

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

### The Importance of TAFE in Smaller Country Towns

Whilst cities have sufficient target markets for a variety of RTOs smaller country towns may only have TAFE skills provision. The working poor, those with disabilities, victims of domestic abuse, early school leavers, English as a second language speakers, the educationally deprived could, through TAFE, and the provision of free courses, change their lives and their futures.

Many country towns have limited transport. To travel to a larger centre is not possible for those who do not own cars or who cannot afford fuel to travel.

On-line learning is not the answer for those with limited literacy and numeracy skills or for those with a basic education. School testing has revealed there are many in this category.

Smart and Skilled has limited exemptions. Unfortunately, victims of domestic abuse who have financially secure partners are not eligible for assistance-nor are the working poor. Previously-school students from poorer homes could improve their skills by attending a TAFE night class and thus improve not only their school performance but their job prospects. This is now barred and referred to as double-dipping

Those who have struggled with learning at school are not going to miraculously learn quickly away from school. It may take several Cert Is or IIs to achieve necessary skill levels. One exemption in a year covers one semester. For many the \$80:00 for the second semester is prohibitive. \$80:00 is a week's food.

To assume all people learn at the same pace is to show an inadequate knowledge of learning theories and educational processes.

Clarification of funding models is required. Funding cannot be tied to a semester model. Jobs are lost, part-time work may, or may not eventuate, sickness and accidents occur randomly. The need for skills enhancement is ongoing.' Multiple entry and exit' with individual programmes is more applicable .

As a teacher with over twenty years of experience I have enjoyed assisting people in all the above mentioned categories. TAFE has provided the opportunities for many to lead happier and more productive lives. It has been distressing this year to not be able to provide tuition for a domestic abuse victim, to teach two poorly- paid young men who needed additional skills to join the armed forces ( they could not afford the fees) and not to assist several students struggling with cert IVs and finally two school students who were being bullied.

Only being charged once for a course is a positive feature of ' Smart and Skilled', however, for graduating students to be both smart and skilled more attention is required on the actual process of acquiring knowledge.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this discussion.