
From:
Sent: Wednesday, 17 April 2013 7:10 PM
To: Committee, EE (REPS)
Subject: Re: Cuts to funding for TAFE Fine Arts courses

I am very concerned about recent cuts to funding for TAFE Fine Arts courses for two main reasons:

1.
I am concerned about the impact of the cuts on particular groups of students who are already disadvantaged in the education system and for whom TAFE represents an irreplaceable opportunity to gain skills and qualifications that will enable them to enter the workforce or go on to further study.

I'm thinking here of the so-called "second chance" students such as recent migrants or women who have been prevented for whatever reason from taking up education in their late teens/early twenties. It's actually misleading to call this "second chance" as for many of these people this is in fact their first, and only, chance at education.

Another group I have seen benefit enormously from what TAFE provides is the younger students who have left school with poorly-developed study habits and/or a mild disability, or who are simply not developmentally ready for university-style tertiary education.

Fine Arts training as provided by TAFE gives these students skills and study habits that will allow some of them to go on to further university-based training, while others are able to find work in a surprisingly wide range of areas. These students are highly unlikely to take on the debt-load required to cover the new fee costs at TAFE and are faced with a lifetime without qualifications or skills to enter the work force.

2.
In addition, I believe these cuts to be extremely short-sighted in terms of their impact on the broader community and culture of NSW. There seems to be a general understanding that society benefits from artists' work that fails to take into account their training needs. The fine arts courses at TAFE have provided excellent skills-based, practical training in the fundamental skills required for artists. The contrast with the level of government support for sport is particularly striking.

I believe the recent cuts should be reversed and funding for TAFE Fine Arts courses re-instated.

Regards

PMA Pickles

