

Subject: TAFE inquiry submission
Date: Friday, 19 April 2013 11:46:08 AM

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Thursday 18/04/2013

Dear Sir/Madam

I have been a teacher for 30 years and have taught across all ages – infants, primary, secondary and TAFE. I have had experience both in private and public education. I am currently teaching Information Technology and Business at TAFE NSW New England Institute at the Coonabarabran Campus.

Throughout my career in advising high school students and adults regarding their career and study options, I have seen the wonderful benefit that TAFE has and the tremendous impact that study at TAFE has had on the lives of so many of the successful students I have witnessed change their lives around. I have personally found extreme fulfilment and satisfaction at seeing hopelessness, poverty and despair change to fulfilment, prosperity and confidence.

I have time and again seen the wonderful benefit that Business studies and Information Technology in particular has had on the lives of so many of my students. One young woman stopped me in the street just the other day, she wanted to thank me for changing her life. I had not recognised her till she said her name, I could not believe the change that had occurred. She had come to my class, as a single mother with three little children, stuck on welfare payments with no skill, ill presented and a face displaying hopelessness and despair. She now stood before me, immaculately presented, professionally deported and articulate. With the security of a permanent job, she said how wonderful it was that she now could pay her bills, plan for the future and give her children a good education. So her TAFE course not only enabled her to get off centrelink payments, it gives her the ongoing ability to provide for herself and not only that - it benefits the future generation. She is, by far, not the only one who has presented such a life change.

I studied Education in the city and was sent to my first school in a small country town of Narromine, I met my husband and like so many other teachers and nurses became a farmer's wife. I have taught in country schools and TAFE campuses for the past 30 years. Thus I have seen firsthand the need of good education opportunities in regional areas, not only for infants, primary and highschool but also for further post school education such as TAFE and university. We have had to grapple with the problem with educating our own children. We have had to witness our youth move away time and again, in order to get further education. The local TAFE campus is the *only* local post high school education that is available to our young people if they cannot or prefer not to move away.

TAFE has forged an excellent reputation based on over 100 years of supplying quality education to generations of Australians. It has done this by affording education that:

1. Endows workers with a vast range of career options
2. Presents courses to recognised and regulated standards with nationally accredited qualifications.
3. Trains using highly qualified, vocationally experienced and dedicated teachers
4. Ensures all employees are Identity residency proofed, Australian security screened and Criminal and violent background checked
5. Guarantees all teachers have passed the Commission for Children and Young People

- Act Requirements and have completed the regulated Child Protection Training
6. Furnishes education in well supplied, well maintained campuses that are continually kept to high OHS standards
 7. Imparts education with additional support for Disabled students, Indigenous students and Minority Groups, considering racial, ethnic or ethno-religious differences
 8. Caters for students with LOE (Language other than English) and child care considerations
 9. Grants Career and Social Counselling and Mental Health Assistance
 10. Provides EEO (Equal Employment Opportunities) to thousands of workers across Australia

Each TAFE benefits each community and thus builds an entire nation. TAFE benefits local communities in so many ways:

1. It offers local employment to a vast range of skilled and unskilled workers
2. It enables students to stay at home while continuing their education
3. It provides pathways for students to obtain options for further education
4. It encourages young adults to become independent and self-proficient
5. It affords employable skilled workers for a host of differing careers in our local community such as hair dressers, beauticians, motor mechanics, aged care health workers, child care workers, office workers, retail workers, publican workers, farm hands and the list goes on...
6. It delivers short term OHS training, First Aid training, Chemical Handling, Safe-Driver training and a host of other job specific short course educational requirements.
7. It provides social contact and thus mental health benefits to many disabled and lonely students
8. It benefits the local community in a host of ways besides enabling the town businesses to continue employing local workers, it also supplies a community centre point that enables the town residences to meet and celebrate in a neutral venue.

The plan to replace trained and qualified TAFE teachers with untrained, unqualified and inexperienced "Tutors" can only mean that education will be degraded. How can a "Tutor" possibly teach students at the same capacity as a true qualified, educated and experienced "teacher". These recent new plans to dismantle TAFE campuses, to break down the teaching profession and to degrade educational standards, will result in future generations of young people who are stuck in the welfare cycle – both uneducated and unemployable!

There is nothing more important than the education of our children and young people. They should have first call on your budget rather than be told that giving them a high quality education is something we can't afford. Cutting back on education is not the answer to saving money. Transferring funding from tertiary level education to support primary level is counterproductive. It may save money now, but it will reduce our nation to third world standards of education in the future.

It's time for you to work together with the Federal Government in the interests of our future as a nation. This requires leadership and a greater financial commitment from you in education and our public schools and TAFE institutes.

I know, from personal experience, that investing more in our public schools and TAFE campuses, makes a real difference for our children and young people, our local communities and hence to our nation as a whole will benefit from it.

Sincerely

Mary Moss

Kind Regards

Mary Moss