

Submission
No 58

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 29/06/2015

Partially Confidential

To whom it may concern,

TAFE has become an important fixture in my family. I have a disability that has severely compromised my ability to work. In response to this, in 2010, I went to TAFE, as much therapy as education. Over the next year and a half I found myself struggling, so with the help of teachers and a disability support officer, I gave myself some time and tried again.

Since 2012 I have completed three certificates and I am currently about half way through my fourth. I'm not ready to work, but I am happy to study, each day making me more employable and one hopes, a bit wiser. However I mentioned family in the first paragraph, exactly what does this mean?

My younger brother has completed FIVE TAFE certificates, three in Fine Arts and two in Horticulture and he has enrolled in another. My mother, forced to 'retire' after she was given a redundancy payout, took it upon herself to study at TAFE in her late 60s, having never completed high school.

My Mum has too much love and energy to slow down. She is onto her second certificate and she is active in the community with her volunteer work. She was nominated last year for a NSW Carer of the Year Award. She has devoted her life to improving the lives of my brothers and I, and now, with TAFE, she is helping herself to help others.

TAFE has made a MASSIVE impact on my family, so the same opportunities should exist for everyone. Everyone should have access to this great institution. Cutting funds reduces the vitality of TAFE, the services on offer, like Disability Support people, and the foundational experience that study gives.

Smart and Skilled has taken away, not given, and the thought that private institutions benefit while public education suffers is not helpful or prudent. My family is not a burden on the state, we are proof that education can lift people up and produce enlightened, productive citizens. Please seek to build up TAFE, not hack it down.

With kind regards,