirm that it is reflective of what you have told me. Your transcript will not be shown to anyone else other than the researchers

☐ Materials might be used in a publication but you would never be personally identified although others might identify you in the materials because of a particular phrasing or words you might use.

☐ The interview is more like a conversation and is semi-formal in nature

The following learning experiences have been identified by students in the research as being valued elements of the program
- School Clinics,
- Special School Clinics
- Work Experience – General
- Work experience with Cricket Victoria
- Regional Development Officer roles
- Female Cricket Participation roles
- Working at the Stars and Renegades Games
- Volunteering
- Flexible teachers, Quality of the teachers – shared interest

- Going to the MCG, $6 meals, The Nets at the MCG, famous people
- Delivering or participating in Clinics with high profile coaches and Players
- Jim Steines – Reach Foundation
- Globall – Cricket and Football
- Major projects
- Outdoor Recreation experiences, surfing

Questions for each experience
How does this experience come about?
What is the input from the partner into this experience? The students don't see this as a CV experience but it is highly valued, what role if any do CV play in this experience? Are the students paid for this work or is it voluntary?
Why do you think young people value this experience?
What do you think young people learn from this experience?
How does it help them make decisions about their future?