TITLE OF STUDY

THE DEVELOPMENT OF BATCHELOR COLLEGE 1972 - 1990:
AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

by

MICHAEL UIBO

A major project submitted in part fulfilment of the degree of Master of Education Studies, Faculty of Education, Northern Territory University

December 1993
To the best of my knowledge and belief the work in this major project is original, except as acknowledged in the text, and the material has not been submitted in whole or part, for a degree at this or any other university.
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To my supervisor Dr. Tony Austin I give special thanks. He was always available, tolerant and patiently demanding in his advice to me, regarding points of language use and general construction of the whole study, throughout its many phases.

I am grateful for the patience and understanding of my family, my wife Didamain and daughters Jocelyn and Selena, who put up with my constant unavailability during the course of the study. I am indebted to them.

To the Aboriginal people, without whom the College would not exist, I hope this study gives some insight into the development of Batchelor College. This development has been a team effort by all concerned, and there is still much to be done to consolidate this exciting and valued institution. Your contributions to the College should increase over the next 20 years as more graduates fill positions of authority in remote Aboriginal Australia and elsewhere.
## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS PAPER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEP</td>
<td>Aboriginal Education Policy (NAEP)</td>
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<td>AHW</td>
<td>Aboriginal Health Worker</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATEC</td>
<td>Aboriginal Teacher Education Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATSIC</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Batchelor College</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIATE</td>
<td>Batchelor Institute of Aboriginal Tertiary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>CALL</td>
<td>Centre for Australian Languages and Linguistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMEC</td>
<td>Community Management Education Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTEC</td>
<td>Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTS</td>
<td>Commonwealth Teaching Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAA</td>
<td>Department of Aboriginal Affairs</td>
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<td>DCC</td>
<td>Darwin Community College</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIT</td>
<td>Darwin Institute of Technology</td>
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<td>KIAH</td>
<td>Katherine Institute for Aboriginal Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLA</td>
<td>Member Legislative Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>MHR</td>
<td>Member House of Representatives</td>
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<td>NAEC</td>
<td>National Aboriginal Education Committee</td>
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<td>NT</td>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTDE</td>
<td>Northern Territory Department of Education</td>
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<td>NTTS</td>
<td>Northern Territory Teaching Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTU</td>
<td>Northern Territory University</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTUA</td>
<td>Northern Territory University Archives</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPSC</td>
<td>Past Present Students Committee (of Batchelor College)</td>
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<td>RATE</td>
<td>Remote Area Teacher Education</td>
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<td>SAL</td>
<td>School of Australian Linguistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRC</td>
<td>Students Representative Council (of Batchelor College)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEABBA</td>
<td>Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association</td>
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<td>TAFE</td>
<td>Technical and Further Education</td>
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<td>TEC</td>
<td>Tertiary Education Commission</td>
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<td>VTC</td>
<td>Vocational Training Centre</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH

This paper deals with the historical developments of the formation and growth of Batchelor College, from its very humble beginnings in early 1972, up until the start of 1990.

I have worked at Batchelor College since its early days, and have attempted in my analysis of this topic to be objective, but where at times I have drawn from my experience and knowledge, this has been indicated.

My background has been in Aboriginal education, since undertaking teacher training in the middle 1960’s specifically to work in the Northern Territory.1 The background of Aboriginal affairs at that time was based on the assimilation policy, which influenced the content of subjects specifically orientated towards teaching in the NT, such as anthropology, 'native education', tropical health and linguistics which were, when looked at in retrospect, a product of the times. These subjects also provided an early insight for me, into the richness and complexity of Aboriginal culture in the Northern Territory.

My teaching experiences in the remote areas of the Northern Territory have encompassed working on large government (and former government) communities, small rural schools on cattle properties and medium sized schools on church missions and former missions.

Although adult education for Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory had been provided in a piecemeal and ad-hoc fashion for some years in the Darwin region and in some bush communities, prior to 1972, I will be focussing

1. Teacher Training done at the Australian School of Pacific Administration in Sydney
particularly on events and developments in the township of Batchelor.

Some analysis of Government policy for Aboriginals is undertaken, so far as it pertains to education for adults. There has been a lot of change in the actual government departments and structures dealing with Aboriginal affairs and training since the early 70's. This has been correlated with events such as the courses offered, their development and accreditation.

The study also examines how Batchelor College has responded to the expressed needs of the remote Aboriginal communities, from which the students come. The formation of a predominantly Aboriginal council, and its influence over the operation of the College's various programs was a major development and its implications in the life of the College are examined. The study explains the background and development of the large number of training courses for Aboriginals at Batchelor, in the period being reviewed. There have been many government policy changes in Aboriginal affairs over the period of this study and these are reflected in the College's growth and diversity of courses, particularly in the middle 80's and later.

Up to now, there appears to have been no one definitive statement dealing with the formation and overall development of Batchelor College.

Many of these events are fairly recent happenings so it is still reasonably easy to access some of the decision makers in government departments (especially Education) and elsewhere to gain first hand accounts of how policies were formulated.

Perhaps too, after approximately a twenty year span of Aboriginal training at Batchelor, (the length of this study) it is appropriate to record and reflect on this development. I am sure that many Aboriginal people, especially those who have been students at Batchelor, will be interested to understand how the College has grown and consolidated its operations. Some major Federal Government policies which have indirectly affected the College are :-

Assimilation (from approx. 1940)
Integration (early 1970’s)
Self-Determination
Self-Management and Self-Sufficiency

The Assimilation Policy pre-dated Government schooling for Northern Territory Aboriginals, and was followed by Integration in the early 1970’s. The Self-determination Policy was first alluded to by Gordon Bryant in July 1973, with the last being a policy enunciated by the Liberal-Country Party coalition in 1975, which had the broad aim of enabling Aboriginals to look after their own affairs.

The study investigates any correlation between the College’s operations and Mission Statement and the general directions of these government policies.

THE BACKGROUND OF ABORIGINAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING

To understand why the Vocational Training Centre (VTC was the forerunner of Batchelor College), came to be established in the town of Batchelor, it is necessary to look at the situation regarding training for Aboriginal adults in the 1950’s and the 1960’s, and keep in mind the government policies for Aboriginals at that time.

In the years before the commencement of the VTC, several different venues were used by Aboriginal participants in vocational courses in Darwin. Around the beginning of the 1970’s this was beginning to prove unsatisfactory, because of the movement of students between accommodation locations and work places on a daily basis. There were transport problems, and student absences were difficult to monitor--remembering that the (adult) students were almost always from remote communities and so not used to the regulated lifestyle of a larger town. A better solution was needed for the running of Aboriginal adult and vocational courses in the Darwin region.

The wide spread of training venues in the Darwin area included the Central Training Establishment at Myilly Point, Kormilda College at Berrimah.

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the Darwin High School, the Baptist Hostel, East Arm Hospital, and the Adult Education Centre (Darwin central area), as well as at Bagot Community. Policy makers began to look at rationalising most functions into a central venue. 3

COMENCEMENT OF BATCHELOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE

The VTC commenced at Batchelor on 1st March 1972. 4 The plan was for the VTC to utilise the recently vacated single-men quarters at Batchelor, after the Rum Jungle uranium mine closed in April 1971. A central residential location there certainly was, but from my observations in the mid 1970’s, there was definitely a lack of suitable work spaces, except for basic classrooms, which were in fact some of the original dormitory blocks with the interior partitions removed. Residential accommodation was crowded for single students but almost impossible for family groups. A large dining hall and kitchen, previously used for the single mine workers, was available for the residential students. The grounds were spacious, well grassed and tree covered. Natural bush surrounded the town and was within easy walking distance of the centre. Additionally all town facilities such as post office/bank, shop, club, oval, basketball courts and swimming pool were available to the students and their dependents. A positive feature of being located outside Darwin, for the mainly remote area students, was the comparative tranquillity of the semi rural setting plus the opportunity for students to get on with their studies without the disruptions of city life.

Morgan (1988) 5 presents an historical outline of Aboriginal teacher training from 1953 until 1988. He describes early attempts at informal and ‘on-the-job’ training through to the formal ‘short courses’ in the late 60’s and early 70’s, followed by full one year courses, then the later teacher education developments at Batchelor College. He also discusses some of the factors which affected the changes in delivery and accreditation of these courses. He does not discuss any of the other course developments at Batchelor.

3. Annual Report of the Northern Territory Administration 1971, p38
5. The Role of Batchelor College in Aboriginal Teacher Training in the Northern Territory. Ngunjook, Number 1, July 1988
Concurrent with developments in Aboriginal assistant teacher / teacher education, there had been a gradual expansion of adult education courses for Aboriginal persons. These courses were grouped under the general heading of Vocational Training Courses and were coordinated by the (then) Welfare Division of the Northern Territory Administration (NTA). In the 1970-1971 Annual Report of the Northern Territory Administration (Social Welfare Division), many different assistant and trainee categories are listed including the assistant teacher training courses. These are listed in the section on early developments of VTC, in chapter three.

All qualified school teachers in the Aboriginal community schools (Government Settlements) from the 1950's onwards, were employees of the NT Administration's (NTA) Welfare Branch. As well all teachers in Church missions were employed in one form or another by the relevant Church authorities. This situation remained until the formation of the Commonwealth Teaching Service in 1972. Thereafter when the Welfare Branch needed teachers to operate the Teacher Training course at the VTC these personnel came from the Commonwealth Teaching Service (CTS).

Around this time also, the Federal Government created the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA), which in its initial establishment stage assumed the functions of the NTA Social Welfare Division. It must be remembered that all government functions in the Northern Territory up to July 1st 1978 were controlled by Commonwealth Government Departments. Following the granting of limited self-government for the Northern Territory, 'state' type functions were gradually assumed by the Northern Territory Government, however Aboriginal Affairs remained with the Commonwealth as in the other Australian states.

The teaching assistants' course was re-located from Kormilda College to Batchelor as a vocational course approximately 1 1/2 years after the majority of other vocational courses, and was the course which survived when these other courses ceased in 1975. Perhaps even in the early days of VTC the assistant teachers in particular perceived there was a career path ahead for them.

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6. See reasons for vocational courses ceasing, in chapter three.
The growth and direction of the College over the ensuing 15 years does appear to parallel many of the advances in self management and development which took place in much of remote Aboriginal Australia.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study has used personal interviews including tape-recording of primary sources. A literature search was done to provide relevant background material particularly for Aboriginal policies. In addition archival searches were undertaken, mainly using government and institutional files. A private collection has been reviewed as well.7

**LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Because of the rapid growth and continuing diversification of Batchelor College in the last few years, the study has been limited to approximately the beginning of 1990. Several key events occurred about this time, including the passing of the Colleges' legislation, the formation of the predominantly Aboriginal College Council and the creation of new academic/administrative structures, all of which define a logical end point for this study. Limited reference has been made to the financial structures and funding sources of the College, and similarly the physical layout and phases of building programs have not been examined in any detail.

7. The J.D. Gallacher collection was reviewed at the NT University Archives.
CHAPTER TWO

ABORIGINAL POLICIES

In order to provide a background against which the development of Batchelor College can be viewed, some of the policies relevant to Aboriginal affairs from the 1960's onwards will be examined. Major trends are looked at to help explain some of the decisions behind planning which has affected educational development in remote areas, particularly in the NT. After the era of protection and isolation for Aboriginals, early this century, the Federal Government developed the policy of Assimilation, supposedly to enable Aboriginals to 'blend into' or be absorbed by the dominant culture.

OUTLINE OF THE ASSIMILATION POLICY

An examination of the Assimilation Policy sets the scene for Aboriginal policy development for a number of years from the early 1940's; in many ways this was used to justify the attitudes of the wider community towards Aboriginals.

A major statement of the Assimilation Policy as agreed to by the joint Commonwealth and State Ministers meeting on 11th. and 12th. July 1963, in Darwin, stated that all Aborigines and part-Aborigines (the term used then for people of mixed ancestry)\(^1\) would attain the same manner of living as other Australians:

and live as members of a single Australian community enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs, hopes and loyalties as other Australians. Any special measures taken for Aborigines and part-Aborigines are regarded as temporary measures, not based on race, but intended to meet their need for special care and assistance to protect them from any ill effects of sudden change and to assist them to make the transition from one stage to another in such a way as will be favourable to their social,

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\(^1\) At the time the Assimilation Policy was in use, terms such as 'half-caste' and 'part-Aborigine' were commonly used in official documents for people of mixed ancestry. Unfortunately these terms are still in common usage today and are deemed to be offensive by most Aborigines.
economic and political advancement.2

One of the methods of advancing the policy was to consolidate the Aboriginal settlements (particularly in the NT) and thus encourage Aborigines into a more settled way of life and to make services available, including education and vocational training. Section (v) of the methods of advancing the policy refers to the need for:

Vocational training (including apprenticeships) and employment, particularly in ways which will assist Aborigines and part-Aborigines to make a contribution to the advancement of their own people -- teaching assistants, nursing and medical assistants, patrol officers, welfare officers,...

Policy directed that Aboriginals and Part-Aboriginals were to be the same as all other Australians. In this way it appears the 'majority culture' was deemed by government policy to be correct and valued.

A major turning point in the manner in which the Australian nation dealt with Aboriginals was the positive acceptance of the 1967 referendum question to count them officially as part of the nation.3 Soon after, the Government established first a Council and then an Office of Aboriginal Affairs4 to specifically deal with Aboriginal issues.5 These organisations were later replaced by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) which was the major coordinating body for Aboriginal issues until it was recently superseded by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) based on Aboriginal representatives being decentralised Australia wide.

INTEGRATION

In the early 1970's it must be assumed that officially at least, the policy of Assimilation (for Aboriginals) was to be replaced by another policy. This is

3. It is ironic, that voters in the NT could not take part in the referendum, as Australian territories in 1967 did not yet have the right to vote in referendums.
4. The Office of Aboriginal Affairs was a forerunner to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.
evident when reviewing comments by Prime Minister William McMahon, which stated that Aborigines had the full freedom to choose their own lifestyle as Australian citizens. The major thrust of the Assimilation Policy had been to make Aborigines the same as everyone else, now officially cultural differences were to be sanctioned. This was the policy of Integration, in use between the policies of Assimilation and Self-Determination.

A number of initiatives presented by successive federal governments since the 1967 referendum, strengthened the idea that Aborigines could retain their individuality while still remaining part of the Australian nation as a whole. Some points, mentioned by McMahon, and pertinent to this paper deal with the introduction of compensatory programs in education, in particular the Aboriginal Study Grants Scheme (for adults) and the Aboriginal Secondary Grants Scheme which were designed to respectively enable adults to study in higher education or Technical and Further Education (TAFE) programs; and to allow secondary age children to remain at school longer. Both were designed to have a positive effect on Aboriginal education by increasing the numbers of Aboriginal adults and secondary pupils remaining in study programs. No mention is made in the statement of the cultural appropriateness of the education which they received. The widespread use of the Aboriginal Study Grants scheme did not take place in the case of Batchelor College until the early 1980's.

McMahon also discussed Aboriginal attachment to land, and mentioned the reviews and special lease arrangements which his government hoped to instigate in the NT, but very little of this was put in place. The Liberal/Country Party coalition stopped short of introducing land rights in its present form. In this period many Aboriginal groups began to move back permanently onto their own tribal lands, commonly called ‘homelands’ or ‘outstations’ in many remote areas. This was a significant factor in raising the self-esteem of many Aboriginal groups. A typical situation was that in Central Arnhemland where groups set up

7. Figures quoted in Prime Minister McMahon's statement (1972) p 7
8. NTDE File 81/1517 folios 61, 62. Memo Davis to Directors North, and South (10/2/83). N.B. At this time proposals were formulated to have 1st year Teacher Trainees, who held NTDE positions, apply for ABSTUDY in order to leave the position /salary vacant for a temporary replacement. Other private students were to apply for ABSTUDY.
a multitude of outstations which including local schools which were serviced by visiting teachers (and supplied with resources) from large central communities. Such groups decided amongst themselves who was the most appropriate person to be their local ‘teacher’. Often there was conflict among the community leaders in an outstation deciding between a person with some western qualifications and skills compared to those with greater tribal acceptance and perhaps no literacy at all. This had ramifications for Batchelor College when the chosen teacher or assistant applied for entry to a training course, requiring some flexibility and sensitivity in the College student selection process.

SELF-DETERMINATION, SELF-MANAGEMENT

The federal Labor Party began to formulate policies of self-determination for Aborigines which were mentioned several times early in the 1970’s by Gordon Bryant, who later became the first Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. In some ways this was a conflicting situation for government as much of what transpired in planning and formulation of policies was done without Aboriginal involvement, so in effect appeared paternalistic and was done for the ‘good’ of the Aborigines and so not really self-determination on their part.

A major event which was to help strengthen Aboriginal self-determination in remote areas of the NT, occurred during 1976 with the passing of a Federal Government act which granted land rights for Aborigines. The result was Aboriginal reserves in the NT became Aboriginal Land, with two statutory Land Councils (Northern and Central Land Councils) to oversight the land interests of groups who resided in Aboriginal communities and the small outstations and homelands on such reserves. This legislation together with the bilingual education program, which is described later, and the outstation movement

10. Personal experience and observation of the author while working in Arnhemland schools and in Batchelor College.
12. Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976. (NB: The NT was still under Commonwealth jurisdiction at this time).
13. There was provision in the legislation for the Minister to approve other Land Councils. The Tiwi Land Council was the next one approved and recently the Anindilyakwa Land Council was approved.
became a very powerful motivation for Aborigines to control more of their own affairs and in particular influence their educational and school programs. For many remote area Aboriginals in the NT, the effects of being more in control of western education programs were manifested in the requests for onsite (later called Remote Area Teacher Education [RATE]) teacher education programs, from the late 1970's on. These issues had great significance for Batchelor College and are developed later in this paper.

In a much later Government statement by the Liberal Minister for Aboriginal affairs, Hon. R.I. Viner, self-management was re-stated as the major thrust of Government policy for Aboriginals. He stated in a 1978 report that the economic side of self-management was self-sufficiency, which amongst other initiatives was to include training programs and expansion of employment opportunities for Aboriginals.14

The term ‘self-management’ appears to be a softening of the policy of ‘self-determination’ according to comments in the 1985 report by the House of Representatives select committee on Aboriginal Education, but one important issue which was raised in the report is that of a greater increase in the funding of educational programs for Aborigines by the Commonwealth from then on. 15

The author agrees with Keeffe,16 that for real self-management to work Aboriginals must have an economic base, and the lack of this among other things brings about a dependency on state (government) support. He is pessimistic that training on its own will bring about any great changes in Aboriginal circumstances. It must be remembered though that in the wider society, education is funded predominantly through state education systems and a range of Federal Government grants and programs and is therefore government dependent. Having a meaningful system of Aboriginal consultation to prioritise the use of these funds, such as the current Aboriginal Education Policy (AEP), may be at last the direction to meaningful self management, at least in education and training. Details of the AEP are given below.

The support of the College for the policy of self-management was

16. Keeffe (1992) From The Centre to the City p174
reiterated at the graduation night address by the Principal (now Director) late in 1989. He reported the Ministers statement that Batchelor College was a vital support for traditional Aboriginals involved in the 'outstation movement' in the Northern Territory. This comment confirmed the College's direction as outlined in its mission statement.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Towards the end of 1972 a new Labor Government was elected and amongst its earliest reforms was the policy announcement that Aboriginals in the NT were to be taught in their own languages. This policy was to have far reaching effects on both Aboriginal education and Aboriginal teacher training in the NT. Early in 1973 an advisory committee formulated a report which outlined operational details of the NT Bilingual Education Program. The report recommended the implementation of bilingual education in several trial schools in remote NT areas to commence in 1973. It also suggested there was an urgent need for qualified and literate (in their own language) Aboriginal assistant teachers to be the key professionals in the delivery of bilingual teaching programs. Another strong suggestion was that such Aboriginal members of teaching teams have two years of training initially with the possibility of a further year. The large intake of assistant teacher trainees for the commencement of the 1974 academic year, the year the assistant teacher course moved to Batchelor, reflected the interest and enthusiasm in the remote communities by Aboriginals to take on the extra responsibilities associated with teaching in the bilingual program.

The Northern Territory bilingual program is in effect a bilingual / bicultural program, as it closely integrates elements of local history, the arts and culture, elements which are virtually impossible to separate in traditional Aboriginal

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18. In Gale, M.A. A Review of Bilingual Education in Australia p 8. Statement by the Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, on 14/12/72. Announcing the Bilingual Education Programs for the NT.
19. The Report was titled: Bilingual Education in Schools in Aboriginal Communities in the Northern Territory. (1975) AGPS Canberra. Members of the committee were Dr Betty H. Watts; Mr. W.J. McGrath; and Mr. J.L. Tandy.
In this manner local Aboriginal groups were becoming empowered to assist the development of more meaningful educational programs in their communities.

At the same time the NT bilingual program was being set up. Linguists and educators met in Darwin to discuss the formation of a centre for the support of vernacular literacy programs and the training of Aboriginal linguists. From this initiative the School of Australian Linguistics (SAL), with the assistance of Commonwealth funding, was developed as a part of the recently established Darwin Community College and eventually located in the town of Batchelor. SAL's development and operations will be discussed in a separate section of the study.

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

In 1977 the Federal Government established the National Aboriginal Education Committee (NAEC) to advise it on a wide range of educational issues which affected Aboriginals. The 17 part-time members represented each State and Territory and they worked with a full-time chairman and deputy chairman. Regular reports from the NAEC were made to the Minister for Education and at times the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. In addition close links were maintained with the Commonwealth Schools Commission and Tertiary Education Commission. Parallel with this was the development of State Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups Australia wide. These were formed to advise each state education authority on Aboriginal education matters. The NT Aboriginal Consultative Group was named 'Feppi' and although restructured several times still advises the NTDE on Aboriginal education matters. The NAEC was an active body and appears to have been extremely effective in its role, being made the principal advisory group to the Federal Government, on Aboriginal education matters. It ceased to operate in the late 1980's when the Government restructured its own approaches towards

22. Australia (1985) p 49
23. Personal comment from Mrs. D. Uibo (1993) (formerly an NT representative on the NAEC) Many NAEC members were also on their respective state consultative groups as well, assisting continuity of operations. This was not the case in the NT in the early 1980's.
Aboriginal education with the formulation of the AEP. 24

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION POLICY

The AEP was a Federal Government initiative to bring together the findings of several extensive reports from 1984, 1985 and 1986. These reflected the aspirations and directions as outlined by Aboriginals as to their priorities for Aboriginal education through the 1990's. 25 The AEP is a joint policy worked out between the states and Commonwealth, after extensive consultation with Aboriginal groups to address some of the inadequacies of the education systems so far as Aboriginals are concerned.

The various state and Territory education systems submitted to the Commonwealth, both strategic and operational plans for the AEP. After consultation with Aboriginal groups and others in their own regions aimed at promoting access to and equity of educational programs for Aboriginals. Resource agreements, funded by the Commonwealth through the states, for institutions offering Aboriginal programs plus other system wide initiatives would be monitored to gauge their effectiveness and efficiency. As Keeffe 26 comments, curriculum development would now be adequately resourced to cater for a very diverse and spread out population, where previously this was an economic impossibility.

The implications of the AEP for Batchelor College were many, with the ability now to be able to present submissions through the NT Consultative Group Feppi as well as NTDE and if successful, gain assured program funding for a minimum of three years. One special program which has had a marked

24. According to Keeffe (1992) p 61, there was another body which replaced the NAEC for a short while: The National Aboriginal Employment Education and Training Committee which was disbanded in 1991.


bearing on the success of the Batchelor College Education Studies programs is the AEP tutor scheme, this is described in a later section of the paper. Ironically though, tutor funding and staff contracts have been caught up in the bureaucratic system of government often giving the program continuity of one year of less, resulting in intermittent program delivery. 27

The various policy initiatives had implications for progress at Batchelor College. These are analysed below.

27. The 20 AEP funded tutors work in remote communities in the various programs of the School of Education Studies. Their funding is now devolved to BC and viability of their programs is assessed by the College each semester.
CHAPTER THREE

EARLY DIRECTIONS & BATCHelor CAMPUS GROWTH

Against a background of the current Assimilation Policy, the NTA Welfare Branch operated vocational training for Aborigines in the NT, particularly in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Training courses were being offered in central locations.

These courses were held in the main centres such as Alice Springs or Darwin, as well as in some remote Aboriginal Communities. Such courses were skills orientated and included:

1. Art and Craft
2. Bricklaying Assistant
   Building Maintenance
   Cook's Assistant
   Hygiene Assistant
   Leading hand Hygiene Assistant
   Motor Service Assistant
   Nursing Assistant
   Office Assistant
   Office Procedures
   Paramedic and Rehabilitation Asst.
   Pottery Trainee
   Pre-Apprenticeship
   Teaching Assistant
   Plumbing Assistant
   Sewing Assistant.
   Recreation Assistant

Not all of these were planned to be delivered at the Batchelor Vocational

1. DAA, Annual Report 1972-1973
2. The specialist Art-Craft course was run by a trained teacher, Kevin Kluken. It operated for all of 1974, and when it ceased the next year. Kluken joined the assistant teachers course as a lecturer.
Training Centre as there were not sufficient facilities on-site for such a range of courses, particularly the ones requiring specialised equipment. The particular courses to be offered at the Batchelor site were those which did not require very much infrastructure. Such areas as office skills, cook’s assistant, basic building maintenance were the types of course planned for VTC. In line with the general thrust of the assimilation policy for Aboriginals, those undertaking courses were to gain European skills and knowledge.

Teaching was almost all in the English language, irrespective of the adult student’s facility in that language. Most people were from remote localities and therefore had little understanding of English, so it is likely not much of what instructors spoke about would have been understood. Vocational courses were mostly of a practical nature, and almost always focussed on the ‘assistant’ role. The position of Aboriginals was generally in the role of helper and assistant, with non-Aboriginal ‘experts’ or ‘supervisors’ setting the program, whether it was suitable or not.

RE-LOCATION OF ASSISTANT TEACHERS TO BATCHELOR

Although there were changes in Government policy in the early 1970’s, (self-management) causing the general vocational training courses to be re-located to communities, the decision was made at the end of 1973 to relocate the first and second year Assistant Teachers program from Kormilda College to the VTC at Batchelor. This course had operated at Kormilda for several years, but it was not an altogether satisfactory arrangement being located in an Aboriginal residential secondary college. The assistant teachers certainly would have had an ‘image’ problem in such a location. The course needed a larger more suitable location as greater numbers were to be enrolled in 1974.

Commencing in 1974, there was a course being offered at the Darwin Community College (DCC), which led to the award of Aboriginal Schools Teaching Certificate. This was a third year of training for the assistant teachers, and gave entry to the Commonwealth Teaching Service (CTS) in a non-

3. NTDE File No.73/551 Folio 178
5. Kormilda College Year Book (1973) p19
At the commencement of 1974, the first and second year assistant teacher courses were located in the VTC at Batchelor, in addition to a number of previously established vocational courses. This situation remained until approximately April 1975 when the third year teaching course, operated by DCC, was re-located to Batchelor. The reason for the re-location was the large scale damage of facilities at DCC and Darwin as a result of Cyclone Tracy. It was fortunate for all the Aboriginal students that now the three separate years of Aboriginal teacher training were located in the one place, even if not by direct planning. One benefit from this physical amalgamation was the third year students' feeling of belonging to an Aboriginal training centre, as opposed to previously being a very tiny group on the large DCC campus.

Organisationally though, it meant a third group was now involved in the administration of the VTC. The name Aboriginal Teacher Education Centre (ATEC), had been coined in 1974 for the first and second year Assistant Teachers' courses. Together with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA), which administered the VTC and provided instructors for the vocational courses, things worked reasonably at this local level. The other group involved in administration at Batchelor was DCC which operated both the third year of teacher education and SAL from late 1975. It was not altogether an ideal situation, but staff generally got on with their own jobs without too much interference from one another.

**POLICY DEVELOPMENTS & OWNERSHIP OF THE BATCHELOR VTC**

Against a background of changing Federal Government policies at this time, which included integration, self-determination and self-management, several government departments which had responsibilities in the Northern Territory appeared to be lobbying for responsibilities in Aboriginal training.

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6. This course was the Aboriginal Schools Teaching Certificate.
7. Personal observation of the author.
8. Details of the operations of SAL and its eventual amalgamation with BC are outlined elsewhere in this study. Other Course Developments.
Several reports and meetings in 1973 and 1974 helped to shape the operations of Aboriginal vocational training, the deployment of DAA staff, the ownership of the VTC as well as the Assistant Teachers and Teachers courses. Various groups and departments continued to lobby for the eventual ownership and right to operate the different sections of Aboriginal post compulsory education.

A Federal Government working party on Aboriginal vocational training, under the Chairmanship of a Canberra based official, Ms A Stephen, met in Darwin and Canberra during early 1973. One of the recommendations in the Stephen Report on vocational training released in 1973, was against centralised vocational courses, and suggested that regionalisation and community based vocational courses were the most appropriate way to provide this training to remote area Aborigines. The emerging community councils were seen to be the main agents in the delivery of vocational training. Logistically this was not practicable for such a course as the Assistant Teacher course, which was still centrally located at Kormilda College in Darwin at the time. Perhaps the Stephen Report attempted to reflect the changing Government policies of self-management and self-sufficiency and get away from trying to mould everyone to be the same as the Assimilation policy had done previously. Interestingly, comments later by Ford and Gallacher suggest that the Stephen report was deemed to be an unsuitable document for the purposes of vocational training planning for Aboriginals in the NT, as in their opinion it lacked depth and was unworkable.

Discussions continued regarding the future of vocational training with a view expressed in February 1974 by R. Nicholson, the acting Principal of the VTC, suggesting the possibility of vocational training coming under the control of the NTDE. An opposing view was put forward by the Northern Territory's

9. Ms A Stephen (Chairman) (1973) 'A Report into the Overall Vocational Training Needs of the Aboriginal communities of the Northern Territory'. It was requested by NTA (Welfare Branch).
10. Comments in Vocational Training for Aboriginals in the NT (1976) p 8 unpublished report by M. Ford (DAA) and J. D. Gallacher (NTDE), submission prepared for the Williams Committee hearing into Education and Training, 9/7/77.
11. CTS Personnel File No.2939 folios 6,15 (obtained through DEET) show R. Nicholson as being seconded from NTDE to DAA during 1973 and 1974 with the local designation of Principal of the VTC due to the fact that he was a member of the CTS. He left VTC early in 1975.
12. NTDE File No.74/1975 folios (not shown)
Ted Milliken at a Commonwealth government meeting discussing vocational training for NT Aboriginals in August 1974. He suggested that both the VTC (Batchelor) and an experimental Aboriginal pottery project at Bagot (Darwin) would be better under the control of the newly established Darwin Community College.

In April 1974 Dr. H. Beare, Director of the NT Department of Education, reported that officers of DAA as well as Labour and Education had agreed that the Batchelor VTC should from 1975 become a Department of Education institution rather like a "residential technical college". At the same meeting it was agreed that technical education was to be coordinated by the Department of Education in the NT. The suggestion was also made that DAA should transfer its Vocational Training Section to the Department of Labour NT. 13

As the DAA was at this time becoming more and more an agency to facilitate change, rather than an operational department, recommendations were made for the future redeployment of their staff. In 1975 a statement was prepared to transfer DAA personnel to both the Department of Labour and Department of Education. Yet again, mention was made to transfer the VTC to Darwin Community College control, but only for those courses which could be conducted without any major increases in facilities at Batchelor; for example typing, leadership and management etc. 14 The eventual hand over of the Batchelor operations from DAA to the Department of Education did not take place until 21st July 1979. 15

In the middle and late 1970's some staff at DCC questioned why all of Aboriginal teacher education 16 was not under their control. DCC's Interim Council early in its first term expressed the desire to be the body to control all post compulsory education throughout the NT. In August 1978 a letter was sent from the Special Projects Section (NTDE) to the School of General Studies (DCC) in an attempt to play down any take-over plans, explaining that any

13. NTDE File No. 73/551 folio 155
14. NTDE File No. 73/551 folio 113
15. NTDE File No. 78/764 folio (not shown). The NT Department of Education was the last Commonwealth controlled department to transfer to the new Northern Territory Government.
16. See sections on development and control of Diploma of Teaching program. (History of the Fourth Stage of Teacher Education).
from the Special Projects Section (NTDE) to the School of General Studies (DCC) in an attempt to play down any take-over plans, explaining that any changes to the present operational arrangements of ATEC would have to be negotiated at a very senior level, as they had been originally made by Ministerial directive. In fact the issue of control of the various areas of educational delivery in the NT remained contentious through the 70's and 80's as different emerging institutions established their identities. Some of these struggles will be examined in more detail when the control of Batchelor College's first Diploma level course is discussed elsewhere in this study.

POSSIBILITY OF TRANSFER TO FRANCES CREEK

The staff at the VTC, in particular those dealing with Teacher Education, realised that the developing campus at Batchelor, although not an ideal site, needed to be consolidated and adequately staffed. It appears though, that government advisors tended to give very little thought to long term planning of Aboriginal training as demonstrated by the following two examples of suggested sites for relocation of ATEC operations.

In early 1976 a Government proposal was floated that the recently closed iron ore mining town at Frances Creek should be used for some purpose instead of being dismantled. It was tentatively proposed that Aboriginal Teacher Education become the user of the town and its facilities. In March 1976 a group of senior Department of Education officers and Don Dickson, Head of School of Education at DCC, visited Frances Creek, approximately 25 km. east of Pine Creek, to assess the facilities. Later staff and students from ATEC (including some Batchelor based DCC staff members) also made an appraisal visit to Frances Creek. Their comments were not encouraging, given the amount of renovations needed on buildings and the extra staff needed to virtually run the functions of a whole town. Isolation was foreseen to be a huge problem, both professionally and physically. At the time students made weekly visits to schools and educational facilities in Darwin, as an integral part of the school experience section of the ATEC curriculum. The views of the senior officers of

17. NTDE File No. 75/263 folio 162. Memo from Assistant Director Special Projects to Head of School of General Studies
18. See the section elsewhere in this study: History of the Fourth Stage of Teacher Education.
the Department of Education,¹⁹ who had been given the brief to investigate and report (it almost appeared a favourable answer was ‘expected’) on the suitability of the Frances Creek site, contrasted greatly with the ATEC staff views outlined above. ²⁰

The proposal was deemed finally to be unviable. In hindsight it would have been a disaster to relocate to Frances Creek. It seems unlikely that the Commonwealth government would have provided the resources to offer town facilities equivalent to those of Batchelor. Nor would the concept of a “closed” town have been acceptable to staff, students and leaders in Aboriginal advancement at that time. Such a move would not have been seen to support either of the Federal Government policies of integration or self-determination (or even for that matter the former policy of assimilation).

THE TI-TREE SITE FOR CENTRALIAN TEACHER EDUCATION.

At Ti Tree, a small settlement on the Stuart Highway about 200 kilometres north of Alice Springs, a large education facility had been built. It was originally intended to be a regional or area school mainly for Aboriginal pupils from the surrounding district. There were a number of transportable school buildings initially (known locally in the NT as ‘Silver Bullets’), which were replaced by a large complex of permanent buildings. These included classrooms, a dining facility and offices et cetera, and were opened in mid 1978.

A suggestion was put forward in the Education Department that one of the groups to use the facility could be Aboriginal teacher education, drawing its students from the surrounding region.²¹ The academic staff at Batchelor disagreed and in March 1977 wrote to the Senior Education Officer for Aboriginal Teacher Education stating their concerns. They raised a number of issues mainly to do with the isolation from other educational facilities. There was a fear also that the already scant resources at Batchelor would be depleted

¹⁹. NTDE File No. 80/164 folios 40, 41, 42. A dissenting comment from D. Dickson (Head of School, Teacher Education DCC) was noted, when he stated the third year course should not re-locate to the Frances Creek site
²⁰. NTDE File No. 80/164 folios 54, 55.
²¹. NOTE: It appeared because of the large amount of unused space, that the Government was looking for ‘tenants’ to justify the building of the large Ti Tree complex.
Senior Departmental staff replied that school and social experience visits could be made to Alice Springs twice a semester, and other school experience could be at both Ti Tree school and at Neutral Junction School (north of Ti Tree) on the Stuart Highway. The Department of Education called Ti Tree a ‘regional on-site course’. When applications for enrolments for the 1978 course were being called, a space for preference of location was included on the forms. This was for either Batchelor or Ti Tree. The author recalls that most students from the southern region of the Territory did not want to go to the Ti Tree centre, but instead declared their preference for the Batchelor site. Although this was far from their homes and ‘homesickness’ was ever present, staff reported from student conversations, that the students preferred to come to Batchelor as it was a known area, rather than to live at Ti Tree. In fact there were students from Roper River as well as Milikapiti in the first Ti Tree intake, as well as a few from the Central Australian region.

Much later, communities in Central Australia made strong representations to the College for a facility in their region. The development of both the Alice Springs annex (later campus) and Barkly annex reflected the much greater awareness of Aboriginal aspirations by the College administration. This is described elsewhere.

**GRADUAL AND STEADY GROWTH AT BATCHELOR**

In the period of the middle to late 1970’s and the early 1980’s, ATEC at Batchelor progressed steadily. Vocational courses had ceased at Batchelor by 1976, leaving Aboriginal Teacher Training as the only course operating. There were however a few ‘hobby’ type courses operating, such as sewing and some mainly after hours recreational activities. The reason for the demise of the vocational courses at Batchelor was a change in government policy with the

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22. NTDE File No. 80/164 folio not shown Senior Education Officer, Peter Gamer
23. NTDE File No. 77/111 folio 97
24. See chapter seven, formation of annexes and the Alice Springs campus.
emphasis now on self-determination and self-management, which put the responsibility for this form of training for Aboriginals, back into the remote communities under the control of local community councils. Whether the communities had the skills or infrastructure for organising training programs at that stage was debatable.

In 1979 a statement was made by the then Minister of Education for the Northern Territory, Jim Robertson, stating that the VTC and ATEC were to amalgamate under the new name of Batchelor College of TAFE. He also called for the establishment of a Board of Governors to advise on the operations of Batchelor College, with its membership to be made up largely from the Northern Territory Aboriginal Education Consultative Committee.

**EXPANSION PLANS AND NEW BUILDINGS**

Along with the expansion of RATE programs, particularly in the late 70's, and proposed major development of the Batchelor Campus, College resources were stretched fairly thinly as these developments took place concurrently.

As well there was the on-going debate as to who was to control the Teacher Education Course (DCC or NTDE). Closely linked to this was the continuing discussions at various levels regarding the end award to be issued by Batchelor (Associate Diploma or Diploma). This did have some bearing on the range of facilities which were planned for the College, but it was more a political issue and will be explored fully in the section dealing with development of the College's fourth stage teacher education program (the first Diploma level course at the College) in chapter four.

Although there was an increase in requests from remote communities, for greater access to training, the Assistant Director (TAFE) suggested that no more expansion of activities should be attempted until the current developments were consolidated, such as; the completion of the new facilities, appointment of the new College Principal, filling all current Batchelor (lecturer) positions and

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26. N.T. News 20/6/79 'Black School Unites'
27. This group was later called 'Feppi' an Aboriginal name from the Daly River and Peppimenarti area.
Towards the middle of 1979 the Commonwealth government made known its intention to fund a new TAFE facility at Batchelor, to replace the existing and physically run-down centre. The ATEC Centre was located in the old Rum Jungle mine single quarters on the western side of Batchelor. The new development would be on a totally new site on the eastern boundary of the township. It was to include student living quarters, as well as adequate and appropriately designed classroom spaces. The development would take place over a number of stages, and take several years to complete.

In fact it appeared that the expansion plans for the new Batchelor College were evolving so rapidly that no long term view of development had yet been outlined. This is borne out by the changing nature of the proposed building plans. Instead of just a replacement for the old ATEC facilities as first proposed, there was now a concept plan for the development of the Batchelor College of TAFE as a result of the Minister's recent statement.

Emphasis in the new facilities for a strong on-campus enrolment was evident by the provision of family as well as single style accommodation. In his concept proposals for Batchelor, the Principal stated the family support policy was one of the strong and unique features which had to be preserved if a viable alternative tertiary education system (for Aborigines) was to be recognised. The development of a small on-campus child care centre was also to be included in the plans. This would enhance the family support systems at Batchelor especially when a single parent or both parents were enrolled as students.

Course options for students enrolling in Teacher Education around 1979 and 1980 were for first stage to be offered either on-campus or in several communities in the RATE mode. The second stage was only on offer in the central Batchelor campus. As yet there was no audible community request for a second stage of RATE. As an NTDE internal memo of the time suggested,
numbers would not yet have warranted a stage two Teacher Education course in any one place. The third stage of the course was still being offered at the Batchelor campus by the DCC.

**NEW FACILITIES OPENED**

The main campus at Batchelor continued developing as a central base while the Territory wide operations of the College’s different courses gradually became community based. The new academic and administration buildings were occupied in mid 1982, with the official opening ceremony being held at the end of that year. There had already been some accommodation development on the new College site for several years, beginning with transportable buildings and then gradually as they were completed, the new residential blocks were occupied from 1979 onwards. There was an existing NTDE dining room on the new College site, which had been built in the middle 1970’s for the Batchelor Education Village inservice facility, this was transferred to the College and upgraded, to serve as the dining hall for the residential facility.

**ABORIGINAL HOMESICKNESS**

In the early 1980’s there were still many students who wished to undertake their training at the central Batchelor campus. Due to being away from their communities for extended periods, problems were caused by a lack of traditional family support. Many students dropped out and did not complete a full stage of their course for a variety of reasons.

Aboriginals from traditional backgrounds (mainly from the remote areas) generally do not like being away from their own place of residence for any length of time. This has a great deal to do with an individual spiritual attachment to land, and the fact that when in unfamiliar areas sorcery and evil spirits are perceived as a real threat. From the author’s experience unless a student had a trusting relationship with a College staff member, often some other (Western cultural) reason was given for their return to home.

31. NTDE File No.80/164 folio 185
32. Batchelor College was officially opened by Grant Tambling MHR on 8/12/82. (Details from opening ceremony plaque)
In later College developments many of these reasons for the lack of students' continuation at the central campus were addressed by planning for community-based course delivery, and a mixed-mode of delivery, interspersed with short residential workshops in a central location or another community. For further details of these developments see chapter seven which deals with the growth of RATE and community based programs.
CHAPTER FOUR

DEVELOPMENT OF FOURTH STAGE TEACHER EDUCATION
(DIPLOMA OF TEACHING)

The year 1990 finally saw the establishment of the first diploma level course at Batchelor College. It ended a period in which staff battled to gain acceptance for the College as an Institute of Higher Education. It may best be looked upon as the College establishing its identity. Additionally there had been continual and extended power plays between the NTDE and DCC as to who would control not only teacher education but all post compulsory education in the NT.

The early bids by ATEC and Batchelor College for the development of the teaching course up to Diploma level demonstrates that innovative plans, especially in Aboriginal education, are not easily accepted.

Teacher education was the only program being offered at Batchelor after the demise of the vocational courses in 1975 (see chapter three), until a small 'access' course began in 1983 followed by the Associate Diploma of Adult Education in 1985. Therefore almost all the earliest academic initiatives at Batchelor were related to the teaching course. It was, therefore, very easy for those not intimately connected with the College to continue to perceive it as being only a teachers' college. As previously mentioned, the third stage of the teacher education course was re-located onto the campus at Batchelor from early 1975, to join the first and second year assistant teacher courses.

The table below shows the award offered in July 1979:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>END AWARD</th>
<th>ISSUING BODY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year Assistant Teacher</td>
<td>Asst. Teacher Grade One</td>
<td>NTDE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Year Assistant Teacher</td>
<td>Asst. Teacher Grade Two</td>
<td>NTDE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Year Teacher Course</td>
<td>Aboriginal Schools Teaching Certificate</td>
<td>DCC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. DCC and BC (1980) Accreditation Proposal for Diploma in Teaching (Primary) /Associate Diploma in Teaching (Primary) with a Specialisation for Teaching in Aboriginal Schools. Darwin p 4 and Table 1.
Staff at ATEC and some senior officers in NTDE and DCC began as early as 1978 to plan a full Diploma in Teaching (over four years) and Associate Diploma in Teaching for Aboriginal Schools for accreditation through DCC, an institution which already had standing and experience with the National Accreditation Bodies.

A four year course was planned for an 'Undergraduate 2' diploma level award. Because of the open entry arrangements at Batchelor College, the NT teaching employment body (Commonwealth Teaching Service [CTS] and later Northern Territory Teaching Service[NTTS]) only recognised the Aboriginal Schools Teaching Certificate (later the Associate Diploma in Teaching) as 'two year' trained status, thus with the extra year planned in this course it would then be equivalent to 'three year' trained status. Promotional rights and eligibility to apply for any position in the NT school system were the perceived benefits of the 'four year' diploma.

Chief Minister Paul Everingham favoured a quick introduction of the fourth year to begin in 1979, but was opposed by the Federal Minister for Education J.L.Carrick. There were delays in the submitting of the accreditation document, while continual discussion took place between the DCC and NTDE, whose officers wished to review a report into Aboriginal Teacher Education, by consultant Dr. H. Penny. This was due to be presented in the latter part of 1979, and the NTDE was naturally keen to see the recommendations before making any decisions on policy issues.

NTDE records show that some doubts were raised as to whether students could start the proposed course in 1979, without the accreditation having been received. Further problems were perceived as to how the applicants for such a course were to be selected, as the proposed end award was a full Diploma of Teaching, leading to permanent employment in the CTS. It appears that officialdom was acting in a paternalistic manner and could not appreciate that

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2. NTDE File No. 80/164 folio 175, 176. Memo. Carrick to Everingham. (7/12/78)
4. NTDE File No. 75/263 folios 172,173.
Aboriginals were able to gain an award and then perform as a professionally trained teacher. The 1978 draft proposal was later re-written and submitted again to the Northern Territory Accreditation Committee.5

The NT Further Education Council stressed the need for additional consultation between a number of bodies, such as the NAEC, the TEC and the CTS. Also, an examination of recommendations which would come from a proposed review of Aboriginal Teaching Assistant career structures, by the Secretary of NTDE, would need to be undertaken.

THE 'AGREEMENT' BETWEEN NTDE AND DCC

While the College building redevelopment was taking place there were still personnel in the Darwin Community College who saw Aboriginal teacher training as the prerogative of their institution. Documentation, concurrent with the time when the third stage teaching assistant course was re-located to Batchelor (early in 1975), shows continuing interest by some DCC staff in operating all teacher education in the NT (including Aboriginal teacher education). It was therefore necessary, once and for all, to 'spell out' who controlled the different sections of the programs being delivered at Batchelor.

NTDE strenuously resisted moves by DCC to take over the first and second stages of the course. Their reasoning for this was to closely relate aspects of work-place practices in Aboriginal schools with the actual content of the teaching course, to keep it 'job specific', as the vast majority of the College graduates at that time would return to the work place they operated from previously, when their training was completed. In the earlier days of ATEC and teaching assistant training, all course participants were employees of the Education Department and were released on pay for the duration of their training. There was virtually no provision for 'private students', who were not in employment with a government department. One or two special enrolments were negotiated from time to time, particularly with students from interstate or

5. Darwin Community College, School of General Studies, Department of Education Studies in association with Batchelor College, Accreditation Proposal for Diploma of Teaching (Primary) and Associate Diploma in Teaching (Primary) with a Specialisation for Teaching in Aboriginal Schools, July 1980.
from another Department in the Northern Territory. This situation gradually
changed throughout the 1980’s with the wider availability of adult ‘Abstudy’\(^6\)
grants for private students. A policy statement (or agreement) was necessary, to
state categorically who controlled each of the three stages of the teacher
education program. It was signed by both the Secretary of Department of
Education and the Principal of the Darwin Community College in March 1980.\(^7\)

**JOINT POLICY STATEMENT (AGREEMENT DETAILS)**

The agreement was the first occasion on which responsibilities had been
officially spelt out, between the two controlling bodies (NTDE and DCC) dealing
with education at Batchelor. The agreement outlined a formal division of
responsibility between NTDE and DCC:

a) Batchelor College was to provide teacher education courses for
Aborigines, and when resources allowed, vocational courses. Batchelor
College would control the first and second year assistant teacher programs,
while the DCC would have control over the subsequent years of the program,
leading to the award of Diploma in Teaching.

b) Service staff and NTDE staff were to be responsible to the Principal of
Batchelor College; DCC teaching staff would be administratively responsible to
the Principal of Batchelor College and professionally responsible to the
Principal of DCC; by local agreement of the Batchelor College Principal and
combined teaching staff, units from any level of the courses could be taught by
members of either institution. Staff recruitment would be in accordance with
criteria set out from the respective institutions, in consultation with the Board of
Governors.

c) The curriculum of the teacher training courses would be designed by
the combined staffs of both institutions (at Batchelor).

d) Mention is made also of an accreditation proposal for a Diploma in
Teaching / Associate Diploma in Teaching for Aboriginal Teachers, which dated
back to September 1978. (Funding had been sought several times for this, but
had been unsuccessful).

e) Approvals for future awards were to be by the Batchelor College staff,

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\(^{6}\) ‘Abstudy’ is a grant to enable adult Aboriginals to study full or part-time. It is administered by the
Commonwealth Government Department, DEET.

\(^{7}\) NTDE File No. 81/571 folios 2.3.4. Signed by Dr. J. Eedle (NTDE) and J. Flint (DCC)
and would follow this process: to the Board of Governors; to DCC course accreditation group; to the N.T. Accreditation Committee; to the National Council for Awards in Advanced Education.

f) There would be an advisory Board of Governors, “primarily composed of persons of Aboriginal and Islander descent” to offer advice on a range of administrative, policy and cultural matters. There would also be one member form each of the NTDE and the DCC (both these to be non-voting).

g) Batchelor College’s Principal would be the “ex-officio administrative officer to the board”.

h) An (unspecific) training program for the Board of Governors would enable it to ultimately accept the responsibility for a “free standing” Batchelor College.

i) The excellent co-operation between the staff members (BC and Batchelor based DCC) to date would be expected to continue, but if disagreements arose then a recognised disputes procedure was outlined.

j) Several other administrative arrangements were outlined and the agreement would be reviewed annually.

k) There were some areas of disagreement. The NTDE was not supportive of the above mentioned accreditation proposal, until a review by the Post School Advisory Council had been completed. However DCC was keen to see the accreditation get national acceptance immediately.

It is worth looking at the above summary closely, particularly in relation to subsequent developments in the College. In later years the right for Batchelor College to offer Diploma level courses was very difficult to achieve, while on a positive note, the mention of a Board of Governors with Aboriginal / Islander representation signalled developments of the predominantly Aboriginal council. Also, mention of possible future expansion into TAFE courses signalled the growth of courses in the late 1980’s.

MINISTERIAL DIRECTION ON DIVISION OF TEACHER EDUCATION

After examining the report of the panel which reviewed the 1980 Accreditation Proposal the NT Minister for Education, Jim Robertson, directed that since the students’ interests would best be served by the program being the
responsibility of the DCC, the Secretary of the NTDE and the Principal of the DCC should present a joint proposal to him, regarding this new arrangement.  

The NTDE stated there were acknowledged advantages in it retaining the first and second year assistant teacher courses, as mentioned previously. Several responses were prepared by both the NTDE officers and the Batchelor staff. The Secretary of the NTDE noted that another form of Board or Council would need to be established to replace the existing Batchelor College Board of Governors.  

The staff at DCC prepared their responses to the Minister’s directive. They would deliver the third (and subsequent ) years of teacher education; as they also had the oversight of the ‘mainstream’ teacher education programs in the NT at that time.

Strong arguments were presented by DCC stating among other things that :- Firstly, all teacher education in the NT should be under the one body for the sake of quality of the programs and their delivery.

Secondly, there had always been an understanding by DCC that their staffing levels at Batchelor had been provided in order to facilitate the eventual teaching of the first and second years of the Teacher Education program.

Thirdly, DCC staff in their bid to control ATEC (and the College), had said that other courses projected for Batchelor were no reason not to transfer the teacher education courses to them.  

There were strong feelings within the DCC for all of teacher education at Batchelor, to be under their control within the School of General Studies. As mentioned in the agreement above, the roles of each institution, specifically in regard to Aboriginal teacher education, were clearly stated, so the apparent continuing dissension did not auger well for a smooth presentation of the current proposal to the accrediting bodies. This was a concern mentioned by the accreditation panel chairman, Dr. N. Stewart (also the NTTS Commissioner), in

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8. NTDE File No. 81/571 folio 15
9. NTDE File No. 82/827 folios 37,38,39,40.
10. Memo to Principal (DCC) from Head of School Education Studies, 6/11/81. (NTUA)
11. NTDE File No. 81/571 folios 2,3,4.
his report to the Chief Minister in August 1981.

The panel also expressed reservations that the four year program at Batchelor could not be seen to be of equivalent status to the Diploma of Teaching offered at the DCC. Although the report by Stewart appeared ethnocentric and implied that the Aboriginal graduate may not have the same ‘standards’ (as a mainstream non-Aboriginal student) on completion of the proposed course, the panel advocated a separate category be created for alternative courses such as that proposed by Batchelor College, and elsewhere in Australia. Mention is made of the sensitive nature of the accreditation with regards to the social implications for Aboriginal advancement, if the proposal was not approved. Stewart also makes reference to the dilemma of how to recognise relevant prior Aboriginal learning in a ‘Western’ culturally based award system. This is still a relevant factor in the designing of courses and appropriate evaluation techniques at Batchelor College.

**FUTURE COURSES PLANNED AND DISCUSSED**

The NTDE was keen to retain the embryonic Batchelor College of TAFE, as mentioned earlier, and pursued the proposals to develop a range of new course initiatives. In fact, there had been mention in 1978 and 1979 of specialist courses for Aboriginal teachers of physically disadvantaged students (deaf / blind children), and Adult Educators.

Meanwhile a major building program had commenced at Batchelor, which confirmed the plans, as previously announced by the Minister in 1979, that ATEC would be developed into the Batchelor College of TAFE under NTDE control. This development foreshadowed the offering of courses other than teacher education. A detailed account of other course development is found in chapter five.

**A SOLUTION TO CONTROL AT BATCHELOR**

In the latter half of 1983 Marshall Perron, then Minister for Education.

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12. NTDE File No. 80/1094 folios 92, 93, 94.
13. NTDE File No. 75/263 folio 186
decree that the three years of teacher education at Batchelor would now come under the control of Batchelor College and officially be known as the Associate Diploma of Teaching (Aboriginal Schools). Provision would be made for graduates of this award to attend DCC and negotiate advanced standing in the regular Diploma of Teaching program. Students who had gained the Associate Diploma at Batchelor would need to negotiate the completion of one or more years at DCC, on an individual basis, depending on their academic levels. Reference is sometimes made to ‘fourth year’ and ‘fifth year’ around this period, in effect referring to the path and length of study for Batchelor College students wishing to gain the full Diploma of Teaching. This would have necessitated students re-locating to the DCC Darwin campus. The Minister also announced that all Batchelor College operations would remain with the NTDE. The new arrangements were scheduled to commence at the beginning of 1984. 14

With the solution to further training now outlined, the proposal for a Diploma of Teaching (Aboriginal Schools) was for the time being dropped at Batchelor College. In effect paraprofessional courses such as the Associate Diploma of Teaching would be offered at Batchelor, while the Diploma of Teaching would only be offered at DCC.

However, there was some resistance from Aboriginal people to the involvement of DCC. The recently formed Past and Present Students Committee (PPSC) objected to the absence of a fourth year course at Batchelor. They agreed that the DCC course should be available with adequate support systems for those who wished to take it, in Darwin, and argued that a Diploma of Teaching (Aboriginal Schools) should be offered at Batchelor as well.15

The student group alluded to the fact that students from remote communities would usually not survive the ‘social situation’ of living and studying on an urban campus, in Darwin.16 They were supported by the Leader of the Opposition, Bob Collins who questioned the adequacy of planning and

14. NTDE File No.80/1094 folios 175,176.
15. PPSC Letter to Principal Batchelor College. 30/9/83 (Suggested award for Aboriginal schools only)
16. ibid
DEAKIN-BATCHELOR ABORIGINAL TEACHER EDUCATION (D-BATE)

Convinced of DCC's inability to provide the kind of program needed to suit remote area Aboriginal students, Batchelor College invited an interstate institution to prepare and offer a course with the equivalent level of a Diploma of Teaching. A proposal was received from the Deakin University, to operate a program in co-operation with the College. This would provide the equivalent of a fourth stage of teacher education. Deakin University had previously been involved in an evaluation and review of the Teacher Education Course at Batchelor College, and the Principal invited them to submit a proposal for the offering of an award at the level of Diploma of Teaching. Deakin University had been in the 'business' of operating courses in the distance education mode for a number of years, while DIT was a still growing and relatively small institution. The off-campus mode of operation appears to have been a feature which appealed to Batchelor College, as the popularity of this style of operating was gaining momentum and acceptance by remote area Aboriginal students at that time.

Deakin University proposed that Batchelor College be a designated study centre of theirs, as no other readily accessible and suitable centre existed at the time for Aboriginal students enrolling in the N.T. One of the most attractive features of this program proposal from the students' point of view was that the bulk of the course was able to be taken externally, that is, in the student's home community, with the assistance of the normal range of distance education materials. Students would each be entitled to have a tutor in their community, and regular 'intensives' or group tutorial sessions were to be held at Batchelor College. The actual course content was to be largely driven by the practice within the various schools from where the students came and reflect varying community interests. The processes of curriculum negotiation were to be

19. The Deakin University Teacher Education Award was: Bachelor of Arts (in Education.)
20. NTDE File No. 84/1352. folios 132 to 146. (Proposal for the Deakin/Batchelor Teacher Education Program)
followed (in a similar way to the College's Associate Diploma of Teaching) as a strategy for students to relate their course work to their work/teaching situation. This process is used in the School of Education Studies at Batchelor to enable the students to include meaningful content in their course from their own experiences, through research in their community.21

The proposal included a 'sunset' clause, which would terminate the involvement of Deakin in the program by 1990, by which time Batchelor College planned to have its own Diploma of Teaching program operating. A significant inclusion was the proposed involvement of Aboriginal educators and elders as members of a program advisory committee to oversee the program.22 Both of these stipulations were to greatly assist in the ongoing professional growth of Batchelor College.

The D-BATE program,23 as the Deakin proposal became known, commenced in 1986 and the first graduates gained their awards at a special graduation ceremony the next year. The following table shows the number of graduates over the life of the program.24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>GRADUATES</th>
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<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>1989</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Batchelor College was still keen to work professionally with DIT wherever possible, as there was no need to be competing for students in a small population base. Ideally the specialities and expertise of each institution should be used to complement one another. These points were discussed in a 1985 meeting of the Northern Territory Higher Education Council,25 at which the author sensed there was a certain amount of mistrust between the parties because of the long history of academic debate which had preceded the D-

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21. Curriculum Negotiation is described in section 5 of the Accreditation of the Diploma of Teaching (Primary) Stage Two document B.C. 1988
22. NTDE File No. 84/1352 folio 135
23. D-BATE : From Deakin-Batchelor Aboriginal Teacher Education
24. B C File No. H 89/008, Graduates by Year of Graduation
25. NTDE File No. 84/1352 folios 129,130,131.
BATE agreement. The Principal of Batchelor College outlined some issues which he felt had to be addressed before the College could offer a Diploma in its own right. Some of these were staffing concerns, to bring the selection and conditions of service for staff more into line with those of a higher education establishment. Also administrative and support services would have to be upgraded to cope with the increasing diversification of courses.

Concurrent with the last couple of years of D-BATE, development was underway with the preparation of Batchelor College’s own Diploma of Teaching course. It was initially a one year course following on from the previously accredited Associate Diploma of Teaching, and articulating with it. The strategies used successfully in D-BATE were to be consolidated and continued in the College’s own Diploma course using features such as mixed mode delivery with centrally based intensive workshops and community tutor support. Courses would be structured around tasks derived from the students' community, and be processed based using the student’s own reflections and judgments for creating much of their own course content. Students would make extensive use of word-processors as a work medium. These strategies underlie many of the philosophies outlined in the mission statement for Batchelor College. 26

The Associate Diploma (of Teaching) course was due for re-accreditation in 1990 so it was decided to integrate the newly accredited Diploma (a one year program) as a fourth and final year to that program. In this way the experiences of the Associate Diploma, the D-BATE program and Diploma of Teaching would all be integrated into one program. 27

Finally, with the accreditation of the Diploma of Teaching in 1990 and after approximately 12 years of planning and political manoeuvring Batchelor College at last had a Diploma level course in its own right. 28 Perhaps the most important feature of this Diploma and vitally relevant for the majority of the Aboriginal students from the remote communities is the fact that the whole

26. BC Annual Report, (1990) p1.2. (see copy of the BC Mission Statement in the appendix)
27. Accreditation of the Diploma of Teaching (Primary) Stage Two, B C (1988)p13,14
28. Reaccreditation Document for Associate Diploma of Teaching (Aboriginal Schools) & Diploma of Teaching (Primary) Batchelor College,(1991); Batchelor N.T.
program had been designed with the students' background as speakers of English as a second language being given recognition. The accreditation of the Diploma of Education (Adult)\textsuperscript{29} was granted at approximately the same time. Concurrent with these developments came a further strengthening of the position of Batchelor College as an Institute of Aboriginal Tertiary Education.\textsuperscript{30}

The vital fact was that Batchelor College could now offer accredited Diploma courses in its own right.\textsuperscript{31} Much of the credit for this organisation along academic lines must go to staff members and the College Council, but without the support from Aboriginal community councils and various individuals in the remote areas as well as professional comments and advice from accreditation panels, such a result may not have been possible. From this point onwards courses still had to designed appropriately, and pass through the normal accreditation processes, but the right to offer Diploma level courses had been established.

One strong desire of the senior College management is that the natural evolution of many of the TAFE courses to the Higher Education sector, will be a process followed as relevant courses come up for re-accreditation. This will have the effect of lifting the status and expertise of graduates in the workplace, thus strengthening their position as managers of their own community affairs.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{29}The original award for Adult Education was an Associate Diploma, accredited in the middle 1980's. With the addition of the 'fourth year' of study an articulated Diploma in Teaching (Adult) was accredited in 1990.

\textsuperscript{30} Batchelor College was recognised as a Higher Education Institute by the Commonwealth Higher Education and Funding Act of 1989 (although outside the Unified National System of Higher Education), \textit{BC Annual Report} (1990) p 1

\textsuperscript{31} The Minister for Education requested an external moderator for the Diploma of Teaching. In 1989 Batchelor College Council appointed Dr. Jim Cameron (Dean, Faculty of Education NTU) to oversee the operation of the new course and monitor the articulation between the Associate Diploma and Diploma. Perhaps the Minister still had lingering doubts as to BC's ability to run the courses professionally.

\textsuperscript{32} Personal comments by J. Ingram present College Director, Interview August 1993.
CHAPTER FIVE

OTHER COURSE DEVELOPMENTS

Batchelor College (and its predecessors) has since its inception attempted to provide training for the needs of remote Aboriginal communities. In the earliest days of the College, the agenda for this training was set by staff and various government agencies with little consultation between the communities and the students. This was the situation at the end of the assimilationist period and the beginning of the eras of integration and self-determination. A gradual growth in acceptance, by remote communities, of the College as a body which could provide skills and training has occurred over a number of years. Some of this is reflected in the degree of Aboriginal input to course proposals and the manner in which the College has responded to community requests, particularly since the formation of the first College council with some Aboriginal members, in the early 1980's.

After the demise of the vocational courses at ATEC early in 1975, various course proposals were discussed but none came to fruition. The only continuing group of courses offered was in teacher education. This later included proposals for a Diploma level award in teaching.\(^1\) The majority of courses suggested were discussed informally, and generally did not get funded.

Graduates from Batchelor College, particularly in the 1970's, had spoken of the need for some form of training in the broad areas of administration and management. This had been discussed within the College and the NTDE particularly in regard to the next ‘level’ of training after the Aboriginal Schools Teaching Certificate. When the Diploma of Teaching proposals were dropped in 1982, the TAFE section of NTDE suggested to the College staff that it would be appropriate to begin the planning process for an Educational Administration Course.\(^2\) This course was never formally offered, although there were a few ‘one-off’ educational administration courses arranged by NTDE and held at

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\(^1\) Development of proposals for Diploma and Associate Diploma of Teaching in 1978, and 1980. See details of development and accreditation of Diploma of Teaching in chapter four.

\(^2\) NTDE File No. 80/1094 folio 140. Memo McGrath to Pitman (2/9/82)
One option being discussed in 1979 and 1980 was Health Worker Administration training. A number of discussions took place between the Health Department and Batchelor College as to what would be the most appropriate form of training. This resulted in a survey of health workers' needs being carried out by the College in mid 1980, mainly in relation to the administrative duties necessary to run a typical remote Aboriginal health centre.4

The initial requests for assistance had come from the Health Department, when Dr. F.S. Soong (Coordinator Aboriginal Health Worker Training Program) met with the staff at Batchelor College and requested that some form of management training course be prepared for the senior Health Workers.5 This request was similar to that being made by many Aboriginal teachers, for some administration training. Other developments at that time were the emergence of the first Aboriginal community councils and a perceived need for management in the retail area. The culmination of all these moves was a proposal by the College Administrative Studies Planning Committee for the development of a Certificate in Aboriginal Health Management6 to be a precursor to certificates in School Management, Local Government and Retail Management. No courses were run but the Secretary of NTDE suggested to the Health Department that Batchelor was the logical place for such a course whenever it did become operational.7

The first course for Aboriginal Health Workers (AHW) was not offered by Batchelor College until 1990, in the newly formed School of Health Studies.8 Previously the Health Department developed their own courses and operated Aboriginal Health Worker Training regionally, as well as ‘on-the-job’ in remote

5. NTDE File No. 80/1094, folio 35.
6. ibid, folio 36.
7. ibid, folio 47. Memo Savile to Gurd (9/12/80)
8. This was the TAFE Certificate in Health Science (Aboriginal Community Health)
Although there had been a few short courses organised by the Health Department using the Batchelor facilities in the middle 80's, it is not in the scope of this study to examine those developments. Many departments and agencies in the NT had been approached by the College in the early 1980's and asked for their views on how they could use the College for Aboriginal training, and this included the Health Department. They had proceeded however, with their own training program until discussions between the Health and Education Departments commenced late in 1988, which led to the eventual transfer of the AHW program to Batchelor.

**THE ACCESS COURSE**

Some of the students enrolling in the College during the 1970's and early 1980's had very low levels of literacy (in English) and as a consequence were not able to undertake the Batchelor College courses satisfactorily. A situation had existed in Aboriginal Communities for many years where once someone had left school there was practically no opportunity for any contact with written English, and from the author's observation, generally very little reading material was available either. The College decided to offer a literacy and numeracy course of one semester duration on campus to lift English language and maths levels to an acceptable entry level, primarily for the teaching course. This course was designed to give people with low attainment levels, or who had been away from formal education for some time, greater proficiency and study skills to undertake formal study programs. The access course which had been poorly funded and too small to be effective, ceased at the end of 1989 after being in operation for seven years, and was transferred to the Northern Territory Open College. In effect BC no longer had any influence over the style or level

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9. Health Worker training was held in Darwin, Alice Springs, Nhulunbuy and in Katherine Institute for Aboriginal Health (KIAH).

10. This amalgamation of the AHW training into BC had been outlined in the BC (Batchelor Institute of Aboriginal Tertiary Education) BIATE PROPOSALS which had been circulated to Dept. of Health. Developments are mentioned in BC File No. A89/056 folios 196 to 199.

11. The access course was first offered in 1983 and ceased at the end of 1989. It was a one semester skills type course mainly, but not exclusively to give entry to the first stage Teacher Education Program. Its funding was transferred to the NT Open College from the beginning of 1990. Refer to NTDE Annual Report (1982/1983) and BC Annual Report (1990).

12. Personal communication, John Ingram, College Director, Nov. 1993

of the course, or its availability to the remote area students it had previously served. On face value it seemed that the NT Open College was further justifying its movement into some of the larger remote area communities.

**ADULT EDUCATION COURSE**

The Associate Diploma in Adult Education was developed and then offered in 1985 after a successful application for a TAFE funded lecturer in 1983. From the middle 1970's when the Aboriginal Assistant Adult Educators were appointed to field based positions requests for further training had been voiced quietly. Finally a series of meetings was held at Batchelor College through 1983, with both community based Adult Educators and the Assistant Adult Educators to gauge their views as to the need for the Assistants to be adequately trained, and what form some of the course design should take.14

Since this course was originally organised there has been a widening of the range of work places from which students are accepted. Although originally only available for Assistant Adult Educators, this criteria was to be reviewed at the end of the first year of operation. Now students are accepted from many independent Aboriginal organisations and the NT Health Department.15 The main criteria is practicum placements in order that adequate work experience and supervision is available. This flexibility emphasises how the College is responsive to Aboriginal requests for training to suit local needs.

A notable feature in this development was the degree of consultation which took place with the client group, (the Assistant Adult Educators and Adult Educators) in the course design. Constructive comments were received from a remote community as to how a training scheme could operate acceptably within an Aboriginal cultural and management style. It was suggested there be one male and one female assistant selected from each community. Additionally, a request was made that the final qualification should be a fully recognised

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15. Personal comment from J. Frawley a/S.L. Adult Education course, August 1993.
A comparison between the original Associate Diploma of Teaching (and Aboriginal Schools Teaching Certificate) with its basically (although not totally) teacher-centred content and the more consultative approach of this course design with its community input, shows how rapidly Aboriginal course design had evolved in a few years. Comparisons can also be made as to how administrators and educators previously recognised the basic thrust of the Assimilation Policy with that of the policies of Integration and Self-Management and how this was reflected in the delivery of post compulsory schooling. The recognition that students had much knowledge already when they came to the College was given a great amount of credence when writing courses, particularly from the middle 1980's onwards. When the first group of adult education applicants and the Adult Educators met in 1984 to ratify the final course accreditation draft, they proposed a list of exemptions for skills and knowledge which the Assistant Adult Educators already possessed. Specifically, recognition was given in the area of Aboriginal language and culture, where the assistant became the 'teacher' while the Adult Educator was the 'learner' in a range of cross cultural communications situations. The Associate Diploma of Education (Adult) was resubmitted for accreditation together with the Diploma of Education (Adult) in 1990, as an integrated four stage program.

RECOGNITION OF AWARDS

It is appropriate here to outline the recognition given by the College, where there is an award at both paraprofessional and professional levels within a course. The current Batchelor College practice is for levels of award below that of Associate Diploma to be recognised by a non-accredited Statement of Attainment or Certificate. Previously, in the Associate Diploma of Teaching such intermediate awards were designated in a different manner. This was prior to the development of the Diploma (of Teaching) and was thus part of an evolution...
UIBO DEVELOPMENT OF BATCHELOR COLLEGE

in formal recognition of Aboriginal achievement. By following such a practice those students who only complete one or two stages of a course are duly recognised by the College and also have greater professional standing in their community.

COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT COURSES

A significant development occurred when the Community Management course commenced in the College. This was notable for several reasons. It was the beginning of the diversification of Batchelor College away from the teacher education / adult education courses and the first time that an NT Government Department (other than NTDE) had made any form of grant to establish and provide some recurrent funding for a course.19

Grants for the courses offered by the Community Management Education Centre (CMEC)20 were provided to the College annually from 1986. The motivation behind the original grants however, appears to have been a genuine commitment by the Government to encourage meaningful Aboriginal participation in the NT Community Government Scheme, through the CMEC courses at Batchelor. The NT Government instigated its Economic Review Committee cutbacks in the early 1990’s, and with much funding for Aboriginal education coming from the Commonwealth, this may have been a way for the Northern Territory Government to devolve itself from funding the CMEC course, as periodically there had been acrimonious exchanges between the two governments regarding Batchelor College funding.

The courses offered were the Certificate in Community Management in 1985 and the Certificate in Office Administration in 1987.21 Broadly the College was responding to requests from remote communities to enable Aboriginal councils to develop their own range of skills along the lines of stated government policies of Self-Management. These courses were planned for a ‘mixed mode’ of operation, with students undertaking on-the-job training

19. Initial establishment grant from the NT Department of Community Development.
20. The term ‘CMEC’ was used first in 1987 and is mentioned in the 1987 NTDE Annual Report.
interspersed with residential workshops in Batchelor or other central locations. The vast majority of the students in these programs were in the work force, and this mode of course delivery was flexible enough to accommodate the pressures of working in an Aboriginal context and concurrently interacting with government bureaucracies. A particularly innovative feature of the course design was the arrangement of a large number of competencies which allowed students the flexibility of self-paced progression and recognition of prior learning. Competency Based Training (CBT) is being introduced Australia-wide in the 1990's mainly for TAFE courses as an aid to flexibility and change, with the emphasis on what a person can actually do, rather than just the achievement of a pass rate in a course. CMEC still offers the original two courses, both of which have TAFE accreditation. They are currently being submitted for re-accreditation in the higher education sector.

**BROADCASTING AND JOURNALISM**

Courses in Aboriginal media began in the second half of 1988, with the offering of the Associate Diploma in Applied Science (Broadcasting & Journalism). Considerable outside assistance was given to the College to set-up this program, with the main contribution coming from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, in the form of technical equipment and expertise to set up a radio station within the College. The Commonwealth Department of Education and Training played a significant role in this course development. Much emphasis is placed on part time instructors and specialists delivering sections of the course. This has the advantage of allowing the students to keep up with developments from the various sections of the media industry, without the College needing to employ its own specialist staff. This is a particularly important aspect considering that most course graduates hope for employment

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22. At the time the course was written (1986) Competency-Based Training (CBT) was a very new feature in Australian TAFE course design. The original very large number of competencies has since been greatly reduced by combining etc. Personal comment D.Kirkby, CMEC Lecturer, Aug.1993 (N.B. TAFE courses nationally are all now being prepared using CBT formulas).

23. Competency Based Training. "CBT Working For You" Information for Employers and Apprentices Booklet (undated), from Australian State or Territory Training Authorities.

24. BC Annual Report (1988). The BC radio station was named Radio Rum Jungle. It is now run by an independent Aboriginal media group named 'Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association' (TEABBA) although it still has very close affiliation with the College, enabling Broadcasting students at times to have practical 'on-air' experience.
I.A. UIBO OEV: DEVELOPMENT OF BATCHELOR COLLEGE

within the media industry.

SCHOOL OF AUSTRALIAN LINGUISTICS

On July 1st 1989 the School of Australian Linguistics amalgamated with Batchelor College. Established originally in 1975 in Batchelor as a separate school of the Darwin Community College, there has been academic cooperation with Batchelor College since its inception. The history of SAL and events leading up to the amalgamation are dealt with below.

SAL, renamed the Centre for Australian Languages and Linguistics (CALL), continued to offer short accredited certificate courses in Aboriginal languages as well as general linguistics and literacy up till approximately 1991/1992. Support and involvement in College-wide Aboriginal language activities has continued, particularly the assistance in Aboriginal Language Fortnight, a unit of work in the Teacher Education program.

COMMUNITY MAINTENANCE

Some of the development for the Certificate in Community Skills had stemmed from the original non-award course known locally in the College as ‘the spouse course’, which was a hobby type adult education course for the husbands of female on-campus students. It was due to be re-written as a TAFE award course in 1990. Unfortunately there was no organised equivalent course for women who were on campus while their spouse was occupied in daily classwork.

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF COURSES

This study does not go into the details of all the courses which were proposed in the late 1980’s. The College has attempted to respond to many of

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25. Former certificates have now been replaced by Associate Diploma and Diploma of Arts (Language Studies).
26. This course had a practical orientation, which proved popular among the men. It served the dual role of providing a useful set of skills, with the social benefits of daytime activity. A statement of attainment was issued on successful completion of the one year course.
the requests and suggestions from the remote communities, as detailed in the consultation report of late 1988. The courses described above are given in some detail as they were in operation before the beginning of 1990. Since that time the rapid increase in the planning and offering of courses has shown the College is now responding as an Aboriginal Tertiary Institution by considering the training requested by remote NT Aboriginal communities. With future projections for establishing new courses, published recently, the College appears to be addressing the expressed training needs of communities through to the end of the 1990’s at least.

In 1983 the Principal envisaged Batchelor College serving the needs of remote area Aboriginals Australia-wide. This has not happened due to financial constraints and the fact that the College’s primary aim is to serve NT remote areas, although there are small numbers of students from interstate enrolled in Teacher /Adult Education, Community Management, CALL courses and Environmental Management. The course in Broadcasting and Journalism more than any other does attract Australia-wide enrolments. One reason for this, is that there are so few Aboriginal media groups in the NT, and the course would not be viable if it relied on NT students alone. In the author’s opinion it is to the credit of Batchelor College that Aboriginal students on the national scene appear to find the course appropriate and relevant, verifying the College Mission Statement regarding the provision of opportunities and skills to gain appropriate employment.

THE AMALGAMATION OF SAL AND BATCHELOR COLLEGE

As a result of negotiations between Batchelor College and the Northern Territory University in the the late 1980’s, the School of Australian Linguistics became part of Batchelor College. There were many parallels in the developments of both these groups, and as mentioned elsewhere close

30. Special agreements have been made to offer Teacher Education courses, particularly in WA, where a lecturer is provided by the client group. e.g. Catholic Education or an independent school group etc. 
large. UIBO DEVELOPMENT OF BATECOL COLLEGE

Professional ties had existed with Batchelor College since SAL was first established. It is necessary to look at the history of SAL to understand its background prior to the transfer, and to understand the potential benefits to the College.

BRIEF HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF SAL

The development of The School of Australian Linguistics (SAL) and Batchelor College have been complimentary to one another, and both co-existed in Batchelor until the eventual transfer of SAL to Batchelor College in mid 1989.

The School of Australian Linguistics commenced as a section of DCC in 1974 in Darwin. Among its stated aims was the support of Aboriginal vernacular literacy including bilingual education. From its inception, SAL enrolled students from the whole of north Australia, including Torres Straits, north Qld, NT and the Kimberley, as well as northern SA. A review of student enrolments by community through the 1980's confirms this diverse spread.

After Cyclone Tracy devastated much of Darwin (Christmas 1974) SAL moved to several temporary locations in the NT before a decision was made to establish it adjacent to ATEC at Batchelor. One of its main functions at that time was to support the Batchelor based students enrolled in the Aboriginal Schools Teaching Certificate (they also were students of DCC). Student residences and office/classroom spaces were established on the western side of Batchelor township in a period of expansion between 1976 and 1983. By 1986 the full time staff had grown to eight academic and four non-academic positions, with additional use of part time staff on a needs basis. Throughout this time course development took place with a number of accredited certificates being offered. An additional base for SAL was established in Alice Springs in 1981. An estimate of approximately 2000 students, from approximately 105 language groups had passed through SAL up to mid 1989. The majority of these people

33. BC File No. A 89/059 folios 2 to 12.
34. Unpublished mimeo, 'A Brief History of School of Australian Linguistics' (1989) prepared by Prith Chakravarti, former member of SAL staff and now BC lecturer.
had completed short courses, but 300 persons had been awarded a total of 400 certificates between them. 35

Continuous interaction with Batchelor College was maintained, with some SAL staff lecturing in the teacher education course in the Aboriginal Languages strand and particularly in the annual intensive, Aboriginal Language Fortnight component. Reciprocal lecturing was undertaken by College staff mainly in English language basic skills, study skills and such areas as literature production and reprographics. 36

During 1988 and 1989 lengthy discussions were held between the NT University (formerly DIT), NTDE and the College as to the future of SAL.37 It was resolved to transfer the SAL operations and staff to Batchelor College and this took place in the middle of 1989 as previously mentioned.38 One of the main complications with staff transfer, was the fact that Batchelor College staff were on TAFE conditions of service while SAL staff operated on Higher Education awards. There were also problems concerning assets and funding to be negotiated.

AMALGAMATION OF SAL & THE COLLEGE. THE ‘REVIEW’ & A NEW NAME

A review of SAL was proposed as soon as the amalgamation took place, to establish the best manner in which it could serve the needs of the College.39 For an interim period while this reorganisation was taking place the current courses had their accreditation extended for a limited time.40 The review was timely as the reorganisation of the academic and administrative structures of the College was being undertaken then, in preparation for the 1990 academic year.

36. Personal comment, from the author, having worked in the Teacher Education program through this period.
38. ibid, folios 132 to 136 (+ 2 unnumbered folios) Batchelor College Council submission (22/3/88).
40. BC File No. A89/ 013 folio 18. Letter, Spring to Johnston 30/10/89. This details the four courses: Certificates in Literacy Attainment, Transcription, Literacy Work, Linguistics-- accreditation extended until 31/12/90.
The College appointed a review convener from its staff to act as executive officer for the 12 members, seven of whom were Aboriginal. The review panel sought a wide range of opinion from; Aboriginal communities and schools, Batchelor students, teachers, teacher linguists and academics, Aboriginal groups and language organisations Australia-wide (there was even one submission from the USA). The review committee worked over several months collating information and holding interviews until the full review panel met for about a week in early November 1989 to decide on recommendations and compile their report.

The SAL Review Panel’s report was presented to the Batchelor College council for their consideration and in addition the College Principal requested recommendations mainly of an administrative nature (based on the Review Panel Report) from a consultant, with these also to be examined by Council. Some of the main recommendations from the review panel are detailed below:

a) It was suggested SAL remain as a separate ‘School’ within the BC structures and that the name School of Australian Linguistics be retained (recommendation No. 1).

b) An increase in both the range of its linguistic courses (recommendations No.11, 12) and increased availability of off-campus / community based modes of delivery (recommendations No. 4 & 6).

c) The suggestion was made that SAL continue its involvement across North Australia with staff based in Alice Springs and staff responsible for and teaching in both North Qld./Torres Straits and the Kimberley/Pilbara region of WA (recommendations No. 17,18).

After much discussion with the College Council and over a period by the staff involved, and after consideration of the SAL Review Panel’s report, as well as the recommendations by Dr Sam Rayner, SAL was incorporated into the

41. BC File No. A89/069 folios 99 to 102. A staff member of BC, M. Cooke was appointed as the convener.


43. BC File No. A89/069 folio 114. A consultant, Dr Sam Rayner was to report to BC Council on the administrative implications as presented in the SAL review report.

College's new School of Community Studies. SAL's name was changed to Centre for Australian Languages and Linguistics (CALL). The functions of CALL were to continue for the time being but it also was to begin development of higher level awards. (the Panel's recommendation No. 11). Rayner was critical of SAL's past performance and suggested to the College Council that linguists undertake teaching duties to assist in training Aboriginal linguists and teacher-linguists; in addition a suggestion was made to increase linguistic content (the study of linguistics) in other courses. He also recommended not supporting interstate expansion, or any increase in staffing for at least a few years, until CALL's new role had time to function smoothly. 

It is ironic that with the potential teaching and research base available at SAL, the NTU (DIT) apparently did little to retain this school within its own organisation. If there had been questions regarding performance and outcomes of SAL in the past, one can only surmise that there may have been disinterest on the part of senior authorities in Darwin, who did not adequately address the situation. For some years SAL had been the only section of DCC / DIT based away from Darwin, a situation which is a marked contrast to the very early days of DCC when Territory wide operations seem to have been its ambition. Perhaps, arguably, with the Batchelor based SAL it was a case of out of sight out of mind?

CALL continues to support language maintenance and revival of Aboriginal Languages and the various bilingual programs in NT communities. Support is also given for the Aboriginal Language component of the Teacher Education course, particularly in the intensive two week block each year. These initiatives must be further consolidated if CALL is to fulfill the goal of its predecessor (SAL) and assist in bringing about positive outcomes akin to the government policies of self-sufficiency and self-management.

46. BC File No. A 89/ 059 folios 126, 127. (Rayner’s recommendations dealing with SAL)
Initially when the VTC was established it was administered from Darwin, by officers of DAA with a local Officer-in-Charge until the appointment of a seconded teacher who had the local designation of Principal. He supervised the VTC courses and managed the running of the centre. The assistant teacher courses commenced at the beginning of the 1974 academic year with staff from the NTDE undertaking the academic aspects of the course, while the general administration and student accommodation needs for students in all the courses were met by the DAA staff.

The small team of lecturers from the assistant teacher course, operated with a Lecturer-in-Charge, who reported on professional matters directly to the Senior Education Advisor, Aboriginal Teacher Education in Darwin. There was some professional interaction between the NTDE staff and the DCC lecturer who taught the Aboriginal Schools Teaching Certificate (third stage teacher education) program. Additionally, in the author's opinion, the excellent professional relationships at Batchelor also extended to the staff of SAL, which commenced in Batchelor as a separate school of DCC in 1975.

Although operational aspects of DAA had ceased generally in the wider community by the mid 1970's, special arrangements had been made to continue...
their management of non-academic functions at Batchelor. The NTDE assumed total responsibility for the Batchelor operation in the middle of 1979 when as mentioned elsewhere in this paper, the Minister announced two important decisions: the formation and expansion of the (new) Batchelor College of TAFE and the establishment of the Board of Governors.

THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors was the first attempt by the NTDE to involve Aboriginals in an advisory role in the policy-making process of Batchelor College. Although the Minister announced the formation of the Board of Governors in June 1979, it was not until mid way through the next year that the Board first met. The Northern Territory Aboriginal Education Advisory group (FEPPPI), selected the Aboriginal members on a regional basis and, as well, there were NTDE and DCC representatives. A training program was established for the Board members, as part of their on-going professional development.

The Board of Governors suffered from a lack of wider educational experiences which was commented on in the accreditation (for the proposed Diploma of Teaching) report by the chairman of the panel, Dr. N. Stewart, when he suggested that the Board needed to be replaced as soon as possible. Stewart felt that there was a lack of higher education experience among present board members, who were more in the position of a management/advisory board, rather than the equivalent of a board of studies. At the end of 1981 the College itself suggested the board be reconstituted as a more representative body.

5. DAA became a ‘facilitator’ and devolved its operational aspects to other agencies in the mid 1970’s.
7. In the Terms of Reference for the Board of Governors the membership was listed as , the College Principal, six Aboriginal area representatives, one student representative, one non-voting representative from both NTDE and DCC, with the executive officer being selected from the Feppi secretariat, while the chairman was to be appointed by Feppi. They were to meet four times each year. (NTDE file No. 80/727 folios 56).
8. NTDE file No. 80/1094 folio 93.
9. NTDE file No. 82/827 folio 37.
Within ATEC in the late 1970's the day to day functions of the courses were under the control of the Assistant Principal (Management) with academic oversight by the Assistant Principal (Curriculum). DCC still had a lecturer at ATEC with specialists visiting as needed. In mid 1980 Peter Plummer was appointed as Principal and quite soon began to formulate concept proposals for the development of Batchelor College. Plummer realised that if the College was to grow and really provide the training that Aboriginals were beginning to ask for, then a degree of freedom within the Education Department was necessary, in order to be able to respond quickly with management decisions. One of his first requests was for direct communication to the Secretary of NTDE, instead of going through the regional administration system as was the practice for Departmental schools. While this procedure was not popular with some of the officers in NTDE, for the College it was a useful step in separating it from purely school-type situations. The 'ownership' of Batchelor College and the ensuing political battles over the development of the fourth stage teacher education program have been outlined above in chapter four.

**BATCHELOR COLLEGE COUNCIL**

A high priority for the new Principal was to establish a council as soon as practicable, in order that decisions affecting College policy could be made in an appropriate manner. After lengthy deliberation as to its formation, the first Batchelor College council had its inaugural meeting in August 1983. This council was a more representative body than the Board of Governors, with membership from other educational institutions, Aboriginal interest groups and Government departments. It had as Chairman, Jim Gallacher, a high profile NT educator.

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10. Personal comment by the author, at that time Assistant Principal (Management). K.Pitman was Assistant Principal (Curriculum). There was no position of Principal, and duties were divided up after these officers conferred.

11. P. Plummer was appointed Principal of Batchelor College on 15/10/80. He had previously had wide educational experience in Papua New-Guinea.


13. The first chairman of Council was J.D.Gallacher. He retired as chairman in Jan. 1989.
The Minister outlined to the first council the Government's objectives for Batchelor College. A wider range of course offerings was suggested apart from teacher training, with the Minister stating that Batchelor College was important and unique on the national scene as well as the NT. Feppi was at this time about to release a proposal for the improvement of Aboriginal education delivery in remote communities. Named the Feppi '12' point plan\textsuperscript{14} it was intimated by the Minister that he expected close correlation between it and Batchelor College programs.\textsuperscript{15} In very recent times Feppi has become the key advisory group in the NT on Aboriginal education matters, including funding, to the Federal Government.

The Minister decided the appropriate delegations for Council which then could oversight many of the functions of the College. Council was to have committees to deal with various issues and as well, a separate Board of Studies was established to guide academic developments. Although the NTDE still retained most of the financial and staffing matters under its control, this was the beginning of the College controlling its own affairs.\textsuperscript{16} During 1984 the Council prepared and published its constitution, giving legal status to the members and their roles and responsibilities.\textsuperscript{17}

One of the major problems facing Batchelor College and its administration in the middle and late 1980's was that it remained within the NTDE, in spite of some devolution of powers to the Council. Often the need to move quickly in response to an Aboriginal community's request was hindered by arguably inappropriate bureaucratic processes. For example the use of part-time instructors (who may have been Aboriginal) for delivery of a unit of work in a community workshop may be requested on the spot after valid negotiation by RATE students, but it could then take weeks to get approval, and several more

\textsuperscript{14} The Aboriginal Education Consultative group (FEPPi) prepared a proposal, after wide consultation, for improving the delivery of Aboriginal Education in the Northern Territory.

\textsuperscript{15} Telegram from Minister Perron to the Chairman, first Batchelor College Council meeting, 11/8/83. Copy from J.D.Gallacher collection, NTUA.

\textsuperscript{16} Paper outlining the establishment of Batchelor College Council functions and membership, provided by P.Plummer, March 1993.

\textsuperscript{17} Copy of Batchelor College Council Constitution, provided by P.Plummer, March 1993.
weeks before payment was possible.\textsuperscript{18} In such a case, to retain credibility in the community the ability to operate speedily was a necessity.

Flexibility and uncertainty of funding were constant sources of frustration which came to a head during 1987 as Council and College attempted to address the demands from Aboriginal communities and students. The College had gradually gained acceptance by these remote communities, who saw Batchelor as 'their' place. When the continuity of programs was put in doubt by funding cuts, the Council backed the Principal John Ingram who had been appointed in early 1985, in his public statements which put both NT and Commonwealth education departments on notice that the College had reached the end of its patience with its viability being placed in doubt.\textsuperscript{19} Ingram knew that his statements would be controversial, but he realised that this was perhaps the only chance he would have to make a public statement outlining the problem. He has said that it was some years before he and the College were ‘forgiven’ by many in the Education Department for making this stand.\textsuperscript{20}

Council documents\textsuperscript{21} indicate that it operated in an organised and businesslike manner strongly supporting the direction and growth of Batchelor College until the middle of 1989 when restructuring took place under the new NT Legislation affecting all colleges.

**THE SECOND GENERATION BATCHelor COLLEGE COUNCIL**

The NT Government passed a Bill, commonly called the Colleges’ Legislation in 1989, which gave the various NT post school institutions, amongst other functions, the authority to form their own councils. Such councils would then be much stronger in a legislative sense in controlling their own affairs than previously.\textsuperscript{22} Wide professional and community representation was encouraged and specifically in Batchelor’s case this entailed a majority of

\textsuperscript{18} From the author’s personal observation and experience.
\textsuperscript{19} Speech delivered by Principal J. Ingram, graduation evening 1987. BC file No. H87/007.
\textsuperscript{20} Personal comment by J. Ingram from interview, August 1993.
\textsuperscript{21} BC files Nos. B 87/002, B 87/003, B 87/007 and B 89/002, B/89/003, B89/007
\textsuperscript{22} NT Education Amendment Act, (1989). Copy from JD Gallacher collection NTU Archives.
Aboriginal members. The controversial appointment of Commodore Eric Johnston (a former Administrator of the NT) as Chairman of Council upset many students and others,\(^{23}\) who had hoped for a prominent Aboriginal to be placed in this position, although a respected Aboriginal Council member, James Gaykamangu from Milingimbi was appointed as the Deputy Chairman. The list of applicants was not made public, and without detracting from Johnston's high public profile it seems the Government needed to be sure of the direction the new chairman would take with College affairs.

Several aspects of the Colleges' legislation stand out as important steps in the development of eventual autonomy for Batchelor College. The (new) Council would become the legally incorporated policy-making body for the College and be able in its own right to employ staff. To date the College Director(formerly Principal) is the only Council appointment, all other staff being employed by the NT Government, although the implications of Council being the employing body have been discussed. Financial control and accountability for funds would be in the hands of Council. Major funds transfers, particularly from federal sources would continue to go through the NT Government presumably until the College became fully autonomous.

Batchelor College Council was now able to make its own by-laws, with one of the most important areas being the writing of academic rules, and the setting up of the Academic (sub) Committee. The College was now rapidly developing into a semi-autonomous higher education institution.

A very useful strategy introduced to assist informed discussion by the Aboriginal Councillors, was their meeting together the day prior to the general meeting. In this way issues could be discussed and explained in a non-threatening environment with the executive officer. Generally by this means a group consensus could be reached on a particular issue before the general meeting. This was another way by which Batchelor College could show that it supported Aboriginal cultural values. It should also be kept in mind that the majority of the Aboriginal members used English as a second language, and preferred to discuss items in their own way and at their own speed in an informal

STUDENT ORGANISATIONS

In the area of students organising their own representative bodies, there was some recreational interaction in a loose student group in the early days of ATEC and the VTC, but it was not until the teaching course students were the total student body (after vocational courses ceased at the start of 1975) that the beginnings of a formalised Student Representative Council (SRC) was recognisable. In academic as well as social terms the establishment of the third year course for Aboriginal teachers on the Batchelor site early in 1975, was a great morale boost particularly for the students who had previously been resident at DCC. 24

During the late 1970's and early 1980's the SRC was supported officially by the College academic staff, who programmed a timetable slot each week for their meetings, within lecture times. This was to add weight to the training role and social benefits which would potentially flow on from the successful operation of the SRC. The Deputy Principal acted as an advisor on matters such as the examination of an appropriate constitution, organisation of sporting teams, management of resources and property, and arranging of secretarial and financial advice. The SRC was the group which coordinated visits of prominent people to be guest speakers to the whole College.

The SRC operated mainly in the role of coordinator of recreation for the full-time students at the Batchelor campus, and voiced opinions in a limited way on social issues affecting students. As more students were enrolled in Batchelor College in the late 1980's, the majority of these were in off-campus situations, only coming to the main campus for short periods. Those students who attended courses full time at Batchelor, from the author's observation, tended to 'own' the SRC. This was a natural reaction seeing that they were on campus all the time, and tended to be concerned with long term resident student affairs. All students though had to be SRC members in order to hold an SRC card. Because of the huge spread of SRC members (across the whole NT and from...
interstate) it has been almost impossible for the group to operate a cohesive organisation. The SRC only has its elected executive from the student body and to date has not been able to organise any full or part time officers to manage the office and organise communication. There has been some advice available from the College counsellors but it is not their role to ‘take over’ the running of a student organisation. 25

PAST AND PRESENT STUDENTS COMMITTEE

As mentioned previously the PPSC was formed in the latter half of 1983, at a conference of current and past students of Batchelor College, and assumed the role of spokesperson and lobbyist on student issues. One of the first issues they dealt with was the lack of a Diploma of Teaching course for Batchelor College in the early 1980’s. Meetings were held spasmodically through the remainder of the 1980’s, but unfortunately the group appears to be inactive at present. In a similar way to the SRC, successfully running a volunteer organisation with a loose form of membership spread across a huge area of remote Australia is almost impossible. It appears to be a logical step for both the SRC and the PPSC to explore ways of combining, for the sake of becoming a legitimate voice of the students from Batchelor College, both past and present.

FORMATION OF BATCHELOR COLLEGE ACADEMIC ‘SCHOOLS’ AND ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

Batchelor College continued its evolution into an Institute of Tertiary Education when its academic organisation underwent major changes at the beginning of 1990, with the establishment of four separate Schools:-

*Education Studies
*Health Studies
*Community Studies
*Academic and Student Services

Each School consisted of a Head with administrative support, Senior Lecturers, Lecturers and Tutors and was to be responsible operationally to the Deputy Director and to the Assistant Director for academic issues and course

25. Author’s personal observation and experience at Batchelor College.
development. They in turn were responsible to the College Director. Such an organisation reflected the growth and diversity of courses, with decision making on many issues given to the relevant Heads of School.

The Deputy Director had responsibility to oversee the daily operations of the College and was to report to the Director. Due to the complexity of Batchelor's operations there was an Assistant Director position created as well, mainly for academic development and guidance. An important aspect of the Assistant Director's responsibilities in staff development was to examine methods to assist with an on-going increase in the number of Aboriginal staff and their professional needs. An Aboriginal staff group was formed as a forum for staff from both academic and support sections of the College to share common issues while working in a developing tertiary institution.

Many of the recommendations from a consultant's report on administrative restructuring were incorporated into College operations at this time. These included the formation of Registrar to manage personnel, non-financial and student records, and Business Manager to oversee all local financial delegations in cooperation with the NTDE.

Batchelor College continues to actively develop an appropriate administrative structure and council, while the effects of these recent changes enable the College to more adequately fulfill its Mission Statement. In particular the concept of 'both-ways' education is given full recognition in all decision-making situations. The term 'both-ways' education is explained below.

'BOOTH WAYS' & 'TWO-WAYS' EDUCATION

A basic premise of most professional activities in the College programs is that of operating within areas of two very different cultures. Aboriginals when

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27. Dr S.A. Rayner produced a report 'Administrative Structures for Batchelor College'. BC (1989)
30. ibid, p2.
discussing aspects of schooling and training often speak of using elements from their own cultures and parts of the western (mainstream Australian) culture. The term 'both-ways' is used to describe this combining of cultural elements and in the case of Batchelor College, it is assumed that students and staff will learn from and respect each others’ knowledge base. 31 A full copy of the Batchelor College Mission Statement is found in the appendix.

31. BC Annual Report (1991) p.2. Mention is made of a principle of College philosophy, respecting and learning from the two traditions of knowledge, Aboriginal and Western. Sometimes the term 'Two-Ways' Education is used in a similar manner.
CHAPTER SEVEN

ABORIGINAL OPINIONS / INITIATIVES / COLLEGE GROWTH

Several Federal Governments outlined, in fairly quick succession, policies which affected Aboriginals, in the 1970’s. Such policy titles as Self-Determination, Self-Management and Self-Sufficiency were often used fairly loosely and commonly interchanged. Due to this gradual change in the acceptance of the idea that Aboriginals were able to do things in their own way, several developments began to shape the direction of Aboriginal training in relation to Batchelor College and its operations.

ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES CALL FOR 'ON-SITE' COURSES

The call for Aboriginal teacher education to be available in the remote communities was being voiced by Aboriginal leaders, in the middle 1970’s, particularly in Arnhemland. These requests were usually verbal, to school principals and NTDE officials. The author also recalls Aboriginal students at that time beginning to mention the possibility of doing some training in their own communities. The Department of Education’s Dr. Maria Brandle and others made investigatory visits to Yirrkala, to assess the practicality of having an ‘on-site’ teacher education course set up in that community. The community at Elcho Island also expressed a desire to have an on-site course.

As a result of the investigations by NTDE officers and discussions with the elders at Yirrkala it was decided to commence the first on-site assistant teacher training course in 1976, with John Bonney appointed as lecturer. Bonney was a staff member of ATEC at Batchelor but was based full time at Yirrkala, and was visited on occasions by staff from Batchelor as well as senior NTDE officers. The lecturer himself was able to make occasional visits to the main ‘campus’ at Batchelor, but this was not nearly as formalised as in later years. Other staff were co-opted on a needs basis from the local school, when they had expertise in a certain field, and could be released from their regular teaching duties.

first three graduates of the course at Yirrkala completed their studies at the end of 1978. The students themselves undertook the course part-time, and this enabled them to spend approximately half-time in the classroom, as many were key personnel in the bilingual program. This general principle has since almost always been followed in RATE programs.

Meanwhile, other assistant teacher on-site courses operated during 1978 and 1979 at Ti Tree, Yirrkala, Elcho Is, Maningrida and Santa Teresa. In 1980 Oenpelli (Gunbalanya), Warrabri (now Alekarenge), Angurugu and Lajamanu opened.2 This method of operating the first year of the teaching course proved to be very popular with students, in particular those who did not wish to be away from home for long periods of time, as was the case with the centralised course at the Batchelor campus. This was gauged by the increasing number of requests as more communities heard of this 'community-based' mode of delivery.

RATE DEVELOPMENTS

The term RATE gradually came into usage in the late 1970's, and developed from the on-site teacher education programs. It seems to have first been mentioned officially in approximately 1981. The term was used to describe the mode of operation for teacher education students undertaking their first year of training with a lecturer based in their community; and much later in the smaller programs operating in cluster groups with tutors and Area Lecturers as described below.3 In later years the RATE mode of operating was extended to the second stage of teacher training and subsequently the whole of the teacher education program became known as RATE.4

In the late 1970's the MLA for the then seat of Arnhem, Bob Collins, called for greater support, particularly for Aboriginal women to be able to do teacher training in their home communities.5 In other words this was an official

3. NTDE File No.84/737 Folios 87,88, 89.
4. A further broadening of the term RATE by many Aboriginals makes it synonymous with most of the Batchelor College courses. (M. Uibo personal observation)
5. N.T. News. 12/7/79
expression of support for the RATE mode of operations and its expansion. It was in this electorate too where many of the first on-site (later RATE) programs commenced.

In spite of some of the successes of individual RATE programs, no hard evidence was available to state that this was the most effective way to develop. The author recalls students and staff at that time commenting positively on RATE student attitudes towards this concept of studying in their home community. Hence the TAFE Division recommended research into the effectiveness of RATE training, and at the same time proposed developing correspondence type courses for students located in small communities where RATE courses were not available. It appears that no research into the effectiveness of RATE took place until the middle 1980's, when a study and review was undertaken by a consultant, Stephen Kemmis of Deakin University and published in 1988.

Batchelor College set guidelines for communities before a RATE course could start and some of these conditions stated numbers of approximately six to eight, as well as an adequate work space and community support for the applicants. This precluded most small communities from ever having training in the form where a lecturer is appointed to that particular program, mainly because of lack of numbers.

Hence the development of correspondence courses was seen to be a logical solution for the smaller communities. These courses were designed to operate with tutors in addition to some compulsory residential weeks at Batchelor. In the early 80's a series of correspondence-type curriculum documents were produced by Batchelor College and NTDE specifically for use by RATE students and their tutors in locations where there were low enrolments. The following titles were published: Child Development and Learning (1980), English Development [1] (1981), Social Science (1981), Thinking About

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6. NTDE File No. 75/263 folio 185,186
Area Lecturers were now appointed to the RATE program. A new concept introduced in the middle 1980's, was that of 'cluster' groups of small communities, which could not support a RATE program on their own each with someone designated as a tutor and having an Area Lecturer to deliver the program overall. This was done by bringing students together into a central community for the course delivery. Students would then return to their own communities for follow up tutorial work. The Area Lecturer would oversee the work of a number of tutors.

With the dynamic developments in all the RATE programs, its curriculum had begun to vary from that of the on-campus teacher education program in the early 1980's. Staff discussed the situation and finally as the teacher education curriculum was being prepared for re-accreditation in 1984 & 1985, it was resolved that RATE would be considered a different mode of delivery but share a common curriculum with the on-campus course. In this manner it could still remain responsive to the demands of the remote area Aboriginal community groups which continued to exert influences on its curriculum, while still being moderated with the on-campus course. Additionally, as RATE was at the time only offered for the first stage of teacher education, those students progressing to second stage teacher education had to parallel the course of the on-campus group to continue their studies at Batchelor. Within RATE further variations developed in response to the needs of small communities.

HOMELAND CENTRE RATE PROGRAMS

As a response to requests from the small homeland centres, in particular in North East Arnhemland, the College in 1984 introduced a variation to the established RATE programs. This development was termed Homeland Centre (HLC) RATE and generally a program (for stage one teacher education) ran for
up to three years due to the assistant teacher often being the only teaching staff member in these small schools. Support for the RATE students in such situations was from a visiting HLC teacher who acted as tutor and came from a central school for varying times. In addition, they supported the general operation of the teaching program in the HLC school. Furthermore the HLC RATE students would periodically attend workshops and tutorials in central schools or occasionally Batchelor.

DEVELOPMENT OF RATE STAGE TWO TEACHER EDUCATION

During 1987 a proposal for a further variation of RATE was developed for stage two teacher education. It was offered at Yirrkala on a trial basis in 1988 in response to requests from community leaders and the school action group. The successful trial was followed in other schools in subsequent years. The stage two teacher education program whether delivered in RATE or on-campus mode was a full time course. In the RATE mode of delivery it was a sought after course, which did much to strengthen the community input into the College teacher education curriculum. In effect it was assisting self-management in many remote community schools by giving school action groups a real say in their educative processes.  

ABORIGINAL INITIATIVES & DEVELOPMENT OF ANNEXES

Further input from Aboriginal people and organisations into some of the operations of Batchelor College occurred in the Central Australian region. Aborigines from 'Remote Australia' generally act in a more informal manner as regards requests and comments to officialdom, so often difficulties are experienced getting written archival evidence of such events. This highlights the nature of the oral traditions of many remote-based Aboriginal people. The moves leading to the establishment of a Batchelor College annex in Alice Springs reflect a desire by the students and communities of Central Australia and the Barkly region for a more acceptable mode of course delivery.

13. The term Remote Aboriginal Australia is often used to describe the locations of Aborigines who have a traditionally orientated culture.
For much of the College's earlier years, there were low student numbers from the Central Australian region. Students often stated that the Top End of the Territory, where Batchelor is situated, was very foreign to them. Comments on such features as the high trees and dense bush, violent electrical storms and humid weather conditions, made Batchelor an alien place. This scenario was even more critical when students came for year long courses before the swing to ‘mixed mode’ course delivery. 14 Mention had been made for some years by Central Australian Aboriginals that some form of central annex or campus was needed in their region.15 When students and community representatives came together for several conferences at Batchelor in the late 1980’s strong comments were voiced for having a Batchelor College presence in Alice Springs.16

During the same period there were several proposals, including some Aboriginal initiatives, for an annex of Batchelor to be established in Central Australia, but it was not definite that Alice Springs was the preferred site. The Willowra community wrote to the College Council to support a base in Central Australia, and suggested the Ti Tree School complex which had been used by Batchelor College during the 1978 academic year.17 The Chairman of the Aboriginal Health Training Centre, in Alice Springs wrote to the College to suggest the use of its centre as a location to be shared by the Health Trainees, Batchelor College students, Police Aides and other remote area trainees. He intimated there would be mutual benefits and cohesiveness for all these groups.18 In late 1988 the Catholic Church at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart offered the use of its facilities in Alice Springs, particularly for the operations of the College access course.19 It was proposed to combine the teacher education program operating at OLSH, with an access course, to be supervised by a

4. At BC the term ‘mixed-mode’ generally refers to a mix of course delivery in the students community being interspersed with regular tutorials and workshops in central locations (either a large community or regional annex/or Batchelor campus) with ongoing practicums and research projects in the ‘home’ locations.
6. My own recollections as a participant, particularly at the conference “Cross Cultural issues in Educational Linguistics” held at Batchelor in August 1987.
9. The Access course had operated at BC since 1983, to build skills in literacy and numeracy and strengthen study skills.
Catholic Aboriginal community management committee. However the offer was not accepted, as the College did not see the running of an access course in other urban areas, as part of its operations.20

Previously, in November 1987 the Education Department had taken the initiative and a committee, comprising NTDE officers, College staff and student representatives, met to review developments concerning the proposed annex. It was suggested that ideally a location near Alice Springs would be more acceptable to Aboriginals from the region than a town-based annex, but this was not practicable as there was neither finance nor resources for a total free standing annex. The plan was to utilise some office space at the Traegar Park School with use of classroom and workshop space in the adjacent Alice Springs Education Centre. For student accommodation needs, use of facilities were to be negotiated with the Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT). These arrangements were not entirely satisfactory, but for the present there would now be a small Batchelor College annex in Central Australia. 21

One of the difficulties for Batchelor College being part of the NTDE was the ongoing sharing of management of facilities and programs. From the earliest days of the College, there had been shared management involving different government departments, which was much easier to operate with when the College was small. The College was a more complex organisation in the late 1980's operating in a semi-autonomous manner and responsible to its own Council and the NTDE Secretary. In Alice Springs several groups would now have to work together for the annex to function. The management arrangements for the annex involved the Assistant Secretary Operations South through the Superintendent Aboriginal Education together with CAT management and BC staff. On a positive note there was mention of a senior NTDE officer being available through 1988 to plan and coordinate the establishment of the annex.22 During 1989 the College designated one of its Alice Springs-based lecturers as coordinator of the annex. 23

22. ibid, folio 53
23. The coordinator was A.M. Priestly, a Teacher Education lecturer.
The above initiatives demonstrate the keenness of many persons to support Batchelor College students from the Central Australian region. The Alice Springs annex opened in 1989 and was supported by a small regional annex which opened the same year at Tennant Creek. In later developments the Alice Springs annex evolved into the Central Australian Campus of Batchelor College but on a more suitable site. Steady development has continued on this campus and from my own dealings with Central Australian staff and students, this facility is accepted as a worthwhile extension of the main Batchelor Campus.

OTHER ANNEX & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the late 1980's the Principal (later Director) of the College stated publicly several times that the College should become more regionalised in its operations, beginning with Central Australia. With courses becoming community-based and operating in a mixed-mode style it was appropriate for a more decentralised delivery of service to be developed. As mentioned above, the Alice Springs and Barkly (Tennant Ck.) annexes were established and soon followed by facilities at Katherine and Nhulunbuy. Katherine annex was based in the former Katherine Institute for Aboriginal Health while Nhulunbuy was in NTDE regional office facilities. Both commenced operating during 1990.

A typical method of operating developed, where students came to the annexes from the surrounding region to undertake their course workshops and seminars. This was dependent on the available resources of each annex, which varied widely (for example class space, student accommodation were both dependent on bookings). As the concept of Batchelor College annexes was still new, student acceptance was slow in many cases, but positive developments have continued in usage of the annexes. It has generally been accepted by most College staff that the Batchelor Campus, despite its large size, is a regional development.

25. BC Annual Report (1990) p.8. At the end of 1990 the Batchelor College campus opened in the former Aboriginal Health Worker (AHW) training complex, which had been transferred along with the AHW course from the NT Dept. of Health and Community Services. Offices, classrooms and student accommodation were now in the one location.
centre particularly for the closer communities in the Top End of the NT. Other workshops are regularly based at Batchelor particularly to use the campus resources, with students coming from any of the programs.

**MAJOR CONSULTATION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

During 1988 there were some significant events in the growth of Batchelor College, which resulted in the publication of two key documents outlining possible developmental trends for the College. These developments were related and enabled the College to demonstrate its willingness to reflect the aspirations of Aboriginal communities towards their self-determination.

**BATCHelor COLLEGE: AN INSTITUTE OF TERTIARY EDUCATION**

Batchelor College produced a document which was to have far reaching implications for itself, in response to the Federal Government's discussion paper, distributed in late 1987, titled 'Higher Education: A Policy Discussion Paper'. This called for all parties interested in the future of Higher Education to prepare submissions to guide its future directions. The implications were vital for the future growth of Batchelor College and its submission was published for comment in April 1988. Within the College this document became known as the Batchelor Institute of Aboriginal Tertiary Education (BIATE) proposal, and as the College Director says, was one of the essential elements for the foundation and recognition of Batchelor College as an Institute of Higher Education. The BIATE document was circulated widely to NT Government Departments, other institutions working in Aboriginal development and training and Aboriginal communities in the northern areas of Australia. This proposal was a composite submission by Batchelor College Council, Feppi (the NT Aboriginal Education Consultative Group), the NAEC (National Aboriginal Education Committee) and other interested organisations. Most importantly, copies went to the Federal Government.

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29. Personal comment by the author, based on planning and operating within the School of Education Studies.
32. Personal comment by J. Ingram from interview, August 1993.
When the final document 'Higher Education: a policy statement' was released, many of Australia's major Higher Education Institutions were listed under the heading of the Unified National System with certain obligations, but at the same time able to derive set benefits. Amongst these was assured triennial funding, offering stability of planning and course continuity. Batchelor College continued to suffer from severe funding difficulties, alluded to earlier by the Principal in his 1987 College graduation speech. Although not being recognised in the unified national system, Batchelor College was given guarantees by the Commonwealth that triennial funding for its higher education courses was assured. Additionally the Commonwealth stated that together with the NT Government the special needs of Batchelor would be catered for. In retrospect it is common knowledge within the College that on numerous occasions since that time there have been problems between the two governments with regards to funding instabilities, and this has periodically caused morale problems for both staff and students, as well as uncertainty for continuity of courses.

Relationships between the Federal and Territory Governments have been characterised at times by conflict and disharmony, and unfortunately because much of Aboriginal Education (and all of Higher Education) funds are Federal grants, Batchelor College's funding base has suffered due to the political manoeuvring between governments. It is not in the scope of this study to examine funding issues in any depth.

Although Batchelor College is a very small institution when viewed on the national scene, it received favourable comments in the Higher Education policy statement.

One institution with an impressive record in tertiary education for Aboriginals is Batchelor College in the Northern Territory. This College has specialised in meeting the needs of traditional Aboriginals from remote areas and has attracted widespread support for its programs, particularly in teacher education. (Dawkins [1988] p58)

Batchelor had been given special status so it was now possible for the

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34. Dawkins (1988) p 58
Commonwealth to deal uniquely with the College's problems. One of the main disadvantages for an institution outside the unified national system was the inability to apply for research funds. Overall, the College now being recognised as operating in the higher education field, was able to deal with and be heard by the NT Government (and others) in a more professional manner. (Note: BC offers courses in both Higher Education and TAFE, funding of the latter being a Territory function).

The Higher Education policy statement advocated amalgamation of smaller institutions into composite groups with a base enrolment figure of 2000 student places to qualify for membership of the unified national system. Batchelor College had nowhere near that figure in 1988 (as mentioned previously there were in addition many TAFE student enrolments at BC) and in its BIAE proposal suggests the possibility of amalgamation with similar small scale specialist organisations training Aboriginals in North Australia.

On examination of these various agencies, commonalities of purpose as well as specialities are found, which are complimentary to the role of Batchelor College. Since the BIAE was proposed there have been several beneficial mergers with Batchelor College. Notably in mid 1989 the School of Australian Linguistics (now named Centre for Aboriginal Languages and Linguistics / CALL) located in Batchelor was transferred to Batchelor College, from the NTU (formerly DIT / DCC). Then at the beginning of 1990 the NT Department of Health and Community Services transferred to BC all of its Aboriginal Health Worker (AHW) training to the College, together with facilities in Alice Springs and Katherine. Also there has been close liaison with the Conservation Commission NT (CCNT) from 1990, as the College developed and then offered the course for Aboriginal rangers, who previously would have been trained through CCNT. Although NT Aboriginal Police Aide training has remained with the Police Department, close links have been maintained, with its mid-year training course being held at Batchelor annually. All this has had the effect of consolidating the position of Batchelor College, by offering a broader range of

35. Personal comment by J. Ingram, from interview August 1993.
36. Australia (1986) p 43
37. ibid p121. Full time student enrolments in higher education are given as 42 (as at 30/4/88)
38. The course for Aboriginal Rangers is titled: Associate Diploma in Applied Science (Land, Parks and Wildlife Management)
courses, while retaining the important Aboriginal features of the institution and at the same time gaining increased enrolments.

Staff and students were keen to see Batchelor College retain its identity, which had evolved over a number of years, particularly with regards to acceptance of the College by Aboriginal communities who saw the it as ‘their’ place and wanted it to remain a distinctly Aboriginal institution. 39 Student comment in the BIATE proposal, supported expansion into other courses to be offered in the mixed mode form of delivery and the retention of the family support system was seen as necessary. They also supported the concept of regional annexes throughout the NT to assist students who may not necessarily wish to come to study at the main Batchelor campus. 40

THE BC COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PROJECT

The second important Batchelor College document of 1988 resulted from an extensive community consultation exercise undertaken in the latter half of that year, 41 and was closely linked to the BIATE proposal. The NT Government placed a great deal of importance on the project and released officers from several departments to assist, included making available an acting Principal to stand in at Batchelor for six months, thus releasing the current Principal to head the consultation project team. 42 There had never been a formal consultation exercise between the College and the communities before, so the team 43 planned to visit the twenty-six cooperating communities twice during the exercise in order to allow wide consultation at each location. Communications were sent to School Principals, Council Chairmen, Adult Educators, additionally the Health Department contacted Health Centres separately. The BIATE document had been circulated earlier in the year, and in addition another

40. ibid Appendix 6.
42. Fred Friis acted as Principal at BC for the duration of the consultation project, thus releasing John Ingram to be the project executive officer.
43. The consultation team included representatives from; the Chief Ministers Department, Department of Employment Education and Training, Department of Labour and Administrative Services, Feppi, and the Principal of Batchelor College. This spread of representation was designed to give objective findings.
summary was sent with the introductory letters. The report tables many findings, but overall several main trends are evident from the nine issues addressed in each community meeting.

The general feeling from communities was that the College should provide at least basic professional awards (Associate Diploma or Diploma) and these should be recognised by the wider community. The author's interpretation of this statement is that the awards should be accredited. The range of courses should increase but always in areas that would give communities control over their own affairs. An important observation was made that jobs needed to be available to utilise the training. Finally if the College could not offer the course or the next level of training, then an association with another institution through Batchelor would be acceptable. In the responses on mode of delivery, the majority of respondents nominated either community-based or a mixed-mode course delivery.

Some of the other suggestions by respondents have now been incorporated into the structure of the College. The Central Australian campus and other regional annexes are now operating, as mentioned above. Another area which strengthened community support and had been problematic in many instances, was the provision of community based tutors particularly for the students from the School of Education Studies. Previously a teacher in a community school had sometimes been released on a part time basis to work in RATE, though at times there were clashes of duties and responsibilities, and was dependent on the level of support of the program by the School Principal.

As newer courses have developed, requests from communities for a mixed-mode of delivery have been supported and this has proved effective in giving students some control over their own learning. Mixed-mode course delivery has allowed interaction with fellow students from other areas, and at the same time enabled students to maintain strong links in their own community. For the staff there have been some difficulties in moderation of student tasks and

45. ibid p 12.
46. The Aboriginal Education Program (AEP) initiatives provided funds for 20 RATE tutors for the School of Education Studies. The School of Health Studies has a number of field based tutors as well.
their outcomes, but staff meet regularly for team planning and discussions in larger courses, and use various mixes of technology to keep in close contact with one another.47

Other findings of importance for the College's future were the almost universal opinion supporting an increase in its size and for the institution to become autonomous, with a predominantly Aboriginal council.48 On the question of staff composition, the majority of respondents suggested a mix of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff with the most important point being appropriate qualifications and experience.

Respondents gave almost unanimous support for the College accepting students from the remote areas of north Western Australia, north South Australia and north Queensland and in fact there have been students in several courses from these regions for many years.49 The respondents were fairly evenly divided on the point of allowing non-traditional (or so called 'urban' 50) Aboriginals into the College in any great numbers. One telling comment was that it was all right so long as the College control remained with the 'traditional' people, and numbers were not too great.51 Generally respondents indicated some willingness to share cultural knowledge with those who had lost this, although a few people were against the non-traditional people coming on campus at all. The issue of a possible name change for the College was canvassed, to complement the changing and expanding role of Batchelor College. A majority of opinion was for the College to still have 'Batchelor' in its name, although if an Aboriginal name were to be used it should come from the traditional people of the Batchelor area. The last main issue discussed was that of a Cultural Learning Centre for Batchelor College. A majority of groups felt this was an important and worthwhile issue to be developed at both Batchelor and

47. The author's personal experience and involvement in School of Education Studies. Telephone / teleconference, facsimile and computer / modem links are all used regularly by college staff, for professional interaction.
48. The author's personal observation: In the early 1990's these points are now a reality.
49. The author's personal observation: Students from Broadcasting / Journalism, Teacher Education / Adult Education and Community Management have enrolled from interstate remote areas.
50. The term 'urban Aboriginal' is generally used for Aboriginal people who do not still uphold sacred or ceremonial practices.
51. BC Consultation report (1988) p 30, 31. The seven comments regarding acceptance of non-traditional Aboriginal students were all from 'traditional' communities.
some said Alice Springs, but it needed careful and sensitive planning to be effective. Respondents agreed one important function of the Centre would be to sensitise newly appointed non-Aboriginal staff who are to work in remote communities.

The results of the consultation exercise dealing with the future of Batchelor College have been discussed in some detail, as this was the first time such a comprehensive survey had been undertaken to report on Aboriginal opinion from remote communities. The policies of the College for the late 1980's and the early 1990's have been guided by the opinions expressed during this consultation process. This reflected what Aboriginal communities and prospective students really needed and wanted, to assist self-determination. Although much written material was tabulated in the Consultation Report, many responses were recorded from conversations in personal meetings. Once again this highlights the oral traditions of many remote-area Aboriginals and shows the importance of direct consultation in their home communities.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Throughout this paper the correlation between government policies and the College’s development has been examined. Aboriginal education for adults is affected by the policies of government, but it is possible for local initiatives and ideas to alter what happens in a particular community.

Change in the College’s direction of development has happened rapidly at times and assisted Aborigines in the general thrust of self-determination. The Federal Government’s policy of bilingual education, in the early 1970’s, had ramifications beyond the original concept of children learning in their vernacular. It appears to have been one of the main catalysts, in the remote areas of the NT, in beginning to raise Aboriginal consciousness of being valued. In the early days of Batchelor College (and ATEC), there were more Aboriginals wanting to undertake teacher training than previously and they generally had much more purpose and feeling of being in control, as many were key people in their communities’ bilingual programs.

Such growth in self-esteem generally developed self-confidence in Aboriginals operating within western and mainstream management systems, in schools, health centres and community government situations. This was in many areas strengthened by the effects of the NT Land Rights legislation of 1976, as it increased remote area Aboriginals’ self-esteem, and the feeling of ‘being in control’.

People in remote areas then began to request more appropriate types of educational services, for example, small homeland centres wanted to have a say in their school education programs, and selected the most suitable local person to be the teacher or assistant. There was a gradual spreading of the notion of community-based training from the early 1980’s, which began with larger communities requesting RATE type programs, and spread to homelands / outstations, until the present arrangements of mixed-mode course delivery
became standard in almost all the College programs.

From the earliest days of Batchelor College (including VTC and ATEC) where the emphasis was on developing courses and family support for long term on-campus students, through the 1980’s when the RATE programs were evolving, there has now been a complete change in the philosophy of Batchelor College. The accepted style of course delivery is now mixed-mode and predominantly community-based. The pressure for this change came from the remote communities and was matched by a receptivity in the College which emphasised a philosophy of staff listening to and learning from the Aboriginal students and community representatives. Although the College has had its own difficulties with government departments and entrenched non-Aboriginal interests in some remote communities, generally the trust of traditionally orientated Aboriginals has been gained and they see the College as ‘their’ place of learning.

The College began to evolve into a multi-campus / multi-annex institution from the late 1980’s onwards. Much of the pressure which caused this development came from Aboriginals themselves, as documented in a 1988 College survey of remote NT communities. The survey shows Aboriginal communities were demonstrating practical self-determination. Acceptance of the College and its programs by remote area Aboriginals has strengthened, particularly since its council was constituted with a majority of Aboriginal members in late 1989. The College now operates from the main campus in Batchelor, and a smaller campus in Alice Springs. Regional annexes are maintained in Nhulunbuy, Katherine and Tennant Creek, and all have local acceptance. The College has remained responsive to the wishes of the remote communities and maintained the impetus of suggestions made in the major consultation exercise of 1988. These suggestions together with the College mission statement have guided the growth and diversity of courses to the present time. This growth is a demonstration by the College of its support for community self-determination.

In 1983 the then Principal envisaged the College serving the needs of remote-area Aboriginals from across Australia. Except in a few instances the
majority of current students are Northern Territory based, and few of this group have any other access to higher education. The main student group from interstate are enrolled in the broadcasting / journalism program, with a smaller number of students in CALL courses from outside the NT. Also, as mentioned previously, some students in Teacher / Adult Education courses are enrolled from remote areas interstate. Special arrangements are negotiated from time to time with other educational bodies who realise the programs at Batchelor College are applicable to the needs of their students. In such cases formal agreements have been signed between the College and the client group, recognising that Northern Territory remote area students are not disadvantaged in any way. The professional interchanges to date have been worthwhile.

Comments by the Minister for Education, Hon. Tom Harris, in the late 1980's show that at times officialdom does not take all aspects of Batchelor College seriously. Amongst recommendations pertaining to the College are statements which request external 'verification' of course results by other institutions.1 This is in contrast to statements in the same document praising Batchelor College for its unique approaches to fulfilling the educational aspirations of remote communities, and the adoption of the NT 'Colleges's Legislation' which gives Batchelor a greater measure of autonomy. The College now has an Academic Committee (of Council) specifically to monitor standards and oversight the accreditation and reaccreditation of courses. It is one of the functions of the Assistant Director to be Executive Officer of this committee. The question of standards remains controversial and maybe there is no clear cut solution to the dilemma within Batchelor College, where recognition of Aboriginal cultural values and prior knowledge, together with appropriately designed 'both-ways' learning experiences are given a weighting in awards which have 'mainstream' accreditation.

To complement the notion of 'both-ways' education, which is supported by the College in the form of its Mission Statement, increased efforts need to be made to bring to fruition the Aboriginal Cultural Learning Centre concept, as proposed in the late 1980's.2 This would enable Batchelor College to further

1. Harris (1990) *Talking is not Enough*, p 43
consolidate its reputation and standing among traditionally-orientated Aboriginals, and provide a base and forum to support contemporary developments of Aboriginal Culture as designated by its users. In addition, to support the non-Aboriginal 'western' areas of cultural learning, a proposed Graduate Certificate in Social Science (Western Studies) is to be offered in the middle 1990's.\(^3\) There has always been sections of all College courses which are based on western learning styles, but for many students the 'hidden curriculum' in western culture has presented problems throughout their time at Batchelor. Coming to understand this and blend it with aspects of Aboriginal culture is part of the 'both-ways' process of learning. It is part of Batchelor College's uniqueness, and it must continue to be developed.

A suggestion was made by the Minister for Education in the late 1980's for Batchelor College to be a major part of the NTDE induction program for new teachers. There have been College staff involved on an ad-hoc basis in the regular NTDE induction programs, to present relevant College information to new appointees.\(^4\) For this to be a meaningful contribution by staff and students, proper forward planning would have to take place, with students' contributions particularly, being negotiated as part of their course. In this way the considerable expertise of the College in areas of general Aboriginal education and community development could benefit new appointees to remote communities. Adequate funding would need to be provided from NTDE to run this type of program.

Another recommendation, from the Minister, of great potential for the College, concerned the inservice and support of newly graduated Aboriginal teachers. He proposed follow up support of field based graduates, such as in-service programs and supportive supervision. This concept should now be expanded to cover all the various courses of the College. There would have to be adequate funding and innovative strategies designed, as this type of scheme could not be just included in the already complex College program delivery.

The continuing moves towards autonomy have developed from the early 1980's when the Principal saw the need to have direct access to the Secretary

\(^4\) Harris (1990) p 36
of NTDE as a prerequisite to dealing with Batchelor College's unique situations, instead of going through a School orientated hierarchical system. The NT Colleges' legislation gave the College Council a much greater degree of autonomy to control many of its own affairs due to increased flexibility in its academic, administrative and financial arrangements. It was still tied to many of the systems, practices and employment conditions of the NTDE and NT Public Sector. Negotiations are still continuing with regards to a range of issues which when resolved will allow Batchelor College to be a fully independent higher education institute with autonomy similar to the NTU or the Institute for TAFE in the Northern Territory. This will enable the College to become even more responsive and responsible to its Aboriginal clients.

It is impossible to predict exactly what directions the Batchelor College may take over the next 10 or 20 years. In hindsight there have been many positive educational developments for remote-area, mainly traditionally-orientated Aboriginals, since the College began. Increasingly such developments will be guided more and more by Aboriginal direction, opinion and decision making. There will always be external government influences on the College by way of new policies and funding parameters. These forces can be modified by informed Aboriginal opinion from an increasingly better educated group of leaders and managers in the remote communities. Batchelor College will therefore continue to grow and prosper.
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A87/016 Beyond third Year proposals and plans
A87/017 D-BATE
A87/018 Aboriginal Cultural Learning Centre
A87/045 Professional Development of Aboriginal Staff of Schools, (non-award and non-enrolled)
A87/049 Academic Support Services
A87/051 Demonstration School
B87/002 Batchelor College Council - general
B87/003 Batchelor College Council - correspondence
B87/007 Batchelor College Board of Studies - general
B87/021 Annual Report
B87/022 Year Book
C87/004 Alice Springs Annexe
D88/016 School of Australian Linguistics
E87/007 Past and Present Students Association
E87/008 Student Representative Council
H87/007 Graduation
A89/002 Access - general
A89/005 Remote Area Teacher Education - general
A89/013 Accreditation and Reaccreditation - TAFE (general)
A89/029 Associate Diploma in Social Science (Recreation & Youth Work)
A89/031 Certificate in Aboriginal Community Maintenance
A89/056 Aboriginal Health Worker Training
M. UIBO

DEVELOPMENT OF BACHelor COLLEGE

A89/059 School of Linguistics Review
B89/002 Batchelor College Council - general
B89/003 Batchelor College Council - correspondence
B89/007 Batchelor College Board of Studies - general
B89/021 Annual Report
C89/004 Alice Springs Annexe
C89/012 Creche
C89/012/1 *
G89/002 Aboriginalisation
H89/007 Graduation
H89/008 Graduates by year of graduation

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78/764  Batchelor Training Centre *

79/868  ATEC Batchelor-- Proposed Centre *

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APPENDIX 'A'

MISSION STATEMENT OF BATCHelor COLLEGE

The mission of Batchelor College as an Institute of Aboriginal Tertiary Education is to advance the place of Aboriginal people, Aboriginal society, and Aboriginal culture in multicultural Australia through education, research and cultural development. In doing this, and in response to advice from Aboriginal leaders, its role is to:

* bring together the Aboriginal traditions of knowledge with Western educational traditions;

* arrange viable opportunities for Aboriginal people to gain the knowledge and skills necessary in professional and paraprofessional areas of occupation that will assist them to fulfil their personal and community aspirations, to manage their own affairs, and to gain employment. This role may be carried out in conjunction with, or by supporting through advice, research and materials development, other educational institutions, Government departments or Aboriginal organisations;

* actively foster the maintenance and development of Aboriginal culture, including Aboriginal languages;

* undertake research into Aboriginal education and training and provide consultancy and advice to other organisations and individuals in this area;

* develop specialised strategies, techniques and materials for the delivery of tertiary education in remote areas and to isolated individuals and communities;

* develop and deliver induction and in-service training programs for non-Aboriginal people who work with Aboriginal people or in Aboriginal

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develop pathways for continuing Higher Education and Training for Aboriginal people by articulation into other institutions, encouraging the development of modes of delivery of programs that are viable and effective while allowing Aboriginal people to meet the social, cultural and personal obligations of their communities.

*(NOTE TO MISSION STATEMENT: Non-Aboriginal people with special employment needs, and for whom the courses available are appropriate, may be accepted for enrolment with specific approval by the College Council. In this regard, special arrangements may need to be made and such decisions be considered in the context of available resources).*