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Submission to the TAFE Inquiry 2013

From

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And

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➤ **Development of skills in the Australian economy**

Allowing each person only one entitlement for a vocational course in their lifetime, will reduce Australia's ability to respond to the rapidly changing skill needs of the economy. Transferring the cost of subsequent training to the individual means that individuals are less likely to undertake this training; and therefore our economy is less likely to have the skills it needs to respond to changes and shortages. Our training system needs to encourage training and retraining. The current proposal will result in a less flexible, less appropriately skilled workforce.

➤ **Development of opportunities for Australian to improve themselves and increase their life and employment prospects.**

The present government funded TAFE systems allows for persons of all age and social status to participate in the TAFE environment and to partake of lifelong learning, education and skills development.

The current proposals will place huge limitations to these opportunities by:

- Reducing levels of funding to established TAFE Colleges.
- Moving away from Government funding of tertiary technical and further education.
- Imposing the requirement that people pay for their courses.

Moving to a competitive educational environment will not maintain the opportunities for learning in the Australian community nor will it increase the level of opportunity; rather opportunity will decrease as high fees and debt levels discourage the most needy from seeking education and training. The current NSW government is already suggesting a limit on training places, and training that does not include concepts of lifelong learning. - "...training places may be limited and will depend on skills priorities". (Smart and Skilled 2012) Self-determination for education will be taken out of the education system along with flexibility associated with a government funded education and training systems that delivers to all members of the community not just those who are able to consider a loan or pay for qualification.

TAFE NSW has a fantastic record in providing pathways for people. Many of these people are returning to the workforce after a long time, or after retrenchment and cannot simply step into a vocational course. They may need access to introductory courses to improve their confidence or literacy skills or computer or information skills; and to help them decide on new directions.

TAFE NSW has in place excellent infrastructure to assist students: counsellors, libraries and disability support workers all contribute to an opportunity for individuals to increase their life and employment prospects.

The changes to a competitive market for training and education leave Australian Governments with substantial costs and less control over the quality of education and training.

- **Those jurisdictions in which State Governments have announced funding decisions which may impact on their operation and viability.**
No comment

Thank you

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