TAFE students hit again by fee rises in State Budget



The State Budget has revealed TAFE students are in for more financial pain, with the announcement of yet another fee increase.

TAFE fees will go up another 4% next year, which is on top of massive fee increases seen over the last few years.

“Some students have already had to wear fee increases of more than 650% over the last two years,” said State School Teachers’ Union President Pat Byrne.

“Students simply can’t afford these extra fee rises, and we are very concerned this means students who are already struggling financially will drop out.

“We have already seen student numbers drop by almost 9,000 in 2014 compared to 2013, which we believe is as a result of these fee increases.

“We suspect student numbers fell even further in 2015, but the government has so far refused to release the figures.

“This state needs a highly trained, highly skilled workforce, and we cannot afford for the government to continue to drive students away from TAFE.”

Ms Byrne said there had also been a significant cut to the training sector, with $13 million to be cut from service delivery next year, and another $50 million to be cut the year after.

“These cuts will result in fewer support services for TAFE colleges, fewer support staff, less resources and a reduction in support programs,” said Ms Byrne.

“Basically, this government is gutting the TAFE system, and young West Australians and people seeking to upskill are the ones who will suffer, and this will have flow on effects for the WA economy.”

The budget also revealed an $80 million saving over the next four years for further staff redundancies in the TAFE system.

“The TAFE sector has already lost almost 500 staff in the last four years,” she said,

“That means the remaining staff have less support and higher workloads, which is putting them under significant pressure.”

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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