New report shows TAFE in crisis

The Australian Education Union says new data released today shows that while university funding is growing, TAFEs are being defunded by both state and federal governments.

The Mitchell Institute's 2017 report into expenditure on education and training in Australia shows that funding for vocational education has dropped 4.7 per cent below 2005 levels.

"TAFEs are in crisis across the country. This report details stark funding cuts and a clear trend of disinvestment away from skills and vocational education," said Pat Forward AEU Federal TAFE Secretary.

"TAFE is the worst funded education sector. We have lost more than 16,000 teachers from the TAFE system over the last four years. Every major stakeholder is calling on the Turnbull Government to invest in the sector, and to develop coherent policy into the future.

"Successive Australian governments have failed to address systemic under-funding of TAFE. The damage done to the reputation of the system by the dodgy activities of private for-profit providers and the VET FEE-HELP scheme mean TAFE enrolments continue to plummet.

"Today's data follows the release of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research report last week, showing TAFE operating revenue has fallen 17 per cent over the last year.

"It is now cheaper, in terms of upfront costs, for students to enrol in a Bachelor degree at university, than a vocational qualification at Certificate three level.

"The Turnbull Government must re-invest in TAFE, returning government investment to sustainable levels, and guarantee a minimum 70 per cent government funding to TAFE," said Ms Forward.

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