

Victorian delegation to build bridges in India

Joanna Mather and Rachel Lebihan

Vice-chancellors travelling to India as part of a major trade mission led by the Victorian government will strike deals this week for new joint degrees and research projects.

They will also take part in an education round table to discuss links between Australia and India as the two countries move past the student safety issues of 2009.

Representatives from La Trobe University will sign a student exchange and research co-operation agreement with the Birla Institute of

Technology and Science in Pilani, in the north-western region of Rajasthan.

A delegation from Victoria University, including vice-chancellor Peter Dawkins, will travel to the western province of Gujarat to discuss plans to offer two new master's degrees at Ganpat University.

Professor Dawkins said Victoria University, in partnership with Ganpat, had already offered what was the first full Australian master's program in India, a master's of enterprise resource management.

The two new master's on the

drawing board are in project management and global logistics.

Attacks on Indian students in Australia in 2009 negatively affected

Attacks on students in 2009 damaged Australia's appeal.

the country's appeal as a study destination. Changes to migration laws have also affected Indian student numbers in Australia.

At Deakin University, Indian

enrolments have more than doubled for the first trimester of 2012, but vice-chancellor Jane den Hollander, who is taking part in the trade mission, said it was essential to keep building bridges.

"In India there is still a view that things might be difficult in Australia, and we need to dispel that myth," she said.

Professor den Hollander will visit India along with leading Deakin researchers Peter Hodgson and Colin Barrow.

They will attend the inauguration of the Nano Biotechnology Research Centre, a partnership between

Deakin and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) of India.

"We've spent a year and a half building all the labs and putting all the equipment in," Professor den Hollander said. "The PhD students there have had a visit here [Geelong] and are now back in Delhi. We're going to showcase some of the very interesting projects that we've got at the Deakin-TERI research institute."

Deakin will also reaffirm its relationship with automotive manufacturer Bharat Forge, and will draw up a partnership with Reliance Life Sciences to undertake industrial biotechnology research.

Managers must 'top it up to keep it alive'

Joanna Mather

Straight-talking Scot John McFarlane, the former head of ANZ Banking Group, has urged Australians to shed their negative attitudes to management education.

He says the federal review of management education now under way is an opportunity to reflect on the value of postgraduate business courses. And he rejects claims that Australian managers are below par. "Of course, part of the problem with university education once it's over is rarely do people go back and refresh it," says McFarlane who, since leaving ANZ in 2007 has divided his time between Australia and Britain.

"The world moves on so there is a need for topping it up, keeping it alive, refreshing it."

McFarlane this year became the chairman of British life insurer Aviva but remains a non-executive director of Westfield Group in Australia.

As disclosed by *The Australian Financial Review* late last year, the Australian Business Deans Council is undertaking a review of management capabilities and practices for the federal government.

The review comes after a 2009 report on manufacturing productivity rated Australian management practices only average when benchmarked globally.

The report, *Management Matters in Australia: Just how productive are we?*, showed local strength in operations management but pinpointed the need to lift people-focused management.

The research confirmed that the level of education and skills among management and non-management personnel had an impact on performance and that well-managed firms tended to exhibit superior innovation capabilities.

McFarlane is seen by many as a doyen of business leadership; he turned a floundering ANZ around during his 10 years in charge. A firm believer in lifelong learning, he insisted his managers at ANZ gain at least a university degree.

"The rule that I had was you could not be appointed to a manager or above job unless you had a degree,



With relevant education and development, [people] become even more talented, says John McFarlane.

Photo: VISUMEDIA

were studying for one or, if you were over 40, proved you were capable of getting into university.

"It caused a problem initially because everybody said that's the end of their career."

But employees eventually came around and in the late 1990s and early 2000s ANZ had "hundreds of people studying for degrees".

The world moves on so there is a need for topping up university education.

John McFarlane

However, McFarlane believes education and training can only do so much.

"It's the quality of the individual underneath that really matters," he told the *Financial Review*. "With relevant education and development [people] become even more talented."

McFarlane undertook an MBA at Cranfield School of Management in Britain at the age of 28. It was a post-

experience MBA, which meant everybody in the course had at least five years' experience and McFarlane says he learnt as much from classmates as the academic content of the program.

He is now patron of the Cranfield alumni association in Australia, which offers the highest-value MBA scholarship of any alumni network in

to people who were talked out of going by their managers. "We've actually offered scholarships to people and we've had the odd manager say 'why bother?'"

Despite advocating international business schools so students can gain global perspective and contacts, McFarlane says Australian schools are good for the size of the population. But he says the top providers should merge to build critical mass and become world class.

"Let's say it was the Melbourne Business School and the AGSM [Australian Graduate School of Management]. Putting them together and having two campuses — one Sydney, one Melbourne — would allow them to share professors and senior staff. The productivity of the educational staff would rise and you would then be able to afford even more top teaching and research staff."

The review of management education will run until the end of September next year.

Auditors take a stand, alone

Joanna Mather

The Institute of Internal Auditors in Australia has launched a tailor-made graduate certificate in a bid to become recognised as a stand-alone profession.

Those who complete the qualification will be eligible for professional membership and identified as "certified practising internal auditors" or CPIAs.

The course, together with tighter membership criteria, would improve professionalism among the estimated 6000 internal audit specialists in Australia, the institute's learning and development director, Deborah Manning, said.

"The [institute's] 2020 strategy is to make internal audit recognised as a profession in its own right, and to ensure that we have a fully qualified membership so we become self-regulating," she said.

Ms Manning said the institute had long offered chartered internal auditor (CIA) certification based on the US model but it was little recognised in Australia and take-up had been low.

"Employers weren't looking for [CIA certification] in job ads," she said. "They were looking for chartered accountant or certified practising accountant status in job ads, which is completely the wrong qualification for an internal auditor."

The institute has become a registered higher education provider in order to offer the certificate course, which can be done over two years part-time. As a registered provider, subjects can be counted toward an MBA.

External auditors are brought in to verify an organisation's financial statements.

However, internal auditors could form part of an organisation and were crucial to good governance, Ms Manning said.

"They they should be independent of management, and their role is to assess the risk of the organisation to achieving its goals and to assure the board that those risks are being managed appropriately," she said.

The *Financial Review's* Monday Education section produces a profile of an industry luminary to reveal their key to success. This unique format of question and answer provides an insight into how these prominent figures achieved their success, the industry challenges, career opportunities, education choices and how they got to where they are today.

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