

Admin, LACO

Subject: FW: Feedback on Vet program

From: info@accessengineering.com.au [<mailto:info@accessengineering.com.au>]

Sent: Friday, 4 August 2017 1:49 PM

To: Redman, Terry <Terry.Redman@mp.wa.gov.au>

Subject: Feedback on Vet program

Hi Terry,

Please find below my Feedback on the Vet program.

Garry has been an employer of Apprentices for over 30 years, employing approximately 25 Trainees.

Many of these undertook Work experience through the School system before commencing as Apprentices.

Up until about 7 years ago, the system worked reasonably well and we had on average 6-8 Work experience students per year.

We were critical initially of the increase in the leaving age of Students, preferring to employ an Apprentice at the end of Year 10 before other influences started to impact their lives.

As time has progressed, we have found that any Students coming in Year 10 now are totally unprepared and their expectations and understanding of our Trade is very poor, together with their skill and education levels.

Unfortunately, this does not improve with Year 11 or 12 intakes. This severely impacts our productivity and therefore contribution to the economy.

We were initially very excited with the building of the Trade Training Centre and enquired on our ability to be involved and ensure that the skills that were being taught were of value to the local Industry. All attempts have been unsuccessful and we have found the Students are not acquiring skills of any value to our Industry. Due to the mining boom, every person that enquires with us wants to be a Boiler Maker Welder as that is the impression they have as to where the easy and big money is. Whilst we do undertake this type of work, it is significantly different to the skills required in the Mining Sector and we cannot offer anywhere near the wage mining can. The whole system lacks first hand industry experienced teachers.

Further to this the TAFE system is fundamentally flawed also with a lack of Trade Trained teachers and much is taught straight out of a book and without first-hand experience in the Industry and therefore a lack of transference of skills to the Student. Recently both our Apprentices have had their training cancelled at a moment's notice with no follow up or reorganisation of the training.

I am sure you will not be surprised at our comments, the issues within Education are broad and far reaching. My suggestion is that the Curriculum needs to be simplified urgently and a refocus on fundamental learning in the key areas of reading, writing, spelling and maths is needed. I have raised many issues with our local school over the years, with at best dismissive concern. I fully understand they are employed to teach the Curriculum, to which they have little input, but the Curriculum is fundamentally flawed and all indicators have been showing this for a considerable amount of time. I will give you one specific example, of which I have many. I did very well at School in particular in Maths. One of my children came home beside herself because she had a test the next day on 'continued fractions', which I had never heard of. I Googled it, to find out it is a complicated system used in top physics equations, used by specific scientists. We studied it and worked it out and she did well in the test scoring 78%, the closest other student getting 27%. Following on from this I spoke to the Teacher as I presumed there would be a practical application and therefore a need for the Students to learn it, which I was interested in. I was horrified to learn he had no idea what it was and was simply teaching it out of a book!! As a mother of 4 intelligent and practical girls, I have watched their levels of stress explode through many examples of having to learn complicated and unnecessary topics, whilst there is a lack of focus on primary learning. This leads to a general disinterest in learning as a whole and is particularly troubling because it stunts an individual throughout the remainder of their life. I believe School should be a springboard to inspiring children to develop their individual strengths and setting them up for a life full of intrigue and wonderment, which is exactly the opposite of what is being delivered at present.

As always, happy to discuss further.

Kind regards,

Louise

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