

Submission
No 93

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

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially Confidential

1. That General Purpose Standing Committee No 6 inquire into and report on vocational education and training in New South Wales, and in particular:

Under the terms of reference,

(a) the factors influencing student choice about entering the VET system

(i) **motivation to study** is obviously no choice at all, unless one wants to remain unemployed and unemployable

(ii) **choice of course, course location and method of study.** Course is a personal choice, based on one's capabilities and availability of jobs in the field

Locality centres on the distance to the closest TAFE facility

Methods of study is either class or online based

(iii) **barriers to participation, including students in the non-government education and home schooling sectors:** disability is an obstacle to equal education, as it depends on the accessibility of the college and assistance according to the disability

(b) **the role played by public and private vocational education providers and industry in:**

(i) **educational linkages with secondary and higher education.** This is important. Once the link between schools and further education is lost, then attrition rates could be high

(ii) **the development of skills in the New South Wales economy.** There is a serious shortage of skills development, which will have an impact on the future skilled labour industries

(iii) **the development of opportunities for unemployed people, particularly migrants and persons in the mature workers' category, to improve themselves and increase their life, education and employment prospects.** I have one comment. Unemployed people, including refugees and mature workers wishing to retrain cannot access courses IF THEY CANNOT AFFORD THE FEE

(iv) **the delivery of services and programs particularly to regional, rural and remote communities.** If, teachers are retrenched because of falling numbers, there is no delivery of services

(c) **factors affecting the cost of delivery of affordable and accessible vocational education and training, including the influence of the co-contribution funding model on student behaviour and completion rates** The deliberate cutting of education funding by state and federal governments is demoralising to students, and creates social problems

(d) **the effects of a competitive training market on student access to education, training, skills and pathways to employment, including opportunities and pathways to further education and employment for the most vulnerable in our community including those suffering a disability or severe disadvantage** Competition between "education businesses" is destroying equity of education

(e) **the level of industry participation in the vocational education and training sector, including the provision of sustainable employment opportunities for graduates, including Competency Based Training and the application of training packages to workforce requirements.** Industry should have more input into the kind of skilled and professional workers they need so that present and future planning can be initiated

(f) the Smart and Skilled reforms, including: (i) alternatives to the Smart and Skilled contestable training market and other funding policies (ii) the effects of the Smart and Skilled roll out on school based apprenticeships Have been discredited.

(g) any other related matter.

On a personal level, as a retired Library Technician of Wollongong TAFE, from 1984 to 1999, I was proud to be a part of an organisation for people seeking education, not only for vocational reasons, but also for the philosophical satisfaction of learning for learning's sake. Surely an all-round education banishes ignorance and produces what Thomas Hobbes called "The Happiness Principle".