

FACTSheets

Reforms, Funding, Fees & Debts

TAFE Community Alliance

- Vocational Education and Training (VET) reform commenced in NSW with 1.7 billion cuts to schools and TAFE in 2012 resulting in the deletion of 800 jobs.
- A massive 9.5% fee increase for students which will disproportionately affect disadvantaged students and those in regional areas who rely on TAFE for accessible, high-quality skills training.
- The NSW government has stopped funding art education in TAFE, leaving 4,000 students without access to finishing their courses in 2013 unless they can pay fees of \$5,500 to \$8,800 per year. Under *Smart and Skilled* this removal of funding will be replicated across all vocational areas that are not in skill shortage areas reducing choice for students and favouring the wealthy.
- Only those students enrolled in Diploma or higher courses are eligible for VET Fee Help which in turn leads to graduates who are entering relatively low paid industries doing so with large debts.
- The government claims that art is not vocational and that there are few job prospects for artists. But TAFE art graduates are employed across many industries - as art therapists, as art teachers, designers, in galleries and museums. These reforms inhibit student choice to be educated in fine arts and gain access to these industries.
- The reforms are meant to address skills shortages however the drastic cuts will see skill levels in NSW decline and are likely in the longer term to create skills shortages in other vocational areas.
- The cuts will damage the TAFE sector in NSW, stretch the already hardworking but overworked employees and will lead to TAFE courses being cut.
- Regional economies will also be affected as jobs are cut from local TAFE colleges or campuses are closed as has happened in Victoria and Queensland.
- A well resourced public TAFE sector is vital to achieving a skilled workforce and contributes to reducing inequalities in society.
- TAFE NSW has been the gold standard in the Australian vocational education and training system for generations meeting the collective needs of society, students and industry.

TAFE IS TOO IMPORTANT TO LOSE!