

NSW Budget has no plan for TAFE growth

June 21, 2019

The meagre 3 per cent increase in spending on TAFE in Tuesday's NSW Budget revealed the Berejiklian Government had no plans for any significant growth in public vocational education, Federation analysis of the documents reveal.

Despite pledging \$79.6 million over four years to deliver a new TAFE super campus for western Sydney and \$61.7 million for eight new regional Connected Learning Centres, NSW Teachers Federation President Maurie Mulheron said the 3 per cent increase in overall expenditure revealed the underlying motive of this NSW Government.

"This is not a budget that plans for any significant growth in TAFE services in NSW," Mr Mulheron said.

"When you look at allocations for 'other operating expenses', they are virtually static at \$424 million. This means that when allowing for even minimal price inflation, the NSW Government is expecting the TAFE system to do more with less money."

The Budget papers showed \$1.85 billion in recurrent expenditure allocation for TAFE in 2019-20, which is only a 3 per cent increase on the revised budget recurrent allocation of \$1.79 billion for TAFE NSW in 2018-19.

Approximately \$53 million extra has been allowed for employee-related expenses on an existing allocation of more than \$1.22 billion.

Mr Mulheron said this Budget comes at a time when the number of year 12 graduates studying or training in the year after they leave school has fallen to its lowest point this decade.

"This is why the Stop TAFE Cuts campaign will continue to highlight how contestable funding for government vocational education dollars has led to cuts in course delivery hours for our students," he said.

"Teachers are also under increasing pressure to deliver qualifications with less face-to-face teaching time. We must stop this dumbing down of qualifications by the so-called Smart and Skilled policy."

