

I would like to submit a comment on this section of the report:

Wage structures in the TAFE sector take no account of the relative scarcity of industry skills being sought. As a consequence, TAFE can find it difficult to attract and retain some VET trainers and assessors with particular industry skills without resorting to overaward payments, while other VET trainers and assessors may be paid more than is necessary to recruit and retain them as trainers and assessors.

State and Territory governments should not have jurisdiction-wide industrial agreements for the TAFE sector. Current arrangements include caps on the use of casual staff, are prescriptive on hours to be worked in TAFE and encourage uniform wages and conditions. These have the effect of limiting the ability of TAFEs to respond quickly to changes in demand and disadvantage them relative to private RTOs. TAFE institutes should be able to select the mix of employment arrangements, supported by contemporary human resource management practices, that best suits their business goals.

These conditions which include uniform wages, conditions and prescriptive hours of work are not unusual in the public sector. I have been in TAFE for 26 years and I know I'll never make a fortune from my workplace in financial gain compared to what I might get from the private sector. However, teaching is a role I enjoy. I have a degree in teaching, and would not expect to place my teaching skills against an industry expert in one particular field (say, plumbing) but I teach business well. It is necessary that all teachers are paid according to their teaching training level and experience, and we have a scale already for that. I am an LVT and a beginning teacher may be starting on level 4, then working her way up over years of experience. I would not like to have to engage in a bargaining game for a wage. I do not think these things should be negotiable.