

**INQUIRY INTO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING
IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Questions from the transcript
Newcastle Hearing – Friday 18 September 2015**

CHAIR: What opportunities are you taking in terms of online access? We have heard about online access in evidence.

Ms LARKINGS: We have a platform that Hunter TAFE uses to deliver a lot of courses fully online. We also use a lot of blended approaches, which we have done for many years, where students might study a lot of theory online and then come in for evening workshops, connected sessions on the internet through platforms. We use all the social media technologies like Facebook with tutors and teachers facilitating learning online. We have some courses fully online and everything in between.

CHAIR: Can you give us some numbers approximately so we get an idea?

Ms LARKINGS: I would have to take that on notice.

CHAIR: Is it hundreds, thousands?

Ms LARKINGS: I would rather get back to you on that.

CHAIR: Do you know how many students you have across your campuses up here?

Ms LARKINGS: At the moment?

CHAIR: Yes.

Ms LARKINGS: I could not tell you exactly. I would rather take that on notice.

CHAIR: Is it 5,000, 10,000?

Ms LARKINGS: Students across the whole of Hunter TAFE?

CHAIR: Yes.

Ms LARKINGS: Tens of thousands.

CHAIR: At Lismore I think it was about 50,000.

Ms LARKINGS: We would be similar

ANSWER

I refer to the above answer.

CHAIR: Can you take it on notice whether there is any evidence of students basically quitting because the pressure is too great because of that situation?

Ms LARKINGS: I am not aware of any but I could certainly take on notice to find that out.

ANSWER

Students withdraw from studies for a range of reasons such as personal circumstances, illness or change in employment status.

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Dr JOHN KAYE: It has been suggested to us that the Hunter Institute takes about 40 per cent of the course income, the entitlement income, and feeds it back into undoubtedly worthwhile things, but that leaves a \$14,000 course with only \$8,000 for delivering so there is a reduced amount of money available. Can I ask you about your operational base funding? Would you say your operational base funding is inadequate to the task?

Ms LARKINGS: I will have to take that on notice. I would not feel comfortable answering that.

Dr JOHN KAYE: Do you know how much operational base funding you have?

Ms LARKINGS: I do not know the exact figure right now.

Dr JOHN KAYE: Can you give us that on notice as well?

Ms LARKINGS: On notice, yes, absolutely.

ANSWER

TAFE NSW operates in a competitive environment. This data is commercial in confidence. Details of TAFE NSW revenue is provided in the Budget Papers.

Dr JOHN KAYE: Can you take on notice the total amount of money that comes from the 15 per cent and the total amount of money that comes from the community service obligation and let us know how that compares to the amount of money you had for disability adjustment and disability services in previous years?

Can you make a comparison—not an exact comparison—between how many hours of part-time casual teaching you had this year versus how many hours of part-time casual teaching you had in say 2010?

Ms LARKINGS: No. I would not have those numbers in front of me. I would have to take that on notice also.

Answer

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Dr JOHN KAYE: Would you be able to give me the part-time and casual figures for the past say 10 years so we can look at how that correlates?

Ms LARKINGS: If I can.

CHAIR: You can take that on notice and do the best you can with that but I would ask that you add the particular skill sets along that so we can see the changing tides.

Answer

Given the number of Part Time Casual Teachers employed by Hunter Institute, this request would require an unreasonable and substantial diversion of resources.