



**STOP
SHORT
CHANGING
TAFE
STUDENTS**

TAFE LIBRARIES

Helping people create better futures

Library and information professionals play a vital role in lifelong learning.

People can create better futures for themselves and their families by extending their knowledge and understanding. This is where library and information professionals play a crucial part.

The role of library and information professionals is to find, share and connect. To connect people with ideas, books, information, knowledge, resources and the broader community. Our library services enable discovery and innovative thinking, and, as information professionals, we are trusted guides. In a global knowledge economy, our information skills have never been more important.

“The Library Resource Centre has a major role in making unrestricted access to recurrent vocational education a practical reality. Just as the need has been seen to improve the libraries of the universities, the colleges of advanced education and the schools, so it must be seen in technical colleges.” Kangan Report

Working with staff

TAFE library teams work closely with course teachers. We help staff keep up-to-date with the latest advances in their field and we help

them identify and source the information and materials they need to deliver current, relevant courses.

We also work alongside learning support officers, disability support officers, social workers and counsellors, to give every TAFE student – school leavers and mature students, from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds – the best chance of success.

Working with students

TAFE libraries enable both supported and self-paced and self-directed learning. Students have access to qualified librarians and are surrounded by the resource materials they require. They have access to electronic resources and to the internet, through library PCs and via wifi. Often, students find it difficult to study at home. In the library, they have the space to work independently or in collaborative groups.

Our library teams help students develop information discovery skills. These will not only help them with their studies, but also be of value as an employability skill and in their working and home lives.



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In May 2012, the Victorian Government announced \$300m in funding cuts for the state's TAFE sector.

This comprised \$130m in cuts per student contact hour (down to \$1.50 for some courses, compared with a national average of \$12.60), and \$170m from the abolition of the 'full service provider' allocation, which pays for student support services, including disability support, counselling, learning support and libraries.

The cuts will force TAFE management boards to make tough decisions about how they allocate their reduced funding. As library and information professionals, we are especially concerned about three issues:

- (1) Any reduction in the number of library technician courses available in Victoria.
- (2) The impact of increased fees on current and future library technician students.
- (3) The likely impact on investment in TAFE libraries.

The Australian Library and Information Association, representing more than 5,500 library and information professionals, and the

Victorian Association of TAFE Libraries, representing library and information professionals working in the state's 74 TAFE libraries, support the call for a review of the \$130m in reduced funding for courses and the reinstatement of the \$170m full service provider funding.

We urge the management boards of TAFE institutes and dual sector universities to maintain their provision of affordable library technician courses.

The Australian Library and Information Association and the Victorian Association of TAFE Libraries have stated:

"We believe that TAFEs should be funded by government to provide people from diverse backgrounds with equal access to job-related training, without putting in place barriers in terms of reduced choice, financial hardship and lack of essential support."



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The case for investment in TAFE libraries is clearly stated in the Kangan Report.

The Kangan Report set the baseline for the development of modern TAFEs and it described Library Resource Centres as central to the delivery of vocational training.

“The activities of the college centre should rest on the propositions: first, that college libraries constitute a natural core for their activities; second, that the quality of the learning process is strongly influenced by the range and quality of services available in or from resource centres; third, that to the extent that colleges are prepared to accept a substitute for the traditional formal teaching

environment the central resource centres will grow in importance for self directed learning.”Kangan Report

Libraries were a focus of 10 of the 31 recommendations of the Kangan Report, and the Australian Committee on Technical and Further Education (ACTFE) recommended that at least 10 per cent of the recurrent expenditure grants for the states be allocated to training professional library staff and providing library resource materials and equipment.

The case for continued investment in TAFE libraries is based on the fundamental principles of equity and social justice.

It was intended that TAFEs should be different from, but not less than, universities.

“Technical and further education has too often been thought of as something different from a tidy, mainstream of education – primary, secondary and tertiary. The proper perspective for the fourth quarter of the twentieth century is for technical and further education to be seen as an alternative – neither inferior nor superior

– to the other stream of education, but so organised as to enable interchange without personal disadvantage.”Kangan Report

However, TAFE libraries are poor relations compared with their university counterparts and there is a danger of TAFE students being further short-changed if investment in TAFE libraries is reduced.

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TAFE library budgets are already significantly lower than university library budgets, resulting in fewer resources and less professional support.

In 2010, there were some 494,300 TAFE students in Victoria and 392,600 university students.

In Victorian TAFE libraries, there was an average of one library staff member for every 793 students, compared with one per 352 students in Victorian universities.

Budgeting for Victorian TAFE libraries worked out at \$26 per student, compared with the \$460 library expenditure for every university student¹.

\$26 per TAFE student
\$460 per university student

We support the management boards of TAFE institutes and dual sector universities in their efforts to maintain funding for this vital student, teacher and community resource.

The Australian Library and Information Association and the Victorian Association of TAFE Libraries have stated that:

“Well-resourced libraries, staffed by information professionals, are an integral part of the student experience and play a critical role in teaching, learning and training. TAFE students must not be short-changed compared with university students. We see this as an issue of social justice.”

¹ Calculations based on CAUL and VATL 2010 statistical data



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TAFE LIBRARIES IN VICTORIA

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Comparison of latest publicly available statistics (2010)

	Victorian TAFEs	Victorian Universities		Total library budget (\$)	Total students
Number of institutions	18	8	TAFE totals	11,421,311	433,240
Number of libraries	74	61	Average library budget amount per TAFE student \$26.36		
Number of librarians FTE	289	422	University totals - expenditure	180,462,545	392,583
Number of library technicians FTE	176	321	Average library expenditure per university student \$459.70		
Total qualified information professionals FTE	465	743			
Other library staff FTE	81	372		Total staff	Total students
Total library staff	546	1115	TAFE totals	546	433,240
Number of staff FTE	14,456	24,140	Staff student ratio 1: 793		
Number of students	433,240	392,583	University totals	1115	392,583
Total library customers	688,314	416,723	Staff student ratio 1:352		



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For more information about TAFE libraries:

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