

# QTU Submission – Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia

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**QTU Submission**  
**Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia**

**Terms of Reference**

The Joint Select Committee has been established to address the following terms of reference:

*The Committee to consider policies for developing the parts of Australia which lie north of the Tropic of Capricorn, spanning Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland, and in doing so:*

- *examine the potential for development of the region's mineral, energy, agricultural, tourism, defence and other industries;*
- *provide recommendations to:*
  - *enhance trade and other investment links with the Asia-Pacific;*
  - *establish a conducive regulatory, taxation and economic environment;*
  - *address impediments to growth; and*
  - *set conditions for private investment and innovation;*
- *identify the critical economic and social infrastructure needed to support the long term growth of the region, and ways to support planning and investment in that infrastructure.*

*The Committee to also present to the Parliament its recommendation for a white paper which would detail government action needed to be taken to implement the committee's recommendations, setting out how the recommendations were to be implemented, by which government entity they were to be implemented, a timetable for implementation and how and when any government funding would be sourced.*

The Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) submission will focus specifically on the role of Queensland's TAFE institutes as critical economic and social infrastructure that contribute to the social and economic well being and growth of north Queensland. This submission draws heavily on the QTU submission to the 2013 House Standing Committee on Education and Employment Inquiry into the Role of the Technical and Further Education System and Its Operation.

**Introduction**

The Queensland Teachers' Union is a state-registered organisation of employees representing 43,000 teachers and leaders in the Queensland government schools and TAFE institutes. It is an associated body of the Australian Education Union and an affiliate of the Queensland Council of Unions. It is not affiliated with any political party.

For the QTU members and TAFE Queensland educational staff, the role of TAFE Queensland has never been in doubt. The focus of teachers has and will continue to be the provision of skills and knowledge to students enabling them to participate in society and the workforce wherever and whatever the need. The TAFE environment is repeatedly chosen by students and employers as a preferred provider because it provides quality education through a learning community, access to libraries and resources, learning support, career and personal counsellors and pathways to further study options.

TAFE across the country has high brand recognition and is well-respected. TAFE Queensland provides Vocational Education and Training (VET) that:

- Provides qualifications across the AQF;
- Is universally accessible and affordable;
- Is of a high standard;

- Is efficient and responsive to need;
- Represents the breadth of social and economic skills and needs.

The Queensland Teachers' Union believes that vocational education and training should be organised to provide broad, contemporary and relevant vocational knowledge and skills, rather than narrow, instrumental, "just in time" skills addressing only the immediate needs of employers. The VET system should develop and promote pathways for students into employment but also into further education.

TAFE plays an important and indispensable role within VET:

- As a public provider, it is best placed to address the broader mission of VET. In contrast, private registered training organisations (RTOs) are inherently focused on meeting short-term and specific training demands of employers;
- TAFE plays a pivotal role in addressing issues of access and equality through its presence in a wide variety of geographical and socio-economic settings and as a key provider of opportunities for disadvantaged students.
- It provides a quality benchmark in terms of its workforce and training programs.

However, it must be acknowledged that the landscape for Vocational Education and Training generally and TAFE specifically has changed. A number of obstacles exist for TAFE Queensland in the short, medium and long term including:

- Decreased funding per the student contact hour;
- Increased competition from the private sector;
- Increased competition between institutes resulting in duplication of effort in resource development and support services;
- Underfunding of maintenance of current assets;
- Changing expectations of students and employers;
- Technological change requiring investment;
- High overheads and bureaucracy;
- Rigid systems and processes limiting flexibility and entrepreneurial activity;
- An aging workforce;
- Across the VET sector generally, the lack of a structured approach to enhancing levels of workforce qualifications and capacity;
- Lack of a support for staff to develop skills and knowledge to engage in flexible and online delivery;
- Disincentives for employees to work in certain geographic locations.

In order to continue to improve the level and quality of offerings and outputs in TAFE in Queensland, a range of issues must be addressed. These include:

- Low levels of government and industry funding for VET in Queensland;
- Professional and vocational development for educational staff;
- Registration and development of code of ethics for VET teachers;
- Professional development and succession planning for managers;
- Centralisation and funding of resource development;
- Formalised, centrally funded networks for collaboration, moderation and validation;
- Funding for educational support services including libraries/resource centres, student counselling services, literacy and numeracy support.

## **The Role of TAFE in the Development of Skills in the Australian Economy, including Regional Australia**

It is common ground that Australia needs to improve its skills development effort. Research has established that increasing investment in education and training and lifting the qualifications level of the workforce is by far the single most effective lever available to improve participation and productivity. Currently there is a significant shortfall in the supply of workers with the required vocational skills, and in particular, in the supply of workers with high-level technical, vocational and tertiary qualifications. TAFE is the VET provider that has traditionally trained these high-skill workers and continues to have a much greater capacity than non-TAFE providers to do this training effectively and efficiently.

John Mitchell is an independent researcher who has conducted case studies of TAFE-industry links involving 80 companies ranging from BHP Billiton, Telstra, BlueScope Steel, Optus, Toyota, QANTAS, Housing NSW, Sydney Water, Energy Australia and medium to small businesses. These employers uniformly and 'publicly attest to the value delivered by TAFE'.<sup>1</sup> His most recent research (five case studies) ...

... shows how TAFE training meets one or more of these business and government goals – increased productivity including global competitiveness, flexible workforces, highly qualified staff building careers, skills for the new economy and regional growth.<sup>2</sup>

In his research on TAFE, Kell noted that:

The importance of the connections between TAFE and economic development was identified strongly in regional and rural locations visited by the Inquiry. TAFE's role was seen as vital to the sustainability of the local economy in providing jobs and being a foundation for social and economic development. One mayor in a rural town spoke of TAFE as "the major employer, a great facility and a major part of the economy"<sup>3</sup>

Kell also noted that TAFE was the only VET provider well placed to deliver training in 'rural and regional areas, [which] represent thin and unviable training markets'.<sup>4</sup>

Previous research by Callan and Ashworth (2004), examined industry-provider partnerships in 47 VET providers (35 TAFE<sup>5</sup>, 5 other public providers, 2 AMES and 5 private) found that 'many industry respondents rated the level of training as world class'.<sup>6</sup>

Employees are often expected to be flexible and open to multi-skilling and working in a range of roles. Thus it would be advantageous to develop courses which focus on the provision of skills for broader employability as well as narrow, job specific skills. Unlike private RTOs, TAFE is well positioned (or would be if properly funded and encouraged to do so) to develop courses which focus on these broader employability skills as well as for specific skills sets.

Buchanan et al. (2009) argue that Australia's economic renewal has been hindered by its "fragmented" approach to workforce development, characterised, for example, by a focus on narrow skills sets and highly fragmented units of competence and on "second order" issues such as contestability and market design. They make a case for a broader approach 'in which learning flows are organised on the basis of

<sup>1</sup> Mitchell, J. (2013a) Macro View is Needed in Analysis, Campus Review, 8 April, <http://www.campusreview.com.au/blog/2013/04/macro-view-is-needed-in-analysis/>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. The full study is: Mitchell (2013b) Reinventing service delivery: Case studies of TAFE Institutes meeting industry needs and government goals, , John Mitchell and Associates, TAFE Directors Australia, [http://www.tda.edu.au/resources/tda\\_reinventing\\_service\\_delivery.pdf](http://www.tda.edu.au/resources/tda_reinventing_service_delivery.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Kell, P. (2006) TAFE Futures: Key Findings, Australian Education Union, South Melbourne, <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/2006/TFsummary.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Including 6 in Queensland.

<sup>6</sup> Callan, V. and Ashworth, P. (2004) Working together: Industry and VET provider training partnerships, National Centre for Vocational Education Research, <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1459.html>

deepening human capability'. They note that 'only an innovative and responsive public sector can recognise, nurture and support' such an approach and that, 'a key challenge is to ensure the public sector builds its capability to help establish such social infrastructure'.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Role of TAFE in the Development of Opportunities for Australians to Improve Themselves and Increase their Life and Employment Prospects**

As noted by Kell:

TAFE students are diverse in backgrounds, interests, needs and experiences and span the full spectrum of ages from school leavers to existing workers to mature-aged students.<sup>8</sup>

Kell noted that students are attracted to TAFE to learn 'hands-on' practical skills, because they are treated as adults and because there are teachers who are 'willing to help you'. Kell noted that some students also expressed the view that TAFE provided them with an opportunity to develop a sense of well-being as well as achieving vocational outcomes.<sup>9</sup> In relation to regional Australia, Kell quotes one rural Mayor as saying 'TAFE keeps opportunity alive in this town'. TAFE was seen as valuable in assisting members of rural communities suffering economic hardship to become 'productive members of the community and not dependent'.<sup>10</sup>

The satisfaction rates for TAFE with both Students and Employers are at historically high levels. The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) Student Outcomes 2011 report indicates that 75 per cent of TAFE graduates nationally were employed after completing training in 2011. A total of 86.8 per cent were employed or engaged in further study. In total, 90 per cent of TAFE graduates were satisfied with their training in 2011. The student satisfaction rate has been rising every year since 2005.

However, many of the support programs and services that have traditionally enhanced student experience in TAFE have been cutback or eliminated due to the relentless pressure on TAFE institutes to seek efficiencies.

### **The Role of TAFE in the Delivery of Services and Programs to Support Regions, Communities and Disadvantaged Individuals to Access Training and Skills and Through Them a Pathway to Employment**

TAFE Queensland has played a considerable part in the development of communities across the state of Queensland economically and socially by being the provider of quality vocational education and training in the State. This has resulted in strong recognition of the TAFE brand and an association with successful outcomes for students. In his 2006 inquiry into TAFE, Kell found that: 'TAFE enjoys good support in the community, and people are passionate about their local TAFE'. But he also noted that uncertainty about the role and future of TAFE was undermining public confidence at the local level.<sup>11</sup>

Through its state-wide network of institutes and campuses TAFE Queensland should continue to contribute to community economic development by providing industry training and second chance or life-long learning opportunities. TAFE is ideally placed to deliver to the thin training markets that characterise many rural and remote centres. Additionally investment in infrastructure and services in regional communities has a flow on effect for the community, providing a stable source of income and contributing to social cohesion.

<sup>7</sup> Buchanan, J., Yu, S., Marginson, S. and Wheelahan, L. (2009) Education, Work and Economic Renewal: An issues paper prepared for the Australian Education Union, Workplace Research Centre, University of Sydney, <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/2009/JBuchananreport2009.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Kell, P. (2006) TAFE Futures: Key Findings, Australian Education Union, South Melbourne, <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/2006/TFsummary.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

TAFE has facilities spread across the state, many in regional and remote locations. These facilities form a core within small communities, only a part of which is the provision of vocational education and training. The local TAFE college is a sign of local prosperity and a sign of the potential residing in the community.

As noted by Whitley, cut-backs in TAFE funding in Victoria have hit regional centres particularly hard resulting in potential students in these areas missing out on opportunities or leaving the area.<sup>12</sup> The QTU has serious concerns that the recently announced planned rationalisation of TAFE facilities in Queensland will have an even greater impact, given Queensland's more decentralised population.

Consideration should be given to forming partnerships with, for instance, local government and community groups to create centres for regional development. A range of complementary activities and uses should be investigated and implemented in order to retain and maintain these important community resources. Kell notes that partnerships are:

... particularly important in areas where equity needs are most apparent, ***such as rural and isolated regions*** and areas subject to economic decline and transition. Partnerships involved organisations involved in disability services, children's services and Indigenous organisations. In many cases they involved multidisciplinary approaches, spanning general education and skills training as well as a holistic view of people's needs. In other centres, strong partnerships existed around support for a clustered approach to industry, which involved relocating training into industry locations, sharing resources, promoting research and development and developing technical services as well as training. (emphasis added)<sup>13</sup>

The QTU supports the expansion of new VET delivery technologies to enhance access and improve the learning experience of students. However, on-line delivery and new technology should not be seen as a panacea which renders face-to-face delivery obsolete. It must be acknowledged that there are still sections of the community who suffer disadvantage and are unlikely to have ready access to or will resist the use of new technologies. Additionally, face-to-face engagement remains the most effective means of enhancing the learning experience and ensuring quality control.

Studies have indicated that there is a large group of Australian adults with low levels of literacy and numeracy. Nation-wide, in 2006 the percentage of Australians aged 15 to 74 years who had literacy skills below the 'minimum level required for individuals to meet the complex demands of everyday life and work in the emerging knowledge-based economy' ranged from 46 to 70 per cent as shown in Table 1. This situation has a clear and important negative impact on national and regional productivity.

**Table 1**

<b>Percentage of Australians/Queenslanders 15 to 74 years Who had Literacy Skills Below the Minimum Level</b>		
	<b>AUS</b>	<b>QLD</b>
Prose literacy	46%	46%
Document literacy	47%	47%
Numeracy	53%	52%
Problem Solving	70%	71%

Source: ABS (2008) Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey Summary, 4228.0, 2006 (Re-Issue),

[http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/B22A471C221C7BADCA2573CA00207F10/\\$File/42280\\_2006%20\(reissue\).pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/B22A471C221C7BADCA2573CA00207F10/$File/42280_2006%20(reissue).pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Whitley, P. (2013) Stop Short-Changing Regional Areas, Campus Review, March, <http://www.campusreview.com.au/>.

<sup>13</sup> Kell, P. (2006) TAFE Futures: Key Findings, Australian Education Union, South Melbourne, <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/2006/TFsummary.pdf>.

Of relevance to this Inquiry, results from the Program for International Assessment (PISA) tests show that literacy levels in rural areas are substantially lower than in urban areas.<sup>14</sup>

Lower literacy skills are strongly correlated with factors such as fewer years of education, unemployment, low socio-economic status, Indigenous status, NESB status and rurality/remoteness.

A key problem to be confronted is tackling educational exclusion and disengagement to deliver more socially equitable outcomes. TAFE has played the key role in addressing these issues and is much better able than private VET providers to address the issues of equity and access that plague the Australian training market. TAFE institutes are far more likely than private RTOs to provide the support and resource services (such as counselling and library services) that are necessary for vulnerable and at risk students.

TAFE provides education and training to a significant number of adults who have not completed secondary education who enter higher level qualifications as well as apprenticeships. Many refugees and migrants, especially those arriving with limited experience in paid employment, have few training or educational options outside TAFE in order to enter the Australian workforce or progress to more advanced training or education. While younger refugees and migrants might be eligible for secondary programs those over 18 are not eligible. The options in TAFE need to be broad in scope in relation to levels and skills in order that adults with potentially only a basic primary education and English as a second language need specialised tutelage and more than a few months of training in basic skills to enter and sustain long term employment.

Whilst some programs may not have immediate industry outcomes, the return on investment is realized in other areas. Increased social inclusion and the increased confidence on behalf of many students with disabilities provide utility and return on investment through limiting the liability in health and criminal justice expenditure.

Kell's 2006 Inquiry into TAFE found that:

Student poverty is starkly confronting and influences the work of teachers in profound and moving ways. Students told the Inquiry of the difficulties in meeting the costs of education and the associated expenses of transport, food, accommodation and childcare.<sup>15</sup>

TAFE has also had a strong presence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and has delivered a number of Indigenous-specific programs as well as enrolling a much higher number and percentage of Indigenous students than the higher education sector in its general courses. TAFE is an important pathway for Indigenous students. Kell notes that these programs can 'overcome entrenched racism encountered in recruitment in many rural towns and the workplace environment'.<sup>16</sup>

A problem that has arisen in recent times has been the abandonment of Certificate I and II courses in TAFE. These are now largely delivered within the secondary school system due the focus of TAFE institutes on providing the most profitable courses. Unfortunately, this means that many people wishing to return to the workforce or retrain have very few opportunities to succeed if they have literacy and numeracy gaps. They are currently forced to enrol in Certificate III, Certificate IV and diploma programs in which they struggle and often fail.

<sup>14</sup> Patty, A. (2011) 'Opposition targets 'shocking' rural literacy', Sydney Morning Herald, 31 January, <http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/opposition-targets-shocking-rural-literacy-20110130-1a9pr.html>.

<sup>15</sup> Kell, P. (2006) TAFE Futures: Key Findings, Australian Education Union, South Melbourne, <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/2006/TFsummary.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.



Currently, there is very limited, and in many cases, non-existent funding for part-time evening students, most of whom are in the workforce. This is inconsistent with the professed ideals of life-long learning, improved community access, and a higher skilled workforce.

The QTU recommends that TAFE returns to providing a breadth of offerings which reflect the broad social and economic need.

TAFE has maintained a strong support system for students with disabilities. Through TAFE providing access to learning support and counselling services, disadvantaged students have had high success rates. In the words of the former Federal Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Chris Evans '*...the public provider TAFE has been a place where people with disabilities have been welcomed and supported properly. It's the only place in the system that does that ...*'.

### **The Operation of a Competitive Training Market**

VET policy under successive State and Federal governments has been to increase competition through the implementation of market mechanisms. Despite the conspicuous failure of market-based approaches to VET over a period of some twenty years (both in Australia and other English-speaking countries), the solution proffered by governments, bureaucrats and employers in responding to each new round of disappointed expectations is to urge even further contestability and marketisation.<sup>17</sup> There has been a failure to critically interrogate the assumptions underlying market-based provision of VET and to consider alternative approaches.

A market based approach has:

- failed to address skill shortage areas in the labour market;
- failed to improve productivity;
- exacerbated inequities in access to quality education and training;
- left many existing workers without qualifications to adapt to workplace change;
- undermined the capacity of the VET system to promote a planned approach to industry development, maximise quality employment and to meet future industry, labour market development and social needs.

Market-based VET encourages training that:

- prioritises provision for those who are easiest and quickest to train and least in need of training;
- minimises the time spent on training, leading to lower training quality;
- requires the least capital input (e.g. in the services sector rather than in manufacturing);
- emphasises narrow skills sets, enterprise-specific qualifications and meeting the immediate needs of individuals and firms rather lifting the qualifications of the workforce as part of a broad workforce development strategy;
- allows the market to determine what training is delivered rather than planning to promote industry development.

There is now substantial evidence to demonstrate the negative aspects of marketisation and contestability in VET.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Though the reservations about market-based reform expressed by key stakeholders (including politicians, industry leaders and bureaucrats) that form the basis for John Mitchell's aptly titled recent collection of essays on VET indicate that its weaknesses are finally being recognised. See Mitchell, J. (2012) From Unease to Alarm: Escalating concerns about the model of 'VET reform' and cutbacks to TAFE, John Mitchell and Associates, October, <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Tafe/documents/johnmitchell2012.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Mitchell (2012) Op. cit.

Kell suggests that the adverse effects of competitive VET markets are disproportionately felt in regional and rural settings and quotes a community leader in a rural community as stating: ‘our community is built on sharing and we are developing the social infrastructure and support for the families and what we offer will attract people’.<sup>19</sup>

With the opening of competition for government funding for VET there has been a proliferation of private providers. While the QTU acknowledges the presence of quality private VET in the market, there has been a worrying increase in dodgy providers absorbing government training money while short-changing on the outcomes. In 2012, the ABC 7:30 Report aired allegations that major private providers of training have been engaged in practices which defraud the training system. The Victorian regulator stated in a letter to the ABC that such breaches would not be uncovered during routine audits and would only come to air through complaints. Anecdotal evidence is that similar practices are in place in providers in Queensland. As qualifications should be honoured nationally – the standard of product is meant to be identical except for regional or enterprise adaptations. Distinctions are being made increasingly on the basis of the provider issuing the qualification.

Stronger regulation is required. But, once the market is established, there are huge pressures to get government to reduce the regulatory burden (“red tape”) and to ensure “light touch” regulation, self regulation, codes of conduct, risk based approaches and so on. Additionally, governments are attracted to these arguments because of the potential costs associated with regulation. Experience shows that it is impossible to get the necessary level of regulation due to the powerful and basic drivers of the market to maximise profits, increase market share and avoid regulatory scrutiny.

Even putting aside instances of inappropriate behaviour and outright rorting, it is clear that market forces haven’t worked adequately to persuade employers to plan and invest in the training of the workforce. The short term interests of individual employers often don’t match the longer term interests of employees, the industry or indeed the community. The current skills shortages can be directly linked to this short-termism.

An increased emphasis on profitability of TAFE institutes is causing a rationalisation of programs. Small regional campuses are less able to deliver a range of courses to the community in face to face mode. Qualifications which may be essential yet have small or irregular numbers of students will be removed from local offerings if not completely from the system. An increased reliance on technology to deliver skills and knowledge will mean that individual students, especially those with a disability or literacy and numeracy problems will be at increased disadvantage.

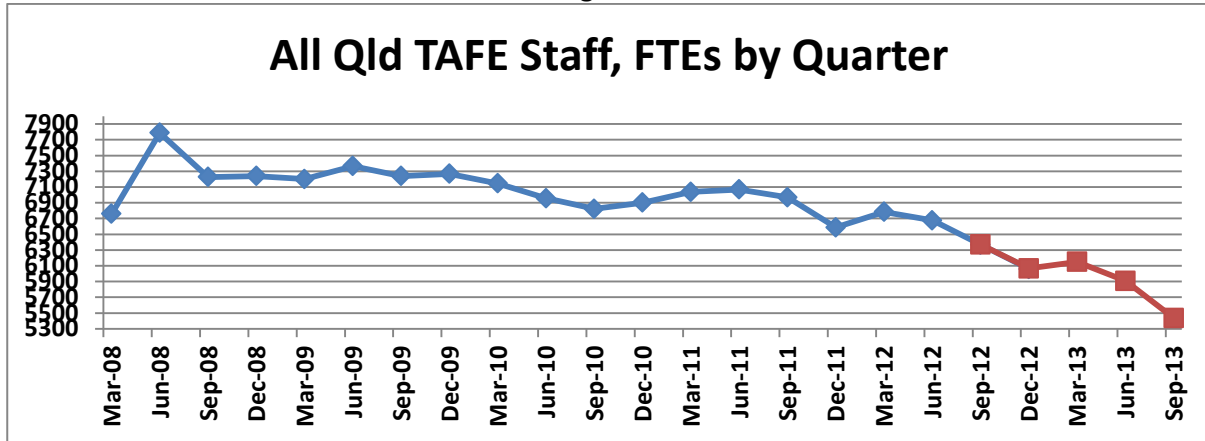
TAFE has been criticised as an inherently inefficient provider of VET. The Final Report of the Queensland Skills and Training Taskforce, however, notes a remarkable increase in the number of annual hours curriculum (AHC) delivered by decreasing staff full time equivalent (FTE) over the period since 2008-09. In short, not only is the Queensland TAFE system efficient in terms of the numbers of student contact hours being delivered per teacher but the efficiency, flexibility and productivity of TAFE teachers has been rising despite the systemic and chronic undermining through underfunding. Unfortunately, the Taskforce appears to have ignored this in developing its recommendations relating to TAFE.

Figure A shows the decreases in TAFE staffing FTEs from 2008 to the September quarter of 2013.<sup>20</sup> Overall staffing has been reduced by 20 percent in terms of full time equivalent positions (FTEs) and by 26 per cent in terms of head count over this period.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Kell, P. (2006) TAFE Futures: Key Findings, Australian Education Union, South Melbourne, <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/2006/TFsummary.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> It should be noted that there was a break in the series from late 2012. This was a result of the adoption of a new job coding/classification system, the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO), which is used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Figures for the December quarter 2013 are not yet available.

Figure A



*Source: Department of Education, Training and Employment, Queensland.*

In his case studies of five TAFE-industry partnerships, Mitchell provides evidence that a focus on “efficiency” narrowly defined is misplaced and suggests that “flexibility” is a better measure:

[N]one of the industry interviewees mentioned low-cost delivery as a priority goal. Some of them said that they appreciated TAFE’s competitive pricing, but they all focused on the value TAFE brought to their businesses and were able to elaborate in detail about the value they sought and obtained from TAFE ...

I asked the industry interviewees what they most valued about TAFE. Flexibility was the word used by four of the five key industry interviewees, and the fifth interviewee chose a related term, innovative ... [A]ll of the industry interviewees noted that TAFE understands their industry and their company, and used this knowledge to design and deliver relevant services ...

All five industry interviewees indicated that flexibility is the result of TAFE taking a customer-centric approach and being willing to develop an in-depth knowledge of the client’s needs, collaborate strategically and continually review training products and services to suit the client.<sup>22</sup>

In earlier research on TAFE-industry partnerships, it was found that:

Training involved substantial levels of flexibility and the use of a variety of modes of delivery ...

High levels of customisation were a key feature of these larger training partnerships. Businesses wanted the training to be highly customised and contextualised to meet their requirements ...

[An] advisory committee, comprised of representatives from industry and the training provider, was a major device used to manage the partnership and to maintain high levels of communication ... As a result of the flexibility of the training, many industry respondents rated the level of training as world class.<sup>23</sup>

## TAFE Funding

The operation and viability of TAFE in Queensland has been under threat for some time due to:

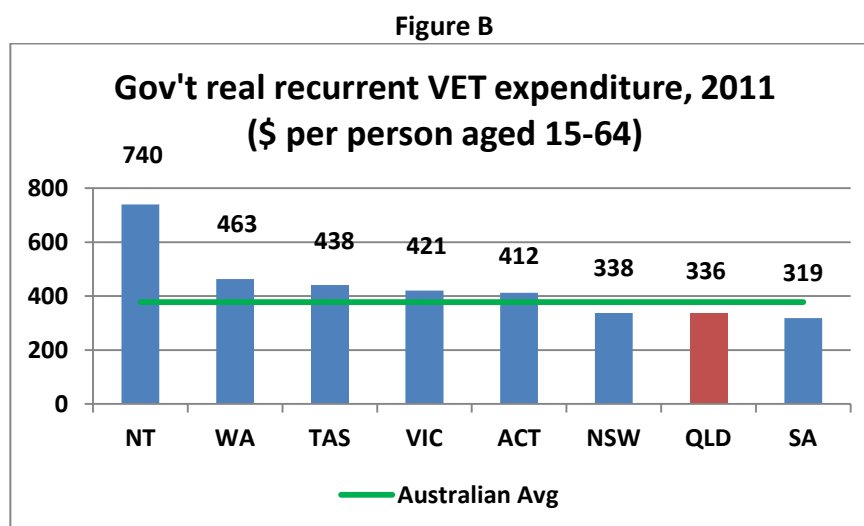
- Long-term government underfunding of VET, and
- An ever increasing share of a shrinking VET funding pool going to non-TAFE providers.

<sup>21</sup> Note: There were further reductions in TAFE staffing in the December quarter 2013 and in early 2014.

<sup>22</sup> Mitchell, J. (2013a) Macro View is Needed in Analysis, Campus Review, 8 April, <http://www.campusreview.com.au/blog/2013/04/macro-view-is-needed-in-analysis/>

<sup>23</sup> Callan, V. and Ashworth, P. (2004) Working together: Industry and VET provider training partnerships, National Centre for Vocational Education Research, <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1459.html>. This study did include some non-TAFE providers, but only 5 of the 47 providers studied were private RTOs.

In 2011, the Centre for the Economics of Education and Training (CEET) at Monash University observed that 'recent government recurrent funding of VET is characterised by a near year-on-year decline relative to provision'.<sup>24</sup> CEET noted a decline nationally in VET funding over the period of 2004-2009 of 15.4 per cent and between 1997 and 2009 of 25.7 per cent. As shown in Figure B, in terms of total government funding (State and Federal) for VET, Queensland ranks second last in Australia. Recent data reported in the Report on Government Services, using real recurrent expenditure per publicly funded annual hour of delivery, shows a decline in funding in Queensland of 23.4 per cent over the period 2002 to 2011.<sup>25</sup>



Source: Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision (SCRGSP), Report on Government Services 2013, Chapter 5, Vocational education and training, Table 5A.2.

An increase of investment is required in training from both government and industry sources.

Kell notes that inadequate levels of funding and the use of standard funding rates have created particular pressures on VET delivery in rural and remote areas:

Standard funding rates ... have been set according to various benchmarks that have often been too low to conduct classes in ... remote and rural settings ...

The specific needs of some large states and territories with sparse populations outside the capital cities such as WA, SA, Qld and NT are seen as not being recognised in the funding agreements and this was seen as placing strain on delivery in rural and remote locations.

Suggestions for improvements in funding included less reliance on a centralised formula that fails to account for local and regionalised difference.<sup>26</sup>

The Newman Government, elected in 2012, has worsened the situation by reducing TAFE funding and staff, and by announcing plans that would see a number of TAFE campuses closed, further staff redundancies, reduced working conditions for TAFE staff, further commercialisation and competitive tendering for VET funds and an even greater market share for private RTOs. The results will include cessation of a number of courses which are not seen as commercially viable and higher fees for students.

<sup>24</sup> Long, M. (2011) TAFE Funding and the Education Targets (An Update), Centre for the Economics of Education and Training for the Australian Education Union, Monash University, November, <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/2011/CEETreport2011.pdf>.

<sup>25</sup> Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision (SCRGSP), Report on Government Services 2013, Chapter 5, Vocational education and training, Table 5A.19.

<sup>26</sup> Kell, P. (2006) TAFE Futures: Key Findings, Australian Education Union, South Melbourne, <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/2006/TFsummary.pdf>.

## Appendix 1: North Queensland (and other regional) TAFE Success Stories

1. Source: TAFE Queensland, <http://www.tafe.qld.gov.au/students/indigenous/success-stories.html>.

### Kevin Edmondstone



Kevin Edmondstone has discovered just how far TAFE can take him. Since graduating in 2004 with an Advanced Diploma in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts, Kevin has gone on to full time employment and his artwork has traveled the world.

"I initially came to TAFE to learn more about art and I chose this program because it is designed for Indigenous people and taught by Indigenous people," he said.

His journey whilst successful has not been without its challenges and Kevin is the first to admit this.

"I had trouble with my math and spelling when I came to TAFE but I gradually learned more and more and got better at it with time.

"The key was to keep trying and not give up."

Kevin also credits his success to the support that he received from teachers and fellow students.

"There was always someone there, a teacher or a student to help me get through and overcome the challenges I faced," he said.

"At first I was shame to come here but that didn't last long. Now I tell everyone to come to TAFE and not feel shame because TAFE is a good place and it provides a lot of opportunities for Indigenous people."

In the future, Kevin would like to go back to his community and teach the skills he has learnt to his people but until then is happy to continue his employment with TAFE as a tutor in the Indigenous Art program.

"I enjoy teaching Aboriginal Art and showing my students different techniques.

"To see the look on their faces when I teach them something new is very rewarding."

2. Source: TAFE Queensland, <http://www.tafe.qld.gov.au/students/indigenous/success-stories.html>.

### Neil Fourmile



Neil Fourmile, of Yarrabah, south of Cairns, believes the rewards from studying at TAFE can be huge.

Neil studied a Certificate III in Engineering (Fabrication) at TAFE, which he completed in 2003.

His interest in a trade first took shape during his senior years at Abergowrie College, west of Ingham. He enjoyed studying metalwork at school so decided to apply for an apprenticeship with Yarrabah Council.

"When I finished in 1997 and came back to Yarrabah, there was an apprentice boilermaker position advertised with the council. I went for it and got it, so three weeks after finishing school I had a job - I could not believe it," he said.

"It was good training, really helpful. The block training was excellent too because I was able to get out and meet new people, and learn new things in a different environment."

"The training and guidance I received from TAFE teachers was integral to helping me complete my apprenticeship.

"If you get in there and stay committed the rewards are huge," he said.

Neil was the first Yarrabah resident to complete a boiler making apprenticeship and in 2004 was named National NAIDOC (National Aboriginal and Islander Observance Day Committee) Apprentice of the Year.

He hopes his success will encourage other young Indigenous people to pursue apprenticeships and traineeships.

"If I can go to high school, and go to TAFE and finish my trade, you can do it too."

3. Source: TAFE Queensland, <http://www.tafe.qld.gov.au/students/indigenous/success-stories.html>.

### Monique Rosas



Monique Rosas came to TAFE to improve her skills and establish her career after successfully obtaining a traineeship in business administration.

She is currently undertaking study in a Certificate III in Business Administration and is proud of the new skills that she has learnt, particularly in computers.

Studying and working hasn't always been easy for Monique and managing the two has been her biggest challenge since commencing at TAFE.

"In the beginning I found it challenging to be working full-time and studying part-time because I had never had to do it before," Monique said.

"It took a bit of getting used to and my employer and my TAFE teachers helped me to get through it and taught me some good time management skills.

"Everything is great now and I'm managing just fine."

Monique credits the ability to obtain skills to increase employment opportunities as TAFE's greatest benefit.

"The skills that I have learned here (at TAFE) are invaluable as they are required in the workforce," she said.

"My study has given me the opportunity to excel in the workforce and my ambitions are to climb up the corporate ladder.

"I encourage people to take advantage of the opportunities you are given and put your best into it because it is worth it in the end."

4. Source: TAFE Queensland, <http://www.tafe.qld.gov.au/students/indigenous/success-stories.html>.

**Gregory Woibo**



Forming a reggae band and supporting world renowned band UB40 on their tour of Cairns has helped Hope Vale resident Gregory (Greg) Woibo, 33, discover where TAFE training can lead.

Greg decided he needed a change in his life and decided to combine his desire to do something different with his "music dream."

"My music dream is to become a well known Indigenous band like Yothu Yindi and then go back into my community and become a music teacher," Greg said.

"I would also like to start music shops in Bamaga and Injino," he said.

Greg decided to enrol in a Certificate IV in Music at Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE in Cairns, one of the 13 TAFE Institutes across Queensland.

"My upbringing was filled with music and I have always been surrounded by it and that's why I chose to study it at TAFE," he said.

"I like learning how to use the latest technologies and equipment, such as computers, to write music. I have enhanced my skills and learnt new skills. I didn't know anything about computers before I came to TAFE."

He said he faced challenges along the way, like having to leave his community and find accommodation and move from 'the bush' to the city, but the encouragement and help he got from the TAFE Indigenous Student Support Officers made all the difference.

"While studying, I joined a reggae band "One Drop" with some of the other music students and since forming we have played at a number of community events and have a regular gig at Johnno's Blues Bar in Cairns," Greg said.

"One Drop supported UB40 on their tour of Cairns... I have been in bands before but I have never made it this far or accomplished this much."

"This success has prompted me to take my studies further. I am currently enrolled in an Advanced Diploma of Music and expect to complete that this year."

"TAFE is a good learning place for any person of any age."

"The benefits of studying at TAFE include learning new skills, meeting new people and making new friends, and obtaining a qualification that will lead to employment and a new career."

"If I did not choose to come to TAFE I would never have met the other people in the band, I wouldn't be in the band and I would not have shared in its success."

5. Source: TAFE Queensland, <http://www.tafe.qld.gov.au/students/rpl/success-stories.html#>

Read some TAFE Queensland Recognition of Prior Learning success stories:

**John McCrae** - Certificate III in Automotive Electrical Technology

After 48 years as a high-voltage electrical fitter mechanic, John decided to gain a new qualification so he could do volunteer work with his steam railway group.

"I wanted to complete a Certificate III in Automotive Electrotechnology so I could be more useful to the group, John said.

"It is great my work experience has been recognised. Now I can really develop my hobby of helping to restore parts of the steam railway collection as part of my community volunteer contribution."

**Lance Plahn** - Certificate IV in Automotive Technology

As workshop manager for PIQ Logistics, Lance Plahn understands the need for relevant, top flight qualifications to stay competitive.

"Recognition of prior learning is a very practical system for people like me who want to have both their trade qualifications and work skills formally recognised when enrolling for higher awards."

**Annette Currie** - Diploma of Agriculture and Diploma of Rural Business Management

Annette is now equipped to take a very active role in managing the family property in rural Queensland after receiving two awards through TAFE's recognition of prior learning process.

"At last I have formal recognition of my lifetime of learning and experience and now can confidently not prepare applications when dealing with government bodies or going to the bank," Annette said.

"I would recommend the recognition of prior learning option to anyone who has plenty of practical experience but no formal qualifications. The process is painless and a great confidence booster."

**Sheree Strauss** - Certificate III in Hospitality (Commercial Cookery)

As a successful business owner of a Kingaroy catering company, Sheree understands the importance of developing further skills and qualifications in her field.

"From a business perspective, I have trainees and apprentices in my business and it was important for me to formalize my own qualifications first," Sheree said.

"I found the recognition of prior learning ran smoothly, and teachers at TAFE were very flexible, encouraging and supportive."

**Penny Tones-Allery** - Certificate III in Education Support

Tabbinga State School teacher aide Penny Tones-Allery said "her years of experience as a teacher aide, the support of colleagues and the user friendly recognition of prior learning process offered through TAFE, assisted her in attaining Certificate III in Education Support through recognition of prior learning."

"I was well supported by the recognition of prior learning team, making the whole process easy to work through."

**Deborah Shaw** - Certificate IV in Franchising

Dalby Donut King Franchisee Deborah Shaw has come a long way since her first retail experience selling hot dogs from a caravan at Expo 88 in Brisbane.

"I have always wanted to run my own business and recognition of prior learning helped me attain a Certificate IV in Franchising. It is a great help at Donut King and is also beneficial in my new businesses."

6. Source: CQ TAFE, <http://www.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-tafe/news-and-events/latest-news/2012081706.html>

**Matthew credits his success to TAFE training and employer**

Friday, 17 August 2012

Apprentice electrician Matthew Varker has thanked Central Queensland Institute of TAFE and his employer, the Gladstone Ports Corporation (GPC) for helping him get to the WorldSkills nationals.

Matthew is one of 10 Central Queensland TAFE trained students who will compete in WorldSkills at Sydney's Olympic Park from August 30 to September 1.

A fourth year apprentice electrician with GPC, Matthew has been practising his electrical skills in preparation for the event.

"I have a rough idea of what I will have to do on the day, but I know that a certain percentage of it will be unknown," he said.

"I am a little bit excited about the competition."

He said his training at CQIT had prepared him for the competition and his day to day job.

"The training was really good and the teachers were very helpful," he said.

Matthew attained a spot in the nationals after the winner in the regional finals withdrew from the competition.

The winner of the national competition may have the opportunity to join the Australian WorldSkills team, which will head overseas for the International competition in 2013.

For more information on Central Queensland Institute of TAFE's electrical training, contact the Institute on 1300 CQ TAFE (1300 27 8233) or [visit the Central Queensland TAFE website](#).

This page was last updated at 17 August 2012

7. Tropical North Queensland TAFE, <http://tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-us/news/2013021100.html>

## Justice Studies student success

Monday, 11 February 2013 11:56AM

Iama Island man Simeon Makie has always been interested in the workings of the justice system and thanks to Tropical North Queensland TAFE (TNQT) he's working in a job he loves.

After graduating from TNQT in 2012 with his Certificate IV in Justice Studies, Mr Makie is about to commence employment as a court officer at the District Court, Normanton.

TNQT Justice Studies teacher Faith Atkins said she was proud of Simeon's achievements.

"Simeon is a mature-aged student who has wanted to help after living for many years in the Torres Strait and observing the problems his people were facing understanding the differences between traditional and Queensland law," Ms Atkins said.

"He has always been passionate about helping others and is a keen listener who has a proactive, rather than reactive, approach to problem solving and issue management.

"When I found out that Simeon was successful in his application as a court officer, I knew that this role was perfect for him to use his life experiences and TAFE education to assist others make changes to their lives."

Mr Makie said he was overjoyed at winning the position.

"It's a 12 month contract and a starting point for me to learn new customs and help people who may only speak broken English have their voices heard and be dealt with fairly by the justice system," Mr Makie said.

"TNQT's flexible learning options mean I can continue my TAFE Diploma studies externally while still working in this new role.

"Working as a court officer I have a real opportunity to make a difference and would urge other Indigenous people to consider taking up justice studies so they too can help restore the traditional respect of the law that has always been the backbone of our culture."

For information on TNQT Justice Studies courses call: 1300 656 959.

8. Source: TAFE Queensland, <http://www.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-tafe/news-and-events/latest-news/2014010602.html>

## Good business sense kickstarts careers

Monday, 6 January 2014

It makes good business sense to begin your career with a foundation of skills that could set you apart in the jobseeker crowd or cement your place in your favoured university course.

Tropical North Queensland TAFE, Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE and Mount Isa Institute of TAFE offer a variety of certificate III, certificate IV and diploma programs for the business savvy student, whether you are embarking on a new career or wanting to pave your way to university.

Institute Director Joann Pyne said graduates of business courses across North Queensland were in demand, completing their courses with industry-relevant and employable skills.

"TAFE prides itself on offering students training that is relevant to the local industry and useful to employers," Joann said.

"Course content is regularly updated and our teachers are industry professionals who are able to connect students with opportunities and employers through well-established industry networks."

A certificate or diploma from TAFE is also an option for those looking ahead to earning a degree from university.

Almost a dozen students from Townsville recently graduated from the inaugural Diploma of Business Commerce - with a quarter of these students beginning the New Year with a headstart on their degree at university.

"The course was developed in response to industry demand - both students and employers were crying out for a course that offered highly sought after skills, but also offered a pathway to higher education," Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE's Wendy Hegarty said.

"Students learn the basics and are introduced to academic writing and the underpinning skills necessary for the higher level subjects of accounting, marketing, management and economics."

Graduate Salli-Ann Buttigieg said the course was invaluable for school leavers considering their career options.

"There is much more to business than just computer skills," Salli-Ann said.

"The course offers a great insight into areas like marketing and economics, which can be helpful in helping to decide on a path for future study."

Business courses across North Queensland are available in a variety of formats including full-time and part-time. Recognition of Prior Learning is also available for students with existing skills and experience.



9. Source: TAFE Queensland, <http://www.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-tafe/news-and-events/latest-news/2013120200.html>

## Uni partners with TAFE

Monday, 2 December 2013

A new partnership between CQUniversity and Cannonvale's Barrier Reef TAFE will provide benefits to about 200 distance education university students who live in the Whitsundays.

These students will now be able to use the facilities of the local TAFE campus following the launch of the 'Cannonvale Study Hub' on Monday.

As well as a designated computer area, CQUniversity students can now use meeting rooms, computer labs, video conference facilities, refectory services and other amenities at the TAFE.

CQUniversity Vice-Chancellor Professor Scott Bowman said the initiative was designed to help take the distance out of distance education and to give the students a home away from home.

"This new hub will enable our students to form study and social groups, access IT resources, lodge assessments and enrolment updates and to video conference with their lecturers," he said.

The study hub was officially opened by State Member for Whitsunday Jason Costigan, in the presence of invited community representatives, business leaders and staff and students of both CQUniversity and TAFE.

Mr Costigan described it as a tremendous leap forward for tertiary education in the Whitsundays.

"It was not that long ago when some people were claiming the TAFE would be shut down. At that time I made it abundantly clear that I would fight like hell to save the TAFE - a very clear position that was not lost on the Minister, who graciously appreciated my position on the issue," Mr Costigan said.

"Well, not only have we saved the TAFE, we have done a little bit of legwork to get CQUniversity to have a look at the Whitsundays and the end result is a new study hub for their distance education students," he said.

10. Source: Tropical North Queensland TAFE, <http://tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-us/news/2013091001.html>

## Hairdresser cuts it with the best

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Tuesday, 10 September 2013 10:10AM

When it comes to cutting and colouring, TAFE hairdressing student Cheyenne Fairley knows her stuff but she never expected to win a prestigious national award.

Cheyenne was recently announced as one of the recipients of the esteemed Australian Vocational Student of the Year 2012 award by the Australian Government in recognition of outstanding vocational achievement and excellence in secondary education, scooping up \$2000 in prizemoney to help her along the way.

The now second-year apprentice began her hairdressing training in 2011 by enrolling in SchoolTech with TNQ TAFE and Woree State High School.

"I always knew that I was meant to be a hairdresser and I was lucky enough to be able to get started early through SchoolTech," Ms Fairley said.

"I wasn't always a great student. I went from a D-grade student to an A-grade student because I had found my direction. It makes winning an award like this even more meaningful.

"It just shows that if you are willing to learn and put in the effort you can really get somewhere."

SchoolTech head Carmel Iivonen said Ms Fairley had previously been nominated for regional and state training awards.

"She is truly a deserving winner and a shining example of how a young person can really thrive by finding their passion and training that suits their needs," Ms Iivonen said.

Ms Fairley is now employed by Jewel on Grafton Hair Boutique and has just 18 months of her apprenticeship left to complete.



11. Source: Tropical North Queensland TAFE, <http://tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-us/news/2013091000.html>

## TNQ TAFE scoops multicultural award

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Tuesday, 10 September 2013 9:56AM

Tropical North Queensland TAFE has won another prestigious accolade – scooping up the award for Education, in the Queensland Multicultural Awards.

TNQ TAFE was recognised for its celebration of the values and differences that a culturally diverse workplace brings. The Institute was also commended on its delivery of a range of initiatives that support people from culturally diverse backgrounds and promote multiculturalism.

The award was presented in Brisbane.

It adds to TNQ TAFE's 2013 award collection, which includes being named a finalist in the Reconciliation Awards and the Workforce Innovation Awards, as well as students winning regional finals in the Queensland Training Awards and Queensland Tourism Industry Council Salute to Excellence.

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Last updated 10-September-2013

12. Source: Tropical North Queensland TAFE, <http://tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-us/news/2013081400.html>

## Trades Training Precinct turns one!

Wednesday, 14 August 2013 12:07 PM

In just one year, more than 1200 apprentices and hundreds of students have welded, sawed, plumbed and nailed their way through their education in TNQ TAFE's state-of-the-art Trades Training Precinct.

The \$30 million Precinct is the only facility of its size (8000sq m) in Far North Queensland, housing all trades in one open-plan, all-weather centre that fronts Wilkinson Street, Manunda.

It also contains more than \$2 million of new equipment.

"Employers can be assured that apprentices who undertake training in the Trades Training Precinct are receiving high quality and hands-on education," Trades faculty manager Jonathan Todd said.

"Our facilities and equipment set us apart from our competitors but so do our teachers who are all experienced trade industry professionals."

For more information about courses offered at TNQ TAFE or to enquire about apprenticeship training phone 1300 656 959 or visit [www.tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au](http://www.tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au).

Picture: Second year boilermaking apprentice Levena Maloney is learning new skills in the Trades Training Precinct.



13. Source: Tropical North Queensland TAFE, <http://tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-us/news/2013081401.html>

## Teen trio builds green benches

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Wednesday, 14 August 2013 12:30PM

There was no sitting down on the job for a trio of teens who swapped timber for recycled plastic to build "green" benches for the Holloways Environment Centre recently.

The SchoolTech students are studying their Certificate II in Construction at Tropical North Queensland TAFE and have been involved in a project which encourages them to think green by incorporating sustainable methods into their work.

Teacher Martin Edwards, who is currently studying a Diploma in Sustainability, said the project was the result of a relationship between the Holloways Beach Environment Centre, Enviromart and green product supplier, Envire.

"As part of my own professional development I was required to undertake a sustainable project - I thought 'why not involve my students and come up with something that will benefit the community'," Mr Edwards said.

"The benches are made from recycled plastic and will be used by students who visit the Environment Centre."

The students built the sustainable benches at TNQ TAFE's state-of-the-art Trades Training Precinct and helped install them at the Environment Centre. The project will help them complete the *Work Effectively and Sustainably* unit as part of their Certificate II studies.

SchoolTech allows students to complete their senior schooling and obtain a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) while gaining industry-relevant skills by participating in work placement.

Year 10 students interested in enrolling in SchoolTech in 2014 can attend an information session at TNQ TAFE on Wednesday, 21 August, 2013. For more information about SchoolTech or to register your interest phone 4042 2590 or 4042 2490.

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14. Source: Tropical North Queensland TAFE, <http://tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-us/news/2013071600.html>

## TNQ TAFE recognised as Reconciliation finalist

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Tuesday, 16 July 2013 9:04AM

Congratulations to Tropical North Queensland TAFE's aged care team who were recently announced as finalists in the Queensland Reconciliation Awards.

The team was recognised for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Rural and Remote Aged Care Training Project which has trained more than 300 people in aged care services since its inception in 2010.

The training is delivered in more than 30 remote and Indigenous communities across the state and is funded by the Australian Government's Department of Health and Ageing.

The project employs a collaborative approach, working with key stakeholders to determine training needs with the aim of working towards building capacity and sustainability in the aged care workforce.

Project coordinator Sue Winchester attended the Queensland Reconciliation Awards presentation in Brisbane recently to accept the recognition on behalf of the project team.



15. Source: Tropical North Queensland TAFE, <http://tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-us/news/2013052700.html>

## TAFE Music Student on his way to Stardom

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Monday, 27 May 2013 3:32PM

Binda Warren Vettters is on his way to stardom after winning the Male Vocalist of the Year award at the Charters Towers Country Music Festival.

The talented Tropical North Queensland TAFE student also came second in the country gospel category at the festival.

Studying a Certificate III in Music, he credits his love for country music and his desire to become a country music star to his family up-bringing.

"I come from a close family where country music was played all the time and I was always encouraged to enter country music competitions," Binda Warren said.

"While I have an Assistant in Nursing qualification and have worked in rural and remote communities as a senior health worker, I have always known I was destined to take the stage as a country music singer.

"My mum told me to follow my dream and as a single dad I really appreciate the way my family has rallied round and made it possible for me to study music at TAFE in Cairns.

"I write my own music, play the guitar and know that my main instrument is my voice. I had heard how great the TAFE music course was and jumped at the chance to learn recording techniques, mixing my music with computers and being able to work with and form some great friendships with fellow musos."

Binda Warren has also appeared in movies and has auditioned for Australia's Got Talent. He is well on his way to a career on the stage and screen.



Last updated 23-July-2013

16. Source: Tropical North Queensland TAFE, <http://tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-us/news/2013052400.html>

## Mining keeps training on the boil

Friday, 24 May 2013 2:42PM

Top dollar mining jobs are continuing to lure Far Northern workers into the industry, with the number of boilermaking apprenticeships spiking by 30 per cent in two years.

New figures collated by Tropical North Queensland TAFE indicate boilermaking apprenticeships were continuing to increase, with more than 170 first, second and third year apprentices currently enrolled.

The number of apprentices in other trades industries, including fitting and turning, plumbing, brick and block, electrical and refrigeration also complement building industry indications of a renewed confidence in the trades industries.

Trades faculty manager Jonathan Todd said it was pleasing to see the number of apprentices gradually increasing, after a period of downturn.

"It is heartening to see the confidence in our region and particularly employers beginning to increase their uptake of apprentices, which means more jobs," Mr Todd said.

"Boilermaking continues to be a field of huge activity in terms of training and this can, of course, be attributed to the mining industry, but also because smaller employers are beginning to tread into niche fields, requiring specialist workers.

"Other trades training areas, including sheetmetal, automotive, diesel fitting and landscaping are also attracting more interest than they have in recent years."

Apprentices enrolled at TNQ TAFE in April 2013 include:

- Electrical 366
- Refrigeration 86
- Diesel fitting 189
- Automotive 88
- Boilermaking 171
- Fitting and Turning 110

Mr Todd said the \$30 million Trades Training Precinct, officially opened last year, was testament to TNQ TAFE's commitment to helping Cairns rebuild its workforce.

"We have the largest and best equipped training facility in Far North Queensland - we have faith in our region's ability to continue its climb, creating more jobs, stability and growth," he said.

In 2013, more than 11 700 students have enrolled to study at TNQ TAFE in Certificate, Diploma and short courses. Of this almost 1500 are undertaking apprenticeships or traineeships. More than 2000 contracts with business and government agencies have also been issued.



17. Source: Tropical North Queensland TAFE, <http://tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-us/news/2013091800.html>

## Tools to teach new skills

Wednesday, 18 September 2013 10:56AM

Automotive apprentices at Tropical North Queensland TAFE are learning their trade using the most advanced technology available.

Three local Snap-on Tools franchisees recently donated \$20,000 worth of diagnostic scanners used to identify issues in vehicles fitted with electronic systems.

Trades faculty manager Jonathan Todd said the new equipment would ensure automotive students' education continued to be high-quality and industry-relevant.

"More than 60 per cent of vehicles on the road operate using a computer so it is imperative that our training is current and incorporates state-of-the-art technology," Mr Todd said.

"We can't thank Snap-on Tools enough for donating these four scanners which will help give our students a well-rounded education and relevant skills to take back to their workplace."

The diagnostic scanners were donated by Cairns franchisee owners Martin Pearce, Anthony Santarossa and David Jones.

"We wanted to help TAFE give students access to the most advanced technology on the market, in turn better preparing apprentices with practical skills during their training," Mr Pearce said.



18. Source: Tropical North Queensland TAFE, <http://tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au/about-us/news/2013121000.html>

## New Diploma course includes Shanghai Experience

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Tuesday, 10 December 2013 10:38AM

For the first time students studying a Diploma of Hospitality qualification at Tropical North Queensland TAFE (TNQT) will in 2014 have the option of also travelling to Shanghai to study and immerse themselves in Chinese culture and language.

This additional option to the TNQT Diploma of Hospitality course is to ensure that graduates are trained and ready to take advantage of the growth in Chinese visitor numbers. The local hospitality industry have thrown support behind this new innovation to TNQT's Diploma of Hospitality course and been invited to engage students in work placements at their hotels.

TNQT education manager Trevor Jewell said he was pleased with the reaction of local industry to the Shanghai Experience addition to the Diploma of Hospitality course.

"In developing the structure of the 2014 Diploma of Hospitality course we worked closely with the local hospitality industry," Mr Jewell said.

"Industry has indicated to us that Diploma of Hospitality graduates with an understanding of Chinese culture and basic Mandarin skills and also possessing practical experience working face-to-face in China does improve their employability.

"The Shanghai Experience includes sessions in language skills and workshops ranging from Chinese etiquette and cultural history to musical appreciation, while studying at the Shanghai Second Polytechnic University. The students will also have the opportunity of putting their new skills into practice with work experience at the Shanghai Intercontinental Hotel."

The new diploma is available under the VET FEE-HELP scheme where students can **study now and pay later**. VET FEE-HELP provides an interest free loan from the Federal Government to help eligible students pay for all or part of their tuition fees.

Download the [course flyer \(PDF, 1.2MB\)](#) for more information, or call 1300 656 959 to talk with a Course Advisor. Further details of [VET FEE-HELP](#) can also be found on the website.

## Appendix 2: Voices of Queensland TAFE Teachers

In developing its response to the 2012 Skills and Training Taskforce Inquiry in Queensland, the QTU invited its TAFE members to provide comments to help inform its position. The following are representative examples of the comments made.

- TAFE provides education and training to a significant number of adults who have not completed secondary education to enter at higher levels eg Certificate 3 or Diplomas as well as apprenticeships. Many refugees and migrants, especially those arriving with limited experience in paid employment, have few training or educational options outside TAFE.
  - Private providers will provide distance education at a price but with no one on the ground to provide quality training because they are in it for profit.
  - Our core function should be to continue to provide quality training to everyone who needs it. I stress the word 'quality'; we must continue to provide a better quality of education than is being provided by private providers.
  - TAFE should continue to supply a broad range of qualifications, at a variety of levels and continue to provide a variety of avenues and opportunities to a diverse range of learners.
  - TAFE should provide a major role in the VET sector training as I believe our infrastructure and facilities are the best available as are our teachers and tutors.
  - TAFE is an instrument of economic development for Government and as such the course offerings must respond to Government priorities for training. However TAFE has a responsibility to provide a breadth of course offerings which reflect community interests, needs and the concept of lifelong learning and retraining.
  - Training in Literacy and Numeracy is essential for entry into the workforce and ability to perform successfully in the workplace. That is a no brainer. Life skills' training is the development of the individual as a person and cannot be neglected in the formation of any curriculum.
  - TAFE Institutes exist in a community and therefore must be responsive to that community's needs.
  - Guidelines need to be established for the provision of training and the co-provision of training that avoid duplication and ensure that the best provider of training actually provides the training.
  - Support functions at TAFE should be organised to provide support to the person at the right time, in the right place etc. to enable a student to complete their learning successfully.
  - TAFEs should continue to provide quality education and training across the State and across all certificate levels.
  - TAFEs should continue to provide post schooling students with a second chance as well as links for school students to enhance employability and job pathways opportunities.
  - Support services, e.g. counseling, library, tuition, need to continue to be funded at a satisfactory level.
  - I believe very strongly in the role of TAFE Institutes being maintained in regional areas - often it is about "second chance" education.
  - The local TAFE has been the hub of many regional towns.
  - TAFE needs to deliver training at all levels including foundation skills programs right through to Diploma or Advanced Diploma level courses.
  - TAFE offers quality that private RTO's don't. Private RTO's are established for profit which conflicts with the ethos of education.
  - TAFE Qld has a social responsibility to develop the skills of our most disadvantaged groups.
  - TAFE should be a hub for lifelong learning and community access.
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- Local regions and communities need TAFE as an alternative to university and as a trade or practical skills educational provider. TAFE has a solid reputation and long history in most communities – the public know its name and what it represents.

- TAFE is widely recognised by existing workers for its ability to provide RPL and qualification upgrades required by industry.
- The public wants a variety of educational offerings – the community love to come to TAFE for short courses, unique qualifications, skill sets etc.
- TAFE should set the pace and the benchmark for quality training as the public relies on the government provider to know what the educational and skills trends/needs are.
- TAFE course are attractive because they are flexible and delivered in many different modes.
- Self-managed and multi-faceted teaching teams/units can better cater to public need – as opposed to many 'expensive' levels of management who are 'out of touch' with students and industry.
- TAFE does have a social role to play and if you were to ask members of the public they'd agree.
- In relation to funding for training and education for disadvantaged groups, the cost of training an adult for four or five years in order to enter paid employment needs to be weighed against the supporting an untrained, unemployable adult in welfare programs for a lifetime.
- It is so important for TAFE to employ experienced professional teachers who not only have the right qualifications, the expert knowledge but also the industry experience so that they can relate to the students and to the employer.
- There should be support and co-operation between Institutes of TAFE rather than competition.
- Training provided by skilled teachers, that are supported in advancing their skills and knowledge is essential to continue to provide these services. It is also essential that they have the resources to be able to do this.
- It is essential that learning is provided by trained industry professionals. There is an unwritten curriculum that is taught together with the written curriculum that enables a student to be successful in the work environment that only a trained industry professional can impart.
- Access to services such as the library and support personnel is essential to every training environment.
- Competition is good. It helps to deter complacency where you may be the only provider. However it duplicates effort and encourages duplication of resources where two institutes are competing with each other. At present there is a reluctance for Institutes to share resources as they are competing in the same markets. It is a waste of resources for Institutes to duplicate effort in the preparation of resources, to not share resources or learnings or developments. At present Institutes work in isolation, with no communication or sharing, busily competing with each other.
- Unlike many tick and flick private providers, TAFE has trained professional teachers and industry educators. This is crucial for quality teaching and employment outcomes, with support from library, counseling and tutor support staff.
- Professional teachers with industry experience are essential. So is maintained currency.
- TAE (Cert IV in Training and Assessment) is not an adequate qualification for trainers.
- Over the years we have seen less and less accountability to our most disadvantaged groups. The gap has grown wider and in places like Cairns where there is high unemployment, this has a huge flow on effect to the community.
- I believe that TAFE colleges should work together rather than competing against each other.
- Development of training materials and resources is expensive and it has never been taken seriously in the time that I have worked for TAFE.
- In the past 8 years I have seen 'competition' between drive the quality of TAFE downwards not upwards. Mostly because it creates a 'dog eat dog' culture where attitudes become negative.
- We are living through a global economic crisis and they want to put fees up/make entitlement models. What are they thinking? People can barely afford to buy food, run cars, shop, go out, take holidays etc. How many can afford to make educational spending a priority? The government must support education at the vocational level to maintain a skilled workforce and an educated society. Education is a human right for everyone – we seem to be forgetting this on every level.

- I work with industry and meet with representatives regularly and try to adapt according to their needs and feedback.
- Encourage all TAFE teachers to be university educated professionals. Provide funding and incentives. Provide continued fair pay and conditions. A good service will promote itself.
- TAFE must continue to provide an alternative to the 'car boot trainers' that offer 'flexible delivery' - actually meaning 'no delivery, just cheat on the assessment'.
- The better qualified the teacher, the better the learning experience. Standards with regard to having suitably qualified teachers that have a subject qualification and a recognised teaching qualification should never be lowered or diluted for expediency.
- The learning experience is a combination of many factors - teaching, equipment, resources, feedback, opportunities to put learning into practice, variety of learning experiences enrolment procedures, records management, the environment for learning, etc. However, the most important factor is the quality of teaching. Professional development for teachers is an ongoing, lifelong and essential element in the provision of quality teaching.
- Validation and moderation need to take place at source with the programme teaching group participation and discussion. Training in validation and moderation can be funded centrally but the actual process needs to be on site.
- TAFE has trained professional teachers and industry educators. This is crucial for quality teaching and employment outcomes.
- Spend money for physical resources.
- Too much emphasis on ridiculous audit requirements including paperwork and not enough emphasis on quality of delivery.
- I believe that constantly offering positions as temporary contracts affects the quality of applicants. If institutes were able to offer applicants permanent positions it would be attractive to more qualified people.