

Fund TAFE First: Greens paint alternative vision to training privatisation*

Media release: 10 March 2015

The Greens announced today that they will be moving to protect TAFE's public funding from competition and slash fees, in a \$900 million boost to the public provider's annual secure budget.

Under the Greens' "*Fund TAFE First*" replacement for the Baird government's "*Smart and Skilled*", the public provider would have first access to all funds for each course that it teaches or could teach.

According to Greens NSW MP John Kaye, this would reinstate more than \$600 million a year to TAFE's secure budget.

TAFE would be able to restore all of the 1,100 staff positions that have been deleted since the Baird government moved to impose the '*Smart and Skilled*' training market.

TAFE colleges would be able to reverse the cuts to courses, colleges and contact hours, reinstate face-to-face teaching, including where it have been replaced by on-line, and restore outreach programs and services for students with disability.

The Greens also announced an additional \$180 million a year to cut fees and a process for negotiating with the Commonwealth to restore publicly funded Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas. This money would come from existing state funding of non-government schools. TAFE would be free for most students.

An additional \$120 million a year would be allocated to funding TAFE to repair the damage done by '*Smart and Skilled*.'

The Greens foreshadowed that after the election they would enter into 'Plan B' negotiations with the Labor party to reform their plan for a 30 percent cap on the proportion of the vocational education and training budget in the competitive market.

Dr Kaye said that while his party felt that there should be no competition for TAFE's budget, the worst case scenario should be a limit of no more than 15 percent of public funds, applied on a course-by-course basis.

For-profit private providers should be excluded from receiving public funding.

The Greens will also initiate a wide-ranging inquiry into competitive funding and the impacts of changes to vocational education and training over the past two decades, including the introduction of training packages.

Need to know more? What are the Government's or the Coalition's plans for education?

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