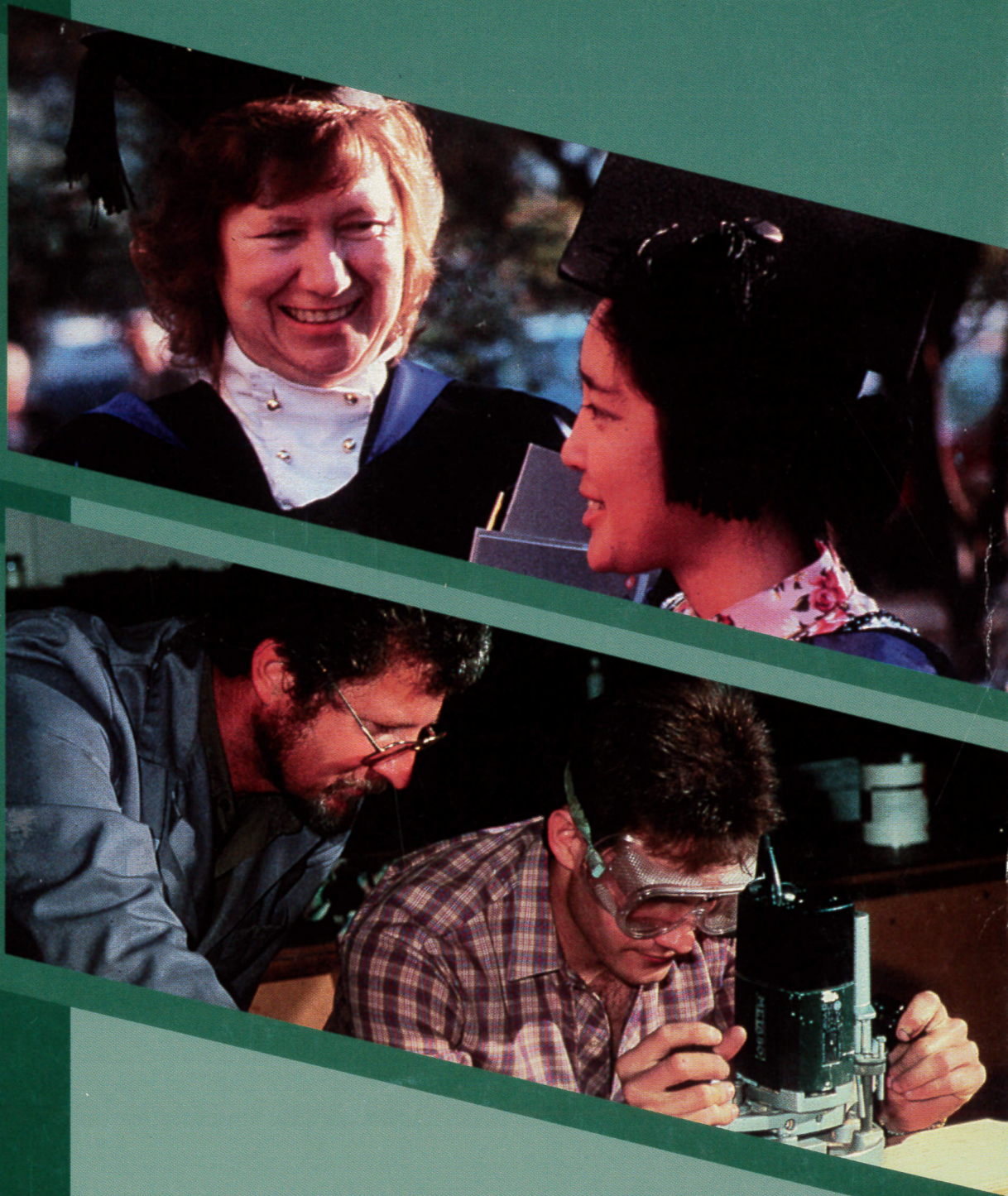




ABSCQ

ABS CLASSIFICATION of QUALIFICATIONS



ABSCQ ABS CLASSIFICATION of QUALIFICATIONS ABS Catalogue No. 1262.0

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IAN CASTLES

Australian Statistician

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 - *for information about other ABS statistics and services please refer to the back page of this publication.*
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PREFACE

This publication is one of two which present the Australian Bureau of Statistics Classification of Qualifications (ABSCQ). The classification is intended for use with information on post-secondary educational qualifications.

Users of education and labour market statistics in both the private and public sectors have long indicated the need for reliable, accurate and comparable information on the 'stock' of qualifications held by the population to assist in research and policy formation. These users have also identified two main elements, level of attainment and field of study, as being of primary interest. Existing classifications are either limited to one or other of these attributes, and/or do not provide full coverage of the entire range of higher education qualifications.

In light of this clear need, the ABS has developed a classification (ABSCQ) which can be used to present statistics by level of attainment alone, field of study alone, or by level and field together. In keeping with the aims of the 1988 White Paper on Higher Education, the ABSCQ was developed to provide users with information not only on qualifications held by the population, but also on the transferable skills which are inherent in those qualifications. To assist in labour market analysis, the ABSCQ has been developed so that, where appropriate, data coded to the classification can be related broadly to data on occupations coded to the Australian Standard Classification of Occupation (ASCO).

The ABSCQ was first used in the 1991 Census of Population and Housing, and is being introduced into other ABS collections. To enhance comparability of education statistics from different sources, use of the classification by other agencies involved in the production of statistics on post-school qualifications and courses is encouraged.

This classification will be revised periodically to reflect changes in post-school educational qualifications in Australia. Comments and suggestions from users are welcome.

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Australian Statistician

August 1993

