

Question

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

Response

- a. Education is holistic in nature. The transfer of learning between the teacher and the student occurs at a deeper level. This gives the student a deeper understanding of the theoretical concepts underpinning the learning and practice of the “*hands on*” trade tasks performed by qualified tradespeople. Training is delivered at a much shallower level.

Training is more the repeated performance of the task so that the learner becomes more skilled with practice. For example you can train a dog to do simple tasks such as to sit, roll over and fetch a ball but the dog does not understand why it is performing these tasks. An Electrician can be trained to connect an electrical motor to a power supply. However, if the Electrician is educated in the operating principles of an electric motor then the Electrician can better recommend to the customer what type of electric motor they should purchase for the type of mechanical load they wish to drive. When the electric motor becomes faulty then the Electrician can through their understanding of the operating principles of the particular type of motor understand what symptoms the faulty motor is displaying and hence what may be causing the fault.

A student that has been educated as opposed to being trained develops better literacy and numeracy skills and they grow more as a person. They develop greater comprehension skills and become more logical in their thinking, meaning that they can contribute more to society. It is widely accepted that a society develops through education. This is why our current society is more developed than it was thousands of years ago.

- b. With the introduction of “**Smart and Skilled**” at the beginning of the 2015 teaching year we have at Hunter TAFE Institute cut 144 hours of face to face classroom delivery from the Certificate 3 Electrtechnology (Systems Electrician) Trade course. This means that concepts that we have studied more in depth, previously, have had to be watered down in terms of delivery. We have been forced to educate less to achieve the training outcomes of our National Training Package in the reduced classroom delivery time. Students are being asked to study more content at home. They are being asked to achieve the learning when by themselves and not when in the presence of a teacher. Our assessment events have been modified to reflect the fact that we teach less theoretical concepts so that we can cover enough of the required practical content in the time that the students are present on campus. The length in terms of time allowed to complete many of our assessment events has been reduced in comparison to the completion time of just a couple of years ago. For example a 2 hour long theory examination may now only be 60 minutes in length.
- i. The implications for TAFE and for private for profit providers are the same since we all operate in the same training market under the same funding systems. We are all teaching to a budget by cutting delivery time from the courses. Increasing the size of class enrolments meaning that the teacher/trainer can spend less time personally one on one with each student during the lesson. And we are also now delivering more content online instead of in a supportive classroom environment. TAFE is doing this so that we do not go over-budget whilst private for profit providers are doing this so that they can return dividends to owners or shareholders.

Michael Dyer
Electrical Trades Teacher
Muswellbrook TAFE Campus
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Question

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.

Response

- a. In 2013 there were four full time permanent teachers of Electrical Trades in my section at Muswellbrook TAFE Campus. There was one full time permanent Head Teacher. Currently, one of the full time permanent teachers is acting in the Head Teacher position and the other three full time permanent teachers are filling their substantive positions.
- b. With the introduction of Smart and Skilled we have lost 488 hours of face to face classroom delivery this year. This is the equivalent of 0.67 of a full time teachers annual teaching hours. Two part time casual teachers that were teaching in the section last year are no longer doing so. Furthermore, we ran a night time tutorial assistance class one night a week last year which we no longer do so. Students would come along to this tutorial class to receive extra tuition which they can no longer do.

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