

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

### **Background**

Joint developments are designed to provide access by students to a broader range of educational opportunities and advantages. The context of this study is a joint development or partnership between three education institutions, Southern Cross University (SCU), North Coast Institute of Technical and Further Education (TAFE), NSW (TAFE) and the Senior College Years 11–12 (DSE). Joint developments are believed to allow for closer educational planning to take place between different providers and allows students to access programs from school, through TAFE and on to University. This thesis is a study of students' perceptions of their participation within the context of a joint development.

### **Research Aims**

Coffs Harbour Education Campus (CHEC) is a joint development with three participating partners, SCU, TAFE and DSE. The aim of this study is to investigate CHEC to determine if and how this joint development addresses the needs of students. A study of students' perception of their participation at this Campus identifies the relationship between what joint developments are proposed or planned to provide for students and what their perceptions are of this provision since the inception of the Campus in 1995.

An investigation of amalgamations and links in education both in Australia and overseas, is the background for conducting this study of CHEC as a joint development. The study is initial research on the Campus in the early post-occupancy stage of a joint development and how that development has impacted on the students as the 'users' or 'customers' of this unique environment. The aim of the study is to examine the students' perceptions, rather than a management or planners view of this institution. The study will identify the initial post occupancy perceptions of students' participation at the Campus and the level of integration that has occurred in relation to pathways and other aspects of the joint development. The issues that emerge from this study are

determined by the students and include major themes and sub-themes as to how the Campus has impacted upon their participation.

### **Assumptions**

Assumptions underlying the study are that the nature of education is changing toward lifelong learning and participation in education is increasing, particularly in mature aged adults. However, included in this study are students from the Senior College who are considered chronologically to be adults and are seen as self directing. Political considerations on a national level involve the increased government directives to create links and pathways between sectors, and develop multi campus sites for education, and the vocationalism of education. The Campus is the tangible result of these government directives.

Joint developments represent economic rationalisation of public spending on education, as shared facilities not only make use of more resources, but provide more educational opportunities for students. Joint developments are now operating on both greenfield sites and existing locations, based on political rhetoric, rather than a tight educational framework or planning policy. There appears a distinct need for closer educational planning before the joint development opens its doors to students. It is not sufficient to build the building and expect a successful venture to simply evolve on site.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study provides a brief exploration of joint developments as it primarily examines the nature of student participation within the context of CHEC. Students who attend and use CHEC or other joint developments are given limited consideration when national planners and non-local representatives are involved in the initial planning and ongoing operational aspects of joint developments. Studies on joint developments have been, in the main, focused on capital works infrastructure, cost benefits, operations and management aspects, and usually involve evaluations of planning and functional issues. There are generalised proposed potential educational benefits for students, but no educational model or framework exists; much depends on local decision making and evolution of planning over time.

In view of the Dawkins (1988) and Finn (1991) Reports which outline the proposed links between DSE, TAFE and Higher Education, educational pathways, credit transfer and articulation are seen as the future of education. The study is an integral part of that process in that joint developments are seen as providing the pathways and articulation opportunities for students. They are also innovative and have great potential benefits for students who participate in education. The strategic plan for the Campus involves joint degrees and curriculum development proposals, and the level of integration appears a crucial issue in the success of the joint development.

This study is, therefore, considered significant in that joint development projects are increasing rapidly and their success in delivering appropriate education to the critical mass is paramount. Critical mass refers to all members of the community who may want to participate in education. CHEC at this stage is the only combination of a university, TAFE college and high school in Australia or overseas, as other joint developments involve different sectors or institutions. More joint developments are being planned, particularly in rural areas. There is no contribution of students or teachers toward the planning of these developments and a study of student perceptions will be valuable to both managers, planners and staff working within these institutions. Student needs are a critical part of the operation of joint developments, and this study will articulate those needs and the level of integration between sectors at CHEC. Participation is also a significant factor within this study as competitive market forces drive institutions to recruit students for their courses.

This research can provide information for future educational planning for joint developments and cross sectoral links. Joint developments are seen as important, innovative educational and capital works projects, and they are considered to be the direction forward for education. As government directives and funding constraints impact upon the costs of education, joint developments are becoming the reality. Planners and managers of these projects cannot easily predict the key success factors for the developments. Many factors impact upon the success of the projects and in view of the competition for government resources for education, the nature of education may well become 'user-choice', in which case, institutions such as CHEC have to recruit and maintain student participation. Student satisfaction will become a necessity for some institutions to survive.

It is, therefore, the student voice that is significant in this study, and can be added to the planning and evaluation stages of other joint developments. It is also anticipated that this study will provide CHEC with some insight into how the Campus is perceived by students in relation to its present operation and assist managers, planners and educators to understand the reality of the students. A potential benefit of this study is that CHEC can be seen as a model of success for other joint developments, if in turn, they can address the perceived student needs which have emerged from this research.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of this study are that the student sample size is small, and this is determined by the qualitative methodology used in the study. Fifteen students across three sectors are interviewed, but the time frame and subsequent amount of the data collected are considered more than adequate for this study. The nature of qualitative research does not provide measurable variables to predict and explain educational outcomes from student participation at CHEC, but the study is considered valuable as an exploratory process to understand student perceptions and from which to develop future research. The data yielded from this study are considered to be more substantial in identifying issues related to participation than a quantitative approach using a questionnaire with predetermined questions.

Further, as the Campus has been in operation only since January 1995, it is considered too early to critically analyse the development of the educational framework. It, therefore, is included as a significant aspect of CHEC as a joint development, but as there is no definite articulation, joint degrees or credit transfers available to students, nor the opportunity to evaluate any outcomes, the study cannot be solely focused on educational outcomes for CHEC as a joint development. The study is therefore limited to exploring how students perceive their participation since CHEC's inception in 1995.

## **Overview**

Chapter Two is a discussion of amalgamations, mergers and links both in Australia and overseas. This background provides the reader with an idea of some characteristics that can be applied or considered when examining joint developments. There are common threads within these amalgamations, mergers and linkages, and the complexities that result from these associations have implications for CHEC in that success of these mergers is dependent upon a number of perceived success factors for joint developments and is underpinned by government directives.

Chapter Three is a closer examination of joint developments within Australia. There is limited literature available on joint developments as they are often developed by planners from separate institutions and within a loose policy framework. What is available, however, are the background planning stage and phases of CHEC which is important when attempting to understand the interests of sectors within the joint development. The views of planners and original committee members are presented in this Chapter, as well as a brief reference to the projected strategic plan (appendicised) for the educational framework of the Campus. This Chapter forms the background to the emergence of CHEC on a greenfields site and outlines the models of joint developments as well as recent developments. Participation issues are mentioned briefly, but not as the focus of the study.

Methodology is discussed in Chapter Four. Qualitative methods are used because of their exploratory nature and the need to elicit from students what they perceived as the issues significant to their participation. This Chapter outlines the process of data collection and how the data are handled and provides a justification of why this method was chosen as the most appropriate methodology for the research. Major themes and sub-themes are categorised according to what students perceived as significant issues.

In Chapter Five, the results of the in-depth interviews are presented. They are presented in a descriptive format, using quotes where appropriate throughout the summary of data collected. It is within this Chapter that the student voice can be heard, and which best presents the focus of the study. Word limits dictate that this Chapter can only present the basic notions of students' participation, but it is apparent within the results that their contribution is significant to the operation of CHEC. This Chapter

brings to light how the Campus has impacted upon students and what they perceive regarding their participation.

Chapter Six explores the data presented in the previous Chapter. The analysis is based on the data and addresses the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the student interviews. Students' perceptions of their participation at CHEC are discussed within the major themes of physical aspects, education, social relationships and attitudes toward education. Participation factors are reflected within the results and are consequently presented as minor part of the analysis to understand why these students enrol in courses at the Campus.

Chapter Seven is the conclusion to the study. From the preceding Chapters, conclusions are presented concerning students' perceptions of CHEC. General recommendations are made, based on those conclusions; the purpose being to draw attention to what students perceive is actually occurring within the operation of CHEC and what impacts are made on their participation. This is followed by suggestions for further research that could be performed by CHEC and other providers to adequately address the needs of their students.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Mergers, amalgamations, linkages and joint developments**

This Chapter provides a brief background to mergers, amalgamations and linkages in both Australia and the United Kingdom (UK), then leads into a general discussion on joint developments. The mergers and amalgamations, linkages and cross sectoral activity overseas have emerged from policy directives and have common ground in the present climate of education in Australia. The discussion draws comparisons with business mergers and the issues that arise from merging educational institutions. A brief discussion of mergers and amalgamations in Australia, is followed by the educational reforms of the Dawkins and Finn Reports on proposed links between sectors. Vocationalism is designed to provide closer links with technical education and industry. These links are directly relevant to the emergence of joint developments.

Literature and research studies specifically targeted at joint developments are limited, mainly focusing on capital works project studies and planning studies that underpin the concept of joint developments. The available information has not produced any clearly defined state or national model for planners to follow; nor does there appear to be a standard blueprint insofar as the level of integration and operational matters in these institutions are concerned. Policy implementation appears complex and there is only a generalised educational framework which focuses on the potential benefits for students in joint development Campuses.

This discussion, therefore, is designed to provide a broad paradigm of joint developments, underpinned by amalgamations and mergers, notwithstanding that any institutional development is dependent on many variables according to the local situation and historical background of the project.

## **Terminology**

Harman defines amalgamations or mergers as:

*...a process whereby two or more formerly separate and independent higher education institutions become legally and organisationally a single entity under the managerial responsibility and control of a single governing body and a single chief executive officer (1983,114).*

and more recently Pritchard defines mergers as:

*...an amalgamation in which two or more component institutions give up their legally independent identity in favour of a new joint identity (1993, 81).*

For the purpose of this discussion, amalgamations and mergers are interchangeable terms.

## **Mergers, Amalgamations and Linkages**

When discussing institutional amalgamations, Harman suggests that there are many different forms of institutions merging together, some voluntary and others involuntary. Within Australia, involuntary amalgamation is usually the result of government directives, although some institutions have protested strongly to have that decision revoked. Results achieved from these amalgamations in tertiary education are not consistent, in that some institutions are considered successful in obtaining their perceived goals and others fall short of expectations (Harman 1983, 118). Mergers and amalgamations are only one way of linking institutions together and can emerge from an exchange of letters between heads of institutions or a more formal agreement can be made between institutions. Harman (1983) points out that there is limited literature and research on amalgamations in tertiary education, which consist of a small number of research theses. However, these studies are considered extensive in comparison with available literature on educational partnerships or joint developments such as CHEC; it is also indicative of the 'newness' and difficulties which cloud the concept of integration within joint developments. A brief discussion on amalgamations, mergers or linkages and their characteristics is designed to enlarge the concept of CHEC as a joint development.

## **Mergers and Links in the UK**

The definition of *collaboration* is to *work together or with one another* (eg, in an intellectual endeavour) and *competition* is described as *rivalry* or the effort of two or more parties acting independently to secure the business of a third party (Longman's dictionary, quoted in Pritchard 1993, 80). The concept of mergers and linkages is designed to work collaboratively and co-operatively, but Pritchard (1993) adopts the view that these mergers and linkages are somewhat similar to what happens in business and that there is an ever increasing risk of competitive forces operating within these mergers and linkages. Policy swings by Governments make any of these collaborative or co-operative efforts difficult to achieve, as often competition emerges as the institutional ethos and the educational future of the institution becomes one that is hard to plan and predict.

What is happening in other countries is of significance when discussing joint developments in Australia. It is in Britain that many of the mergers and linkages have already occurred and where a comparison of some sort can be made with the educational system and reform in Australia – especially as there is concern expressed about the ensuing educational standards from these mergers and linkages. Business typologies and basic definitions are briefly outlined so that they form a background to understanding the notion of joint developments in Australia and how mergers and linkages between institutions are organised.

Pritchard (1993) suggests that the way British Government views higher education correlates to how business mergers occur and that the typologies of these mergers often overlap when forming a new institution. Vertical mergers in industry, relate to stages of production ranging from raw material to a finished product. In business, two firms within a similar industry come together so that both the early stages of production and the finished product can be achieved; that is, the notion of 'end-on' production occurs (Allen, Jr. 1966 quoted in Pritchard 1993, 81). In higher education, this may mean that graduates may emerge from a sub-university institution (for example TAFE) which then merges with a university and so produces the final product. This type of merger may also occur between an undergraduate university and a postgraduate

university. These are said to be of a cross sectoral nature, and could be applicable to a joint development such as CHEC.

Horizontal or lateral mergers are amalgamations of firms 'in the same business, with the same or overlapping clienteles, and engaged in the same stage of production' (Walter 1985 quoted in Pritchard 1993, 82). These are the most difficult to implement from a management view because of the complex issues involved. As an example of horizontal mergers in higher education, two institutions of equal status and prestige would both offer tertiary qualifications and produce graduates. At CHEC, the three sectors are considered of equal status and retain their own qualifications. Conglomerate mergers are amalgamations of firms which specialise in diversification, and in higher education would mean institutions offering totally different fields of study. For example, a health science institution could merge with an institution offering humanities or law courses or industry based courses. The Campus offers similar educational paths for students within each sector.

Mergers can, therefore, be either cooperative or competitive, sometimes both at the same time and if on equal terms they are known as a 'consolidation' (Harman 1988, 4) where partners of similar strength are able to co-operate. This, however, is rarely the case with business mergers, and some educational mergers, as in most business mergers, have a minor and major player. They can also be initiated by participating institutions themselves or imposed by state or federal education authorities. As a joint development, CHEC is considered a co-operative venture, involving institutions of equal strength working together to provide facilities and educational outcomes for students.

The mergers are proposed to broaden the range of courses and programs, to establish larger departments and improve research opportunities. Mostly, it is anticipated that these mergers will result in lower costs. However, John Fielden, a management consultant, in a paper on the resource implications of mergers, proposes that the larger the organisations, 'the more likely the territorial clashes will be' (Fielden 1991, 158). The business approach is again compared to higher education and the claims of potential savings of mergers are examined. Usually staffing is the area where anticipated savings are made, but often the upheavals and attempts to integrate

procedures are not taken into account. There are also property ownership implications, and this is evident in the original planning stage for CHEC. Fielden (1991) suggests that the most important long term cost saving is embedded within the salaries and conditions of staff. There are enormous difficulties in achieving this outcome and, in the final analysis, it is suggested that there are very few, if any, recurrent savings from these mergers. Conversely, Johnes and Taylor (1990) assert that the subject mix at the institution is more important than cost savings, whilst Meek (1988) asserts that growth is often the key factor and potential gains can decline after a merger because of the many difficulties encountered in forming a new institution.

Mergers can be the result of political opportunism and also provide a potential strategy for senior management to increase their status and salaries. They are also present when the political and economical climate is tense and when institutions need to survive (Pritchard 1993, 85). Whatever the reasons for mergers, the management of them is crucial and must come from the top. After the initial crisis period, Pritchard maintains that 'less attention should be paid to controlling people and more to developing institutional loyalty and raising institutional morale ...the difficulty of combining strong leadership with the collegiality and participation – a difficulty which is particularly pronounced in horizontal mergers' (1993, 86). The view supports the notion of institutional or systemic 'baggage' which often pervades in a joint development, particularly where people have been transferred from independent sectors to a new institution such as CHEC.

### **Linkage**

Linkages are different to mergers in that mergers occur in both horizontal and vertical forms to become another institution, and educational linkage is:

*...a form of inter-institutional association that permits higher education institutions to retain their independence and identity whilst enabling them to collaborate for their mutual advantage. Although linkages tend to be based on co-operation, competitive forces can suddenly disrupt a formerly collaborative relationship. The most frequent cause of such disruption is the struggle, indeed often the need, to obtain economic advantage in the higher education market (Pritchard 1993, 90).*

On the one hand, economic forces operating on education in the 1990s have made previously autonomous institutions far more competitive and less co-operative with each other in order to obtain government resources. Course offerings and student recruitment have dictated a business role for administrators and educators.

On the other hand, regional co-operation is fostered by the needs in a particular locality. Franchising arrangements can be developed whereby a higher education institution takes responsibility for course quality and awards the final qualification. Pritchard refers to a 'franchising relationship between a university and a further education institution (FEI) as a form of 'vertical linkage' (cf. the definition of 'vertical mergers')' (1993, 94). The franchising relationship is predominantly one of cooperation, but often funding constraints can lead to increased competition between institutions for franchised students and it is predicted that there will arise 'strident student demands for exclusive, special arrangements between higher education institutions and further education institutions such as TAFE. Increasingly, franchised courses are being used as the first year of degree programs and are putting access courses out of business' (Pritchard 1993, 94). Access courses are those courses that are offered as existing courses in a further education institution, and in particular the return-to-education courses or lower level than degree courses. These are predominant in TAFE in its brief to offer students 'second chance' education.

In the UK, student fee increases and market forces driving higher education have resulted in competition for recruitment. What was valuable as real cooperation in promoting access to higher education has now given rise to competition for students. Parry and Davies (n.d., quoted in Pritchard 1993) have investigated this new trend within higher education. On the positive side, there is shared teaching across as well as within sectors, with both university and polytechnic staff able to teach across the modular courses as further education institutions integrate into mainstream course delivery. This trend is viewed as influencing the student loyalty to one particular higher education institution. In the UK, this has pushed higher education institutions to offer and promote courses that are more attractive than their competitors; this is a potential pitfall for joint developments.

Overall, financial constraints and rationalisation of higher education in the UK have led to mergers/amalgamations and linkages becoming the preferred option for survival. Linkages are more popular than mergers, but all are under threat of market and political forces. The British higher education system is relatively flexible, as the British are not keen to introduce acts, laws and legislations – this is evidenced by there being no written constitution for their country. This allows more flexibility than in Germany (Pritchard, 1993), where attempts to merge and link institutions were not successful because staff with university backgrounds had difficulty or refused to work with the polytechnic staff. However, there is some concern that in the UK these boundaries will become more pronounced.

Finally, rationalisation of higher education in the UK has resulted in increased work loads and decreased financial resources for institutions. One belief (Halsey 1992 quoted in Pritchard 1993, 99) is that 'standards in British higher education have not declined, but experience elsewhere indicates that vigilance is necessary'. Pritchard refers to the Australian experience where mergers have taken place on a greater scale and that there is evidence of 'standards deteriorating' (1993, 100) as a result of wider flexibility in course offerings and importance placed on market forces. It appears then, to accommodate the critical mass and allow access to higher education, there needs to be a vital balance between competition and cooperation, particularly if educational standards are to be maintained.

The emergence of CHEC at Coffs Harbour is based on the premise of amalgamations, mergers and linkages in that it is perceived by planners that there are economies in staffing costs and that the Campus can offer a wider range of courses. If the characteristics of these mergers impact upon CHEC as a joint development, then not only will cross sectoral teaching agreements be complex and problematic, but also there will be difficulties with the systemic and institutional cultures that each sector brings to the site. CHEC is not a single entity, it is a partnership between three large organisations, therefore, there is potential for competition and rivalry to replace the ideal of cooperation. This aspect significantly impacts on the possibilities of joint curriculum development and equitable resource sharing, as similar difficulties are reported in the UK.

### **Cross Sectoral Amalgamations**

Meek (1988) investigated some of the different combinations of non-university sectors with universities in both Australia and Britain. His investigations focused on Colleges of Advanced Education (CAEs) in Australia and polytechnic colleges in the United Kingdom (UK). CAEs and polytechnic colleges offered more applied and vocational courses than universities, and in Australia CAEs have now been amalgamated into University structures and polytechnic colleges in UK remain as TAFE-type colleges merged with universities. There are, however, some issues that arose in this earlier history of amalgamation in both Australia and UK, that are directly applicable to the present discussion of joint developments. Although these amalgamations have occurred or are present in different forms than joint developments as we know them, there are common aspects which correlate with existing and proposed joint developments in Australia.

An overriding concern in all institutional mergers is that of costs. The institutional mergers that occurred in Australia and UK were designed to reduce costs of higher education, and were Government imposed. It was predicted in 1988 that 'there will probably be even more cross-sectoral marriages of higher education institutions in Australia and UK' (Meek 1988, 335) as some institutions face the option of closure because of government constraints on funding. Governments in both Australia and UK are thrusting more responsibility onto the institutions to fund themselves and are promoting entrepreneurship in the higher education sector as part of economic rationalisation.

Politics is an aspect that is associated with all mergers 'that involve the national re-organisation of the higher education system' (Meek 1988, 337) and is complex and dependent on the structure of higher education in both Australia and UK. Both countries are similar in that the Government provides funding and therefore controls the institutions. Even though Australian universities are seen as fairly autonomous, they still depend on funding from Government sources. Meek draws attention to the constitutional fact that the federal Government 'has no direct legal power over universities and CAEs, but instead exerts influence via conditional (section 96) grants of funds to the six States for specified purposes in particular universities or colleges'

(Harman, in Meek 1988, 337). It was a result of this influence in 1981 that the then 30 CAEs either amalgamated with universities or lost funding.

### **The Australian Connection**

In Australia, a proposed merger between Wollongong Teachers College and Wollongong University resulted in a co-operative effort of two sectoral directors, Professor Michael Birt and Dr Peter Rousch, which produced a federal model of a merger in 1980. There were problems at the State level with the Higher Education Board; however, during a period of negotiations in 1981, the State government agreed to the merger in principle (McKinnon, 1988). Factors that were considered important were that a broad representative steering committee discussed the aspects of amalgamation, staffing issues were discussed, a collaborative council worked toward one institution but a poor financial deal resulted for Wollongong University. This happened because limited funding was provided for the university as the State had presupposed estimated savings emanating from a combined institution. McKinnon, as Vice Chancellor of Wollongong University, suggests that:

*It was a compromise package ...it is proposed that the two sectors should have separate academic structures ....the real moves towards rationalisation were to be in the areas of resources and facilities such as the library and computing. There was to be a two lined budget with internal autonomy for each chief executive. Structurally, the two institutions would be yoked together under one governing council; this proposal introduced the essential (and in ways the only) unifying factor (McKinnon 1986, 7–8)*

He thus moved the federal model toward one of full integration instead of the binary system, which he saw as part of 'academic colonialism and an artificial development' (McKinnon 1988, 111). His vision of higher education was that this binary system was creating self-imposed barriers and that there should be more 'emphasis on varied ways of discovering and communicating new knowledge' and that a university could offer a variety of credentials, from associate diploma courses to degree and doctoral programs (1988, 111–112). Initially, the merger was seen as the university being stuck with a 'poor relation', but staff changed their attitudes toward a positive outlook when it became clear that the institution would become larger and stronger than the previous

one. McKinnon (1988) suggests that the merger has now resulted in more access in the Illawarra region, where the participation rate was lower than the national average and excluded the socio-economically disadvantaged. By offering courses from associate diploma to Ph.D. level, the Wollongong University offers more entry point provision than traditional universities. This merger took place over a period of 10 years, and it is McKinnon's view that student attraction has increased, but not without the difficulties in blending internal changes and external forces. The same factors directly affect the notion of joint developments.

In addition, the merger of two different sectors at La Trobe University and Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences in 1988 also opened the way for opportunities, growth and innovation. It provided a balance between professional education and the more traditional university faculties (Rechter & Scott, 1988). The success of this merger was not achieved without experiencing difficulties with integration, funding, coordination and course accreditation. Bernard Rechter, Director of Lincoln Institute and John Scott, Vice Chancellor of La Trobe, were both involved in the original negotiations for this merger. The government had directed an amalgamation in 1981 to form a multi-purpose institution, to which the Institute was opposed, but only to the form of the amalgamation. There is still an emphasis on a single academic structure with specialist support facilities and the integration of coursework across schools that still remains until this day (Rechter & Scott 1988, 58). Both authors have alluded to what they see as crucial issues that arose from their experience with this merger, and which bear consideration when discussing joint developments. These are:

*...in negotiating a voluntary merger, those supporting it must provide precise information and predictions about the future with regard to a wide range of institutional activities, since, whatever the views groups within the institutions have about the general benefits (or deficits) of merger, they will withhold formal support, or even oppose moving to a closure, while there remain any uncertainties about their specific interests; a failure to provide a quite unequivocal rationale. Developing a rationale is essential if a merger is to occur, and there have been deficits in the communication of information on the merger both within and across institutions. (1988, 65)*

David Knight and Arthur O'Neill published a subsequent paper on the La Trobe merger, and used the interesting analogy of the mating habits of Canadian wildcats to the amalgamation of two or more post secondary institutions.

*When wildcats mate, mayhem results, with screams, savage bites and almost the expiry of those involved ...once involved in an amalgamation you cannot get out ...Mating in the wild invariably is urgent, irresistible and very productive. Tertiary amalgamations are involuntary, almost always protracted, quite resistable, entered into with great caution and not very fruitful. (1988, 68)*

Their view of the merger is that, ultimately, if they are to work at all, then the outcomes of mergers must be status enhancing and status protecting, or the lesser of the two evils. If the aspirations of tertiary institutions are to expand and multiply, then they need to be wary of the ruthless control that can be exerted in the education arena.

These aspects of the La Trobe merger are considered the most significant to CHEC as a joint development because they highlight the importance of the planning and negotiation stage for these new institutions.

Similarly, in the UK, a university merger with a polytechnic institution overcame funding obstacles and resulted in a more innovative and responsive institution. The mergers also resulted in increased awareness of community needs and provided more opportunities for participation in higher education. Prior to the mergers each sector had limited or no involvement in the local community and was tied to its traditional provision; the new institution took on a politically strengthened role within the local community.

In the case of the merger in the UK, the university, as a separate sector, had focused entirely on the scholarly pursuits and was far removed from the local industrial, political or commercial interests. When the Thatcher government tightened funds for higher education institutions in the UK, it became critical for the merged institution to link in to regional priorities and gain support – it was this local support that enabled the new institution to survive.

The Wollongong and La Trobe mergers have not been accomplished without problems, but had the institutions remained as two separate identities, the benefit for the region and student access to courses would be limited. The institutions may have faced possible closure as a result of government directives.

Pressures for mergers and amalgamations have therefore been political issues since the mid 1970s, and arose predominantly in the areas of teacher training. It has since moved into other areas of provision, such as the health sciences, and universities are ever more conscious of the need to maintain their roles in international scholarly pursuits, whilst acknowledging responsibilities to the community 'which creates and sustains it' (Meek 1988, 343). Mergers have created closer links and more regional visibility, whilst providing more equitable access by offering a broader range of sub degree, degree and postgraduate programs.

Whilst Meek (1988) acknowledges the resistance of staff to these mergers, they were generally seen as providing colleagues 'with strong interests and highly developed skills in the teaching of students, including greater use of a variety of teaching methods and audio-visual aids' (Meek 1988, 345). However, no one set of guidelines can be produced to guarantee a successful outcome. Local constraints and circumstances will change the nature of the merger and procedures that may prove successful in one institution, can fail or meet resistance in another.

### **Implications**

From a number of studies of various mergers or amalgamations, there are some aspects that may have 'limited relevance in relation to specific cases ...it is worthwhile to outline briefly a few lessons that may be drawn from the merger experience, particularly from the cross-sectoral merger experience' (Meek 1988, 346).

These 'lessons' are important considerations in the concept of examination of joint developments. People, skillful leaders, identity, time, organisation and external forces are the common areas which determine just how well the merger or amalgamation will accomplish its goals.

## **People**

One of the crucial elements in any merger is not the organisation, but people.

As a human resource, different perspectives, skills and abilities, foresight, personal and systemic idiosyncrasies are impossible factors to control. The successful mergers previously mentioned required a move past university or other personnel being preoccupied with the traditional delivery and provision of their institution and demonstrating a commitment to bring about change. Meek states:

*One of the main reasons for their success was the commitment of key actors to bringing about major organisational change in a climate of maximum trust between the courting parties. There are examples of the converse in cross-sectoral mergers where academic elitism ruled the day. While scholarship knows no national or institutional boundaries, neither does academic snobbery or false beliefs of intellectual superiority. Cross-sectoral amalgamations tend to bring out both the visionary academic leaders and the demagogues. (1988, 346)*

## **Leaders**

Leaders must be, therefore, dedicated to the idea of change, but the process cannot happen without politics and conflict within the organisations. Particularly, when similar groups have similar functions within different organisations, competition will emerge concerning student numbers, prestige and status; 'the greater the similarity, the greater is the competition' (Meek 1988, 346). The politics and conflict can be internal and intra organisational, and Meek strongly advises that any planned mergers should not anticipate either faculty or student approval. Fear and anxiety of staff members over issues of job security and conditions of employment are tied in with loss of traditional roles in organisations. This in turn will affect the structure of the merged institution as staff see that 'mergers are associated with the centralisation and consolidation of power and authority ....Some aspects of this are based on actual change in structure, while others are the result of the day-to-day experience of working in a much larger and more diversified institution' (Meek 1988, 347). Some alienation occurs and familiarity with institutional procedures are threatened, which has a direct impact on staff morale and subsequently will affect the success of the merger or amalgamation. McKinnon

(1988) also suggests that influential staff should be identified and demonstrate a consistent and unrelenting commitment to the new institution.

### **Identity**

In any merger or amalgamation the institutional identity is a culture as well as a system of policies and procedures. The loyalty of staff to their institution means that any characteristics of the institution – for example its vocational or scholarly role – can be used as an argument for resistance to the merger. Sometimes this aspect of mergers is not resolved until there is a complete change or turnover of staff in the new institution (Meek, 1988). In the La Trobe merger experience, there had to be a dramatic change in the educational offerings and staff had to have the capacity to see the potential benefits of these changes in developing new approaches to knowledge (McKinnon, 1988).

### **Time**

The changes that need to occur are enormous and, consequently, the period after merger or amalgamation has resulted in the pre-existing institutions being destroyed and a new one established. Everyone in the merger is affected, from cleaners to top level management. Meek reiterates that 'The time required to plan a merger can be anywhere between three months and over a decade. It may also take a considerable amount of time for the benefits of a merger to appear' (Meek 1988, 347). Not all mergers will be necessarily successful nor grand accomplishments – they can also be prime examples of failure and educational disasters.

### **Organisation and External Forces**

Amalgamations and mergers that are proposed on a voluntary basis are usually the result of commitment of 'institutional elites' (Meek 1988, 348) to work through any opposition and in an open manner. If this occurs in an atmosphere of secrecy, then the venture has little chance of success. Exclusion of organisation leaders can add to the problems as they have no idea of why the merger should occur. However, in most if not all cases, the idea of the merger does not come from the sectors themselves; and this factor may account for the resistance and opposition of staff as they and students are

not informed as to the political, economic and educational forces that act upon the establishment of a new institution.

Harman (1988, 7) concludes his study on mergers and amalgamations with the strong theme that within any review of mergers in tertiary education, there is a major move from single purpose or single discipline institutions toward multi purpose institutions. This is seen to fit in with the phenomenon of mergers used to form larger units, whether in business, pressure groups or religious and voluntary organisations within modern society.

Finally, there is no guarantee that there will exist a never ending source of government funding for education. Most educational staff at the coalface and some institutional leaders, may choose to believe that 'their' institution as they know it will continue to exist in the future. Mergers, amalgamations and joint developments are, however, considered as cost effective, innovative, increasing participation by offering broader provision, accessing and addressing the needs of local communities. Therefore, recent government directives on educational cross sectoral links in the 1990s is part of the major push for joint developments such as CHEC.

### **Dawkins Report**

Dawkins's policy statement in 1988 on higher education points out the future direction for higher education:

*...measures will be implemented to encourage institutions to be more efficient, flexible and responsive to changing national needs. These will include measures to make more productive use of institutional resources and facilities, including institutional consolidations and more systematic credit transfer arrangements. (1988, 11)*

The impact of these reforms is reflected in the emergence of joint developments. It is also clear in Dawkins's discussion of rural education opportunities that:

*...the Government considers that all regional colleges have much to gain through association with larger and more diverse institutions. Potential advantages of this association include student access to a wider range of study options, assistance for research issues of regional importance and improved course credit and transfer arrangements. (1988, 22)*

Under these reforms, there will be fewer and larger institutions than existed in 1988 and these will form part of a unified national system of higher education. The Government is quite clear that those who choose to remain outside this system will have no guaranteed Commonwealth funding. The policy discussion paper argues that larger institutions will offer educational advantages in that students can access a more comprehensive range of course and program options and more opportunity to transfer between disciplines, along with better services and facilities. The anticipated growth in educational opportunities will encourage economic growth in regional areas and so attract students to remain in the region and also provide access to education for the critical mass.

The geographical factor of separate institutions on adjacent sites is also a cause for concern. This is seen as part of the previous binary system and under the new reforms, the Government 'expects that amalgamation proposals in each State will place contiguous institutions or campus within a single institution' (Dawkins 1988, 44). It goes on to say that various arrangements are possible between institutions, but also reiterates that smaller institutions face amalgamation or full merger. This will then ensure operating grants from the Government. Most of these proposals have directly affected all universities and colleges of advanced education. However, the thrust behind the discussion paper is to reform higher education into a more cost effective business, and joint developments are seen as part of the future direction.

These future directions are also mentioned in the discussion paper in the form of links between sectors. The Government's policy reforms for employment, education and training propose that strong links be formed between the various educational sectors and that close co operation with schools and TAFE system will be part of the growth in the higher education system. All three sectors will also need to develop and foster links with industry to provide a continuum of education and training. The paper contains comments on high school retention and it is observed that:

*There is substantial evidence that the inequities in participation patterns in higher education, particularly in terms of socio-economic status, reflect similar inequities in the mix of Year 12 students. Accordingly, the changing profile of the Year 12 population will require a major effort to increase student awareness of the options and opportunities available through participation in higher education. Both schools and higher education institutions will play a part in this process. (Dawkins 1988, 62–63)*

A joint development between a high school and university would address this concern and is represented as the partnership between TAFE and DSE at CHEC. Similarly, when discussing technical and further education, the view is proposed that TAFE and higher education institutions share the major responsibility for post school and tertiary studies. TAFE has 'geographical diversity' (Dawkins 1988, 63) and offers vocational training which is seen as its key role. There is also recognition that linkages between TAFE and higher education should be further developed as they are in the linking of SCU and TAFE at CHEC. Options discussed for TAFE were:

- ◆ recognise and expand the legitimate role of TAFE in providing higher education courses on its own account
- ◆ make selected use of TAFE facilities in assisting students taking courses offered by a higher education institution, and
- ◆ foster closer educational links between TAFE and higher education in matters such as course articulation and credit transfer (Dawkins 1988, 64)

The three options are discussed in more detail within the paper, but of significance is the role of TAFE in more cooperative arrangements allowing the use of TAFE facilities in courses offered by higher education institutions. It is noted however, that there is no model of cooperation between TAFE and higher education that is suitable for use throughout Australia. Local needs will determine such links, and reforms encourage a close liaison with local industry and employers and higher education. The chapter concludes with the view that overall, professional and vocationally-based continuing education 'should operate on at least cost-recovery basis taking account of direct and indirect costs' (Dawkins 1988, 70). It is the responsibility of institutions to encourage and foster corporate responsibility for adult continuing education and lifelong learning. This view supports the concept of joint developments and is further influenced by the

Finn Report as part of the overall strategy to improve Vocational Education and Training (VET) delivery.

### **Finn Report**

A report entitled *Young Peoples Participation in Post-Compulsory Education and Training* released by the Australian Education Review Committee in July 1991 is referred to as the Finn Report, after the Chairman Mr Brian Finn. This report suggests reforms in the nature of the choices that young people make about employment when aged between 15–19. They are to be assured within their training choice that they can become flexible and skilled workers and that the role, funding and delivery of secondary, TAFE and tertiary education support high levels in vocational training. It recommends that links between education and training be strengthened and joint developments can address these issues by creating opportunities for credit transfers, linking the school and training system, building more productive partnerships with training and providing better information for employment decisions.

Joint developments reflect the links proposed by the Finn Report in that both University, TAFE, School and Industry are linked together in primary relationships. They also provide a context for the Australian Vocational Certificate Training System (AVC) by providing a progression of training from one level to the next and the maximum use of facilities such as colleges, classrooms, workshops, etc. Cooperative use of facilities across sectors involves sharing buildings, staffing and administration between education and training providers and joint ventures involving industry, TAFE, Senior Colleges, Universities and private providers are seen as reforms in VET delivery and training. CHEC is a manifestation of these educational reforms.

### **Joint Developments**

The definition of a *joint development* involves shared ownership and/or shared capital investment leading to joint management and/or occupancy of capital assets by two or more government bodies or legal entities. The joint development relationship does not necessarily need to be limited to a building project; it can also extend to a significant non building capital asset. Therefore, the term *joint development* applies where two or

more parties enter into an arrangement to deliver Vocational Education and Training (VET) services via a joint capital investment: and where parties to the arrangement remain autonomous and independent entities operating in their own right. Consequently, in each case an instrument of agreement between each party would be appropriate (Tamburro 1994, 6).

Since the 1980s, developments spanning the existing traditional sectors or developments between education sectors and outside institutions have expanded the concept that a jointly developed and constructed infrastructure, joint research and development efforts, joint open learning activities and joint skills development centres is cost efficient. A recent planning conference paper (Butterworth, 1992) focused attention on the Government's growing interest in joint developments and, on a limited scale, joint developments are more recently being considered as providing joint program development as well as reducing costs.

Joint developments are designed to reduce Government expenditure on infrastructures and increase utilisation of resources. The increasing focus on vocational education and links between industry and education, is leading to more cross involvement of public and private sectors. Cross credit transfers between institutions are maximising benefits for students in similar programs and breaking down traditional barriers, for example distance learning activities and joint school and TAFE programs.

The level of integration in joint developments is a crucial issue. If co-location occurs, separate entities retain control of their own organisation, funds, and staff, and liaise only on matters of joint interest. Newer models of joint development are moving toward a fully integrated model with its own identity, thus allowing for more educational innovation and experimentation (Butterworth, 1992). A fully integrated model provides a maximum use of resources that may not be possible with separate institutions. Economic considerations are that one library, one canteen, one administration building, security staff and grounds people are reducing costs, particularly if administrative and managerial operations are integrated. Sites can be master planned to take better advantage of building placement than separate developments.

Educational benefits of joint developments are that closer educational planning can tailor the needs of students, industry and community into programs that can provide maximum credit transfer and articulation, resulting in higher quality planning and educational outcomes. Sectors can cooperate in joint curriculum development and make industrial arrangements to allow for cross sectoral teaching, thus adding to quality delivery of programs (Butterworth, 1992). Joint developments have the potential to reach a critical educational mass which sustains a wider range of functions and developments such as marketing, advisory services, which are not otherwise available in separate institutions. Pathways can be established for students so they can attend a wide range of programs with a clear understanding of options, within a more flexible attendance mode.

There are, however, some obstacles relating to joint developments. Policy documentation on a political level is limited as the concept has only been discussed as rhetoric in political speeches or scantily addressed within funding documents. Without this framework, the extent of integration or direction about educational and administrative issues lacks clarity and issues are resolved as they arise, sometimes to the detriment of the institution or sector. Ideologies and existing practices of institutions often remain fixed, rather than being replaced by new practices and policies (Butterworth, 1992). Common vision, particularly on new or 'greenfield' sites, is essential, particularly as educational plans drive the development process. The community has to be supportive of the concept, particularly as they are often situated in rural conservative areas. Joint developments are seen, however, as a major step forward in Australia's educational future.

Further, Burkhardt (1994) outlines the importance of TAFE in vocational education and training. TAFE must be involved in training partnerships as the National Training Reform Agenda has meant that a broader range of providers are emerging. An example of growth in vocational training areas is Western Sydney TAFE; enrolments have increased 44% since 1989. More flexible delivery and alternative pathways for vocational training and national training and education goals are driving TAFE colleges towards closer relationships with other training providers, on both a national and local scale. Capital funds for educational infrastructures in growth areas such as Western Sydney, are limited, resulting in Government pressure for cooperation and sharing

within joint facilities. Burkhardt's paper outlines the responses of TAFE to joint planning initiatives involving schools, universities and TAFE colleges. New cooperative arrangements of dual accreditation and flexible funding are being trialled in the city at North Randwick, and at Young in the rural context. Coffs Harbour exists as a joint development without dual accreditation or established educational frameworks.

Country areas are targeted for joint developments and these have occurred in other communities such as Tweed Heads, Boggabilla, Lake Cargellico, Maclean, Young, Kingscliff and Wollongbar. Bradfield College in Sydney offers a new approach to TAFE/Schools link, by providing a vocational curriculum and opportunity to complete TAFE Certificates as well as an HSC (with a TER) and on the job training for one day per week (Burkhardt, 1994). This concept breaks down barriers between general and vocational education, between schools and TAFE and between institutionalised vocational education and the workplace. In areas of high population growth, TAFE and University links are the rule rather than the exception – for example, Ourimbah Campus links the University of Newcastle and the Hunter Institute of Technology and was operational before Coffs Harbour Education Campus.

The joint developments are characterised by high levels of cooperation in planning of facilities. Master plans are developed and the document is signed by heads of participating institutions. The Agreement sets out the Intents of Parties and the Objectives of Parties in terms of educational resource/physical and administrative cooperation. Mechanisms for planning, consultation and disputes are determined by the parties. At Western Sydney, (a model of co-location) each entity is autonomous and accountable, but share library and student facilities. New or 'greenfield' sites are designed to offer more integration than a co-location model.

Coffs Harbour Education Campus is a greenfield site of 140 ha, developed with a Master plan and a Memorandum of Understanding signed by Sector heads. Academic directors retain the right to appoint their staff within an agreed educational profile (Burkhardt, 1994). Alternatively, the joint educational precinct which uses the facilities of the Royal Australian Navy Apprenticeship Training Centre at Sydney, has distinct boundaries and identifiable campuses.

Several key considerations for TAFE planners of joint developments are proposed by Burkhardt:

- Cooperation and coordination in the planning and development of new facilities is essential rather than desirable, together with a commitment to derived benefits
- Cooperative planning of educational structures must be in place for both senior level management and local level teaching staff should be involved in the planning process
- A policy framework for changing the nature of vocational education and training should ensure that pathways and flexible frameworks are designed to remove systemic barriers. No adequate policies exist to remove such barriers in the planning stage of joint developments.
- Need to focus on more than new physical buildings, as most of the educational infrastructure for the next 50 years exists without intersectoral linkages.

Burkhardt thus sees a planning limit except in growth areas, and planners should examine models which involve a more flexible use of established infrastructure. The benefits and limits of the degree of integration needs consideration – from co-location to fully integrated. Bradfield and Coffs Harbour have established new institutional forms of administration, but this form can both remove and create barriers to what is envisaged by planners for joint developments.

In conclusion, Burkhardt (1994) stresses the need to develop links between TAFE, School and Universities, but also emphasises the links with industry and the community. He acknowledges that the new forms of institutions may help break the mould of traditional sectors, but the future of education will lie in the sectors working and planning cooperatively.

A report was prepared from a study undertaken by the TAFE National Physical Resources Group in December 1994 (Tamburro, 1994) to investigate joint capital investments between TAFE and other parties, including private, secondary, industry and tertiary. Capital asset needs were of prime importance to joint developments and also to provide a broader delivery of educational programs. Established joint developments were evaluated by the project group and were seen as innovative and providing opportunities to improve service delivery. A significant factor was the lack of

precedent and difficulties in the planning stages of any joint development. An example is the local party's role (eg the provider) and the formal party (eg the Minister) and the legal ownership of assets. It was emphasised that a relationship of trust was essential to counteract the protectionist ethos that some partners in joint developments felt.

The terms of reference for the project were to report on existing joint developments, investigate TAFE's position on funding and accountability, capital assets (including legal liabilities, funding responsibilities etc), industrial award issues and to recommend a model national framework for capital resources for vocational education and training with another party. The study also recommended model(s) of organisation and management. Several general points were raised in the overview of these projects. They included the Government's commitment to effectiveness and efficiency, the opportunities for assets and services and exposure to 'a different business culture', the needs of the individual and enterprise and a more flexible system to integrate training, lifelong learning and flexible pathways and delivery modes (Tamburro 1994, 8). This is part of the national strategy which supports the use of joint developments to maximise investment in vocational education and training.

There have been reported improved links with other parties 'that provide a greater access to specialist facilities for students; and improve the quality of VET service delivery' (Tamburro 1994, 8). The main focus of Tamburro's study was to research the benefits of access to more facilities at joint developments, which also leads to a wider range of curriculum and training. Concerns were expressed at the early stages of planning the joint developments and of control of assets. The total number of joint developments in Australia in December 1994 were forty-three, and potential benefits were prioritised as ranging from one to six: access to specialist facilities, improved quality of service delivery, improved links (with industry, higher education etc), commercial opportunities, contribution of project funds and finally, agreement relationships. The potential concerns in the existing joint developments were relationship/agreement negotiations, followed by reduced role in loss of management control, loss of visibility and benefits of joint developments not meeting their full expectations (Tamburro 1994, 12).

The report developed a list of desirable criteria for establishing joint developments which included both the educational public sector and the private sector. Broadly, the criteria focused on service delivery, industrial relations, community benefits, return on capital investment measured against economic and social criteria and respectively for the private sector, on continuity of service, profitability, demonstrable economic and social benefit to the industry and/or community (Tamburro 1994, 15). Issues of significance were explored in the report in an attempt to draw attention to considerations of planning and management of joint developments. Tamburro (1994) outlined and summarised in detail the issues affecting joint developments such as start up issues, legal issues, funding and accountability issues, industrial relations issues, policy and legislative issues and organisational and management issues.

Recommendations resulting from the above issues identified several important critical success factors for improved planning for joint developments. The report outlines that personalities need flexibility and that success depends upon key personalities building a trusting relationship with each other. There also needs to be a vision that is shared between the parties and this vision should be compatible with larger strategic planning. The ownership of land and assets appears to have a marked affect on all parties concerned and some equitable arrangement may reduce potential inequalities.

There are also suggestions that an early appointment of a Chief Executive Officer is essential and competition between organisations should be avoided. The difference in standards in accommodation, industrial awards, management structures etc, also requires flexibility and perhaps local decision making. All parties share equal fulfillment of commitments and local decision making is seen as a favourable option. The remainder of the report discusses the recommendations in detail, with only generalisations about delivery of educational programs. Students were mentioned as part of the national strategy, *Towards a Skilled Australia* (ANTA, 1994) 'to ensure that future vocational education and training delivery is more devolved, with an emphasis on facilitation rather than regulation so that decisions are taken by those most closely attuned to the needs of the clients' (Tamburro 1994, 38).

The report is a comprehensive study of issues that impact on joint developments and provides recommendations for future planning. The educational framework for joint

developments is not investigated, except for some generalisations about providing a broader range of curriculum and improving delivery. It tends to focus on TAFE's position within joint developments and on the policies and legalities pertaining to capital resources.

### **Models of Joint Developments**

Joint developments are identified in three ways: co-location, semi-integrated and fully integrated, which are briefly outlined below.

**Co-location Model.** The co-location model is defined as 'each institution has its own administrative structure, employs its own staff and organises the enrolment and accreditation of courses and awards. The students are identified as belonging to either a School, TAFE College or a University. Benefits are derived from the proximity to other facilities which through agreement may be used by staff and students from the other sector' (Fletcher 1994, 59). With a co-location model there are only minimal savings from infrastructure provision and duplication exists with administration staff, more limited use of facilities, access to these facilities and articulation pathways is determined by the relationship with the other institutions and are not necessarily encouraged, whilst students are considered to better understand other adjacent educational institutions.

**Semi-integrated Model.** In this model, some infrastructure savings are made and some non-teaching staff costs are reduced. There is more joint use of facilities, subject to timetabling arrangements and easier access to facilities. Any articulation pathways are limited by the separateness of the institutions and staff, but joint projects are more feasible as staff and students are present on the one site. Observation of the other sectors is made by both staff and students on a daily basis.

**Fully-integrated Model.** The highest infrastructure and non teaching staff savings are seen to be made within this model. Timetabling is more efficient and there is equal access to all facilities. The articulation pathways are seen as potentially smooth, as all parties work for the one institution and both students and staff participation in activities means no demarcation of institution apart from the course they are enrolled in or the level of teaching. Staff and students are able to participate in all activities associated with different sectors eg School, TAFE or University.

The three models of joint developments discussed above are outlined in Table 1 to identify some of the advantages and disadvantages of levels of integration. Advantages seem more apparent in the semi and fully integrated models, in comparison to the co-location model. This can be seen by the use of facilities for example, but Fletcher (1994, 63) notes that as these advantages will not be realised until after at least 12 months of operation, it is too early to argue that an integrated or at least semi-integrated approach is better than the co-location model.

The models represent the movement between the original concept and eventual structure of the Coffs Harbour Education Campus. It moved from the co-location model of three separate sites with boundaries and independent administration, staffing and accreditation; the library being the only common facility. Had there not been ministerial intervention, this co-location structure was the most likely outcome, with proximity to facilities as a perceived benefit for students.

**Table 1. MODELS OF JOINT DEVELOPMENT**

<b>CO-LOCATION</b>	<b>SEMI-INTEGRATED</b>	<b>FULLY INTEGRATED</b>
Minimal savings from infrastructure provision	Infrastructure savings limited by number of joint facilities	Highest level of savings from infrastructure provision
Utilisation of facilities is marginally higher than for separate developments but not as high for integrated models	Higher utilisation of facilities compared to co-location model, but dependent on timetabling arrangements between the sectors	Timetabling of facilities is more efficient leading to higher utilisation of facilities
Access to facilities is dependent on relationship with adjacent educational institutions	Easier access to facilities generally associated with other educational institutions	Equal access to all facilities
Articulation of programs can occur depending on the willingness of the adjacent parties to formalise a process	Articulation can be achieved but will be limited by the perception of the staff that they work for separate institutions	Potential for articulation of programs is far greater than in the other two models. There are no agendas of other institutions as all parties work for the same organisation
Joint projects between the sectors are feasible, but are not encouraged	Staff and students are located on the one site which makes joint projects more feasible	Greater inclination to invite all staff and students to participate in activities that would previously have been identified as joint, as there is no clear delineation other than the course they are enrolled in or the level of subjects they are teaching
Staff/students are in close proximity to make arrangements for a better understanding of adjacent education providers	On a day-to-day basis, staff and students can observe what is happening in the other sector	Staff and students can participate in activities generally associated with either a School, TAFE College or a University

Source: Fletcher, J. Joint Educational Developments in NSW, 1994, pp. 61–62

Fletcher also notes that ‘on the basis of savings in infrastructure costs alone, the joint educational developments cannot be justified as this is outweighed by the costs and time in planning such a facility’ (1994, 63). Minister Fahey’s intervention determined that a higher level of integration was needed. It was envisaged that a fully integrated Campus would have emerged, with a single administrative structure and no boundaries between the sectors. This did not eventuate as the sectors remained separate and staff were transferred from existing institutions and presently CHEC is operating within the range of semi-integrated institution.

When Fletcher conducted her study, the Campus was not yet operational. The reactions to this integration issue from members of the steering committee ranged from full integration as a preferred model which they see as having been compromised, to the situation being unworkable and a semi integrated model as the only alternative for 1995. "Regarding the sectors, it has been stated, 'all three are integrated institutions already and you cannot be integrated as part of the campus' " (Fletcher 1994, 60).

Fletcher also suggests that further research is undertaken to determine the cost benefit factor for the implementation of joint developments.

### **Summary**

It is from this conceptual background on mergers and amalgamations, linkages and political implications that Coffs Harbour Education Campus has emerged. The studies on amalgamations, mergers and cross-sectoral links highlight issues that are strong themes within the concept of joint developments. The mergers and amalgamations overseas reflect the changing nature of education in Australia and it is within the context of capital works funding, policy directives pertaining to vocational education, secondary and tertiary education that joint developments now exist as reality. The sharing of resources and provision of pathways, credit transfers and articulation between sectors, are seen as potential benefits to students attending a joint development as well as maximising government resources.

It can be seen that there is not a clearly defined model of a joint development that is designed for use in any and every locality or region. The planning issues for joint developments are problematic and the level of integration is complex as it moves from one end of the continuum as co-location to the other end as fully integrated. Precedents or policy frameworks, particularly in the education aspects, are either non-existent, unclear or subject to negotiation between local parties. The critical success factors apparently depend upon people forming co-operative relationships with not only each other (if on working parties or committees) but within and between each sector or organisation. Although there is an emphasis on improved educational opportunities for students and access to a wider range of curriculum and use of facilities, there is also a strong thrust for economic rationalism and management of assets and capital works funding. There is some consideration of the need for 'local' involvement but input from

staff or students is negligible. The systemic cultures of individual sectors or organisations are also a consideration, but there is a much stronger focus on ownership and operational matters, particularly in the planning phases.

The background information on joint developments is intended to provide a recent review of the new institutions, and to lead the reader to develop a clearer picture of CHEC as part of a unique partnership between SCU, TAFE and DSE. The issues surrounding joint developments are complex and problematic; but these projects also create a wide range of potential benefits for students. The present study has been conducted since the inception of the Campus in 1995, and the issue of integration, as in mergers and amalgamations, is a significant factor in all aspects of student perceptions of their participation. Chapter Three is a discussion of the Campus as a joint development and develops the notion that the Campus has evolved from a number of internal and external forces.