



Australian Education Union

TAFE Division

Policy on Partnerships and Pathways

As adopted at the 2001 National TAFE Council AGM



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Introduction

TAFE's role as the predominant provider of vocational education and training across Australia must be strengthened and promoted if TAFE is to continue to provide the quality education and training required by the community and industry.

The AEU and its Branches and Associated Bodies will work throughout 2002 to ensure that all governments recognise and fund TAFE as a distinct and discrete sector of public education for its work in vocational and further education, and for the multiple areas of TAFE provision.

This will include the following action:

Recommendations

1. The AEU and Branches and Associated Bodies will continue to actively seek a meaningful dialogue with the Coalition to reverse their destructive policies in relation to TAFE funding.

The AEU and Branches and Associated Bodies will continue to work with the ALP, the Greens and the Democrats, to develop strategies to ensure that base Federal funding for TAFE is increased to address the transfer of institute funding to non-TAFE providers, to redress the reductions in overall state and territory contributions since 1991-92 and address the impact of the Commonwealth cuts/freeze.

2. The NTCE will undertake further work to clarify and determine TAFE's role in education and training and to develop appropriate supportive materials for use by all TAFE members.

Part of this work will include the identification of issues that Branches and Associated Bodies can influence and control in promoting TAFE.

Case studies will be developed that highlight the positive contribution that TAFE has made to industry and the community and these will be used as part of a publicity campaign.

The campaign will include an edition of *The Australian TAFE Teacher* focussing on partnerships and pathways within education.

3. The AEU and Branches and Associated Bodies will work with state and federal governments, communities and stakeholders to further develop ways in which disadvantaged students, including youth at risk, can be supported through general and vocational education courses in TAFE. This includes additional funding on a dollar for dollar basis with the states and territories to assist TAFE Institutes enrolling a disproportionately large number of disadvantaged students. The AEU will support the establishment of an Education Equity Program to ensure disadvantaged groups are able to equitably access education and training opportunities provided by TAFE.

This includes access issues for higher certificate levels for those who have not been able to undertake lower certificate levels particularly where these are provided by VET in schools.

That the Federal Office coordinate the sharing of information on state based campaigns and strategies concerning the closure of TAFE courses, where the courses are offered at schools, thereby denying the broader community access to TAFE courses.

4. The AEU will undertake further investigation into partnership to ensure that TAFE's role as the predominant provider of vocational education and training is safeguarded, and that new models reflect cooperative, rather than competitive, arrangements among public education sectors. This will include strengthening TAFE's role in research. Investigation of the models should include the identification of barriers (including funding models) to the development of positive and cooperative partnerships between public education providers.

National TAFE Council Executive will develop a set of guiding principles for partnership models of education including multi sectoral institutions.

5. The AEU will participate in the debate around partnerships and pathways in education in a variety of forums, including Campus Review and through dialogue with other unions, TAFE students and the TAFE Directors Australia.
6. The AEU will continue to lobby all political parties to end competitive tendering arrangements and allocation of funds to private providers where TAFE or AMES is able to undertake the education/training. This will include further changes to the application of National Competition Policy and the strengthening of community obligations in education policy at Federal and state levels.
7. That NTCE produce a discussion paper on the benefits and problems associated with the implementation of a registration process and body for TAFE teachers and lecturers. The discussion paper will detail various models for registration with a view to publishing the benefits or otherwise of each model to promote debate/education on this issue.
8. That the NTCE investigate the issues related to the coverage of TAFE teachers who are employed under Industrial Instruments of one state or TAFE institute but work on a long term basis in another state or jurisdiction.
9. That NTCE hold discussion with other unions that do or may cover private providers of VET, to pursue issues around parity of salaries and working conditions across the public and private sectors.
10. That the Federal Office coordinate the sharing of information concerning state based campaigns and strategies on VET class sizes, in schools and in TAFE, in order that this information be available to be incorporated into all state based class size campaigns where appropriate.
11. That the AEU seek out unions providing VET as private providers or in partnership with private

providers with a view to their involving TAFE as the preferred provider of VET.