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## Three things you must know about Tony Abbott's plans for TAFE

***“If elected the next Coalition Government will take up the reins where the Howard Government left off.”***

**Coalition Education Spokesman Christopher Pyne, 25 May 2010**

The Federal election will be important for the future of vocational training and education in this country. But, so far, the commitments the Coalition has made are not good news for TAFE teachers or students.

1. **Cut Funding.** The Coalition announced in May that it will cut \$1 billion from the training budget if it wins the election. That means a reduction of 396,000 in the number of training places funded by the Federal Government. The TAFE share of those funded training places is estimated to be around 160,000. Less training places means less funding and less resources.
2. **Bring Back Australian Technical Colleges.** Instead of investing in TAFE, the Howard Government chose to build new technical colleges which delivered a small number of trade courses to school age students. They cost 50 per cent more than they were supposed to, took years to develop and not a single student graduated by the time the Coalition lost office in 2007. Instead of learning from their mistake, the Coalition is promising to build more of these colleges. No details yet have been announced of how many colleges or where they will be located.
3. **Reduce Rights at Work.** Tony Abbott has promised to reintroduce individual contracts and cut protection from unfair dismissal. That is bad news for staff working in TAFE. Under John Howard, federal funding for TAFE was made conditional on staff being offered individual contracts which could cut basic working conditions. The Coalition has not said yet whether it would demand this again if it wins the election.

**The AEU is keeping the pressure on all political parties to make commitments that will benefit TAFE. To keep informed during the campaign visit [www.aeufederal.org.au](http://www.aeufederal.org.au)**