

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 22/07/2015

Partially Confidential

Our submission to this inquiry is to highlight that home educated children are forgotten, if not almost discriminated against participating in the Smart and Skilled funding program. We are a home educating family of 2 children (9 and 6). Both my husband and I are well educated with not only postgraduate degree qualifications but also have done many TAFE courses in our lives.

Home educated children are not "at school" and therefore the Smart & Skilled model excludes them from funded models. Parents have already taken on the costly process of home education and usually forgone income to do so. Home educated students receive no funding from the NSW government.

Policies need to be developed that determine that home educated students are considered an "exceptional circumstance" and allow home educated students to qualify for Smart and Skilled funding regardless of being "at school."

Students who are registered for home education in NSW are meeting the compulsory education requirement of the NSW Education Act 1990 but they are not enrolled in a school and are not considered to be "school students" by the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) or TAFE. School students who wish to undertake TAFE studies are directed to school based apprenticeships or traineeships or TVET courses as a pathway to vocational education. Home educated students are excluded from these courses. Access to TVET courses and school-based apprenticeships and traineeships require that students be enrolled in school and therefore TAFE and DEC policy is that home educated students cannot undertake these programs.

Furthermore, home educated students are ineligible for the award of the Higher School Certificate and many use a TAFE course as a pathway to further study.

I hope that you will consider that to provide rich educational options in our country is to understand that diversity is the key, and that alternative pathways enables many people access to higher levels of education.

I look forward to a positive outcome for home educated children.
I have attached my details in the form below and happy to be contacted.