

## TAFE campaign alive and well

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TAFE student funding was a critical issue in the federal by-election for the seat of Bennelong. On Friday, 24 November, a rally bringing together TAFE students, teachers and community supporters was held at Meadowbank TAFE, one of two TAFE colleges in the electorate along with the Ryde campus.

Guest speakers at the event included federal opposition leader Bill Shorten, deputy opposition leader Tanya Plibersek, Labor's candidate Kristina Keneally, Senator Doug Cameron, Unions NSW Secretary Mark Morey and Federation President Maurie Mulheron. NSW Labor shadow skills minister Prue Car was also in attendance.



Mr Shorten stated that the contestable funding model for vocational education in Australia has failed. He said federal Labor would restore funding to TAFE, with \$2 of every \$3 of federal funding for vocational education guaranteed to TAFE. Labor will also ensure all federal government capital works will have apprentices as 10 per cent of the workforce.

TAFE students across NSW, including Meadowbank and Ryde, are facing increased fees and debt, and cuts to course delivery hours with less time to learn.

The Turnbull Government's policies have failed our TAFE students. At Meadowbank TAFE, plumbing apprentices fees have increased from \$1500 in 2014 to \$2000. At the same time, the course delivery hours at TAFE have reduced from 864 to 585 hours.

This increased pressure on students to learn more in less time must be reversed to allow for increased education and skill development and course completions.

The failed government-funding model has resulted in more than 5700 NSW TAFE teachers and support staff losing their jobs since 2013.

At Ryde and Meadowbank TAFE, teachers of fine art, electronics, commercial cookery, tourism and hospitality have been made redundant.

Federation will continue to campaign for increased support for the TAFE system and stop the failed federal-funding scheme. Join the campaign at [www.stoptafecuts.com.au](http://www.stoptafecuts.com.au).