

## **INQUIRY INTO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Supplementary questions on notice - Nowra Hearing – Monday 12 October 2015**

**Questions for Mr Ted Clapham, Head teacher, Carpentry, TAFE NSW Illawarra Institute**

1. Please explain the concept of 'education' in contrast to 'training' and indicate
  - a. Why is it, in your experience, important for the student and for society?
  - b. Does Smart and Skilled for a particular qualification provide funding for education that is not directly necessary to achieve training outcomes?
    - i. If not, please explain what the implications are for:
      1. TAFE, and
      2. private for-profit providers.
2. How many teachers in your section have lost their positions as a result of restructuring or other changes since 2011? Please specify permanent full time equivalent positions and/or part time casual staff:
  - a. How many were there before the restructuring began?
  - b. Please explain the impacts on students and TAFE of this change.

### **Please explain the concept of 'education' in contrast to 'training'**

At times the terms are interchangeable but there are fundamental differences in my opinion. Education is the process of transfer of “knowledge” or “knowledge acquisition”. This involved the person being educated (the student) gaining knowledge. Generally theoretical knowledge. There is usually a Teacher involved who may also be a facilitator and mentor.

Training to me involves is the “acquisition of skills”. Before skills can be acquired or learnt a certain amount of underpinning knowledge is required. Once the required underpinning knowledge has been gained, the best way to acquire a skill is to –

- Observe the skill being performed by an expert (trainer)
- Mimic the skill along with the expert
- Practice and perfect the skill over time
- Perform the skill under assessment conditions
  - To a set standard
  - In a set timeframe
  - Safely
- Please note that attitudes, values, teamwork and tradesman like habits are also developed.

There is, I believe a knowledge/ skills/ knowledge continuum. That is knowledge is acquired pertaining to a particular skill. The skill is developed and perfected which is in itself new knowledge which may lead to aspiration of higher learning. This new learning will enable the development of new skills etc.....

In a TAFE setting of the Carpentry section of TAFE NSW Illawarra institute (Nowra) Education and training take place as follows.

- Students attend for 6 x 4 day blocks per year for 3 years
- Before each block attendance the student completes a “student guide” that comprises reference material and questions designed to
  - Inform the student about the content and context of their upcoming block
  - Assess their comprehension of the subject matter
  - Establish a degree of underpinning knowledge
- The block commences with a reflexion on previous blocks and an overview of the current work (linking knowledge)
- A short MOODLE based quiz will –
  - Focus the student onto the block content
  - Establish how diligent the student was with his pre block work
  - Identify gaps in knowledge and understanding for individuals and for the class
- Next a theory lesson is conducted including WHS implications and risk assessment
- Over the 4 days, depending on the content a blended mix of theory and practical components are taught/ demonstrated/ facilitated / observed and assessed.
- As all my units are competency based a result of NC (not competent) or AC (achieved competence) is awarded
- To be deemed competent in a unit the Students must pass –
  - Student guide (submitted and substantially completed. Errors allowed)
  - Pre block quiz
  - Practical tasks. Completed safely and to a standard and timeframe
  - End of block theory exam
  - ALSO. The employer must sign that they have demonstrated appropriate level of competency on the job for that unit.

I don't see the importance of differentiating between the education and training. Both are components of the work done under VET (hence the name), both are important and neither should be diminished to save money at the expense of students learning outcomes.

### **Why is it, in your experience, important for the student and for society?**

Why is education and training important? Society needs people to be productive. Without skills and without knowledge productivity is impossible to achieve.

**Does Smart and Skilled for a particular qualification provide funding for education that is not directly necessary to achieve training outcomes?**

**If not, please explain what the implications are for:**

**TAFE, and private for-profit providers.**

Smart and Skilled funds me to train (educate) young people to be carpenters in conjunction with the training they receive on the job from their employer.

As far as I know what I deliver is in accordance with the Training package for that qualification overseen by ASQA and under the provisions of State Training.

I would argue that all the training (education) we deliver is necessary to achieve the course outcomes. The implication of any diminishment of the content would result in diminished standard of student outcomes. Furthermore any further cutting of deliver hours may well lead to unemployment for many highly skilled highly qualified teachings.

In the longer term we risk deskilling the workforce. The trade teachers of the future will be drawn from a pool of inferior tradesmen and the cycle continues.

I have no idea what the implication is for private RTOs.

**How many teachers in your section have lost their positions as a result of restructuring or other changes since 2011?**

**Please specify permanent full time equivalent positions and/or part time casual staff:**

**a. How many were there before the restructuring began?**

**b. Please explain the impacts on students and TAFE of this change.**

The impact to date has been that one of my fulltime teachers has needed to teach at another section at another discipline for all of this current year. Another fulltime teacher needs to travel 150km to another Moruya for part of his program.

I have seen a significant reduction in part time hours. I would estimate the equivalent of one fulltime teacher. The implication of this is the potential loss of our most valuable links to industry and our most current teachers.

Ted Clapham.  
Head Teacher Building and Construction  
TAFE NSW Illawarra Institute, Nowra

**Question on notice.**

**Mr CLAPHAM:** We are yet to see the full impact but we are already seeing students who are not coping withdrawing from courses. I think there has been an increase. I do not have the figures.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** Is it possible for you to quantify that on notice?

**Mr CLAPHAM:** I will do my best to do that.

The impact of not having tutorial support-

As I stated during the inquiry at Nowra, in the past we conducted tutorial support for students who struggled with the course work. This year we have not been able to offer this support.

Students are struggling. Some have withdrawn and many of these have done so before the SALM system was able to enrol them so the data is lost.

However, my teachers tell me that there is a problem. At the end of the semester when all assessments have been marked we will see how many have been deemed NOT COMPETENT. It is too early to see the effects of this cut.