

Funding increases for TAFE courses

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TAFE teachers and students were given some welcome news in October, when a significant number of qualifications on the NSW skills list received funding increases.

Earlier this year, Federation reported that pressure from industry groups, TAFE teachers and Federation on the Department of Industry had restored and back dated funding for heavy vehicle apprentices. The qualification price increased from \$13,360 to \$17,270.

Now a review of all qualifications on the skills list has resulted in funding increases for a further 78 qualifications.

TAFE teachers in heavy and light automotive and commercial

cooking have campaigned and lobbied for increases in Smart and Skilled funding. The funding for apprentices completing Certificate III in light vehicle mechanical technology has increased from \$12,240 to \$13,750. For those in commercial cooking, the funding is up from \$9,540 to \$10,570.

Other qualifications to increase include community services, music, nursing, aero skills, health and fitness plus catering and patisserie. The price increases took effect from 28 September 2017 and will be applied retrospectively to existing enrolments. Visit the digital edition of *Education* for a live link to the new Smart and Skilled prices.

Federation will continue

to campaign against the ill-conceived Smart and Skilled voucher system. The policy framework started in 2013 with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) conducting a review of price and fee arrangements for government-funded vocational education and training under Smart and Skilled. Federation has argued this methodology to determine price and fee arrangements is flawed. It has resulted in increased costs to students and allowed private for-profit training companies access to public funding.

Smart and Skilled has increased unnecessary compliance and auditing requirements for TAFE teachers and continues to pressure teaching sections to reduce course delivery hours

for students. TAFE teachers and support staff have suffered from increased workload pressure since the introduction of Smart and Skilled. Federation members continue to question the ever-increasing, meaningless compliance requirements of Smart and Skilled; compliance that members believe reduces time available for teaching and learning. The Stop TAFE Cuts campaign is fighting for guaranteed funding for TAFE students. We will continue to expose the flaws of the voucher system that allows private profit from scarce public funds.

Members are encouraged to urge their colleagues and local community to join the campaign at www.stoptafecuts.com.au.