



2 June 2016

Christine McCall
President
Adult Learning Australia
Henderson House
45 Moreland Street
FOOTSCRAY VIC 3011

Dear Ms McCall,

Re: Lifelong and Lifewide Learning Policy Statement

Thank you for sending a copy of your policy statement, *Lifelong and Lifewide Learning*.

Labor values the role of the adult learning sector, including the array of education providers represented by your organisation.

That is why we, along with so many proponents of the role of the vocational education sector, have been outraged at the lack of effective action that has been taken by the Abbott-Turnbull Government to deal with the scams, and outright fraud that has been perpetuated on students and taxpayers through the lax administration of VET FEE-HELP.

Through their failure to fix up the mess, the Liberals have caused immense damage to the entire adult education sector – community, public and private.

As you will be aware, the Liberals have cut \$2.75 billion from the skills portfolio including axing the National Workforce Development Fund, the Workplace English Language and Literacy Program and cutting funding to the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program.

Labor has announced a full, evidence-based review of the vocational education and training system to build a stronger sector and weed out dodgy providers and student rip-offs.

The vocational education and training sector deserves a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to policy-making to ensure it is fit for the critical task of preparing Australians for the jobs of the future.

The Terms of Reference for this review include ensuring a regional presence and ensuring that all Australians have access to quality vocational education and training.

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opportunities. We would welcome the input of Adult Learning Australia as part of the review process.

Last year, on National TAFE Day, the Leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten and Shadow Minister for Vocational Education, Sharon Bird, announced Labor's plan to back TAFE into the future by developing a National Priority Plan. This plan will place TAFE squarely as the public provider within the vocational education and training sector and ensure it's viability and strength into the future.

For the first time there will be a clear description at the national level on the role and purpose of public provision – it will describe what government expects from TAFE as the public provider and will make clear what makes it different from other providers.

This plan will define the unique role of TAFE as our public provider and will deliver on this by working with the States and Territories to provide ongoing guaranteed TAFE funding.

It is vital that we train and retrain our workforce to deliver on improving the participation, productivity, innovation and growth efforts required for the nation. To that end we welcome your policy statement and look forward to working with the adult learning sector to advance our shared agenda.

Yours sincerely,

ALP Information Services Unit

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