




Speech By  
**Mark Boothman**

**MEMBER FOR ALBERT**

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Record of Proceedings, 8 May 2014

**TAFE QUEENSLAND (DUAL SECTOR ENTITIES) AMENDMENT BILL; FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING BILL**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (7.53 pm): I rise today to speak on the cognate debate on the TAFE Queensland (Dual Sector Entities) Amendment Bill 2014 and the Further Education and Training Bill 2014. Firstly, I would like to start on the TAFE Queensland (Dual Sector Entities) Amendment Bill. This bill certainly bridges the gap between TAFE and university education.

In September 2013, the Newman government executed an agreement with Central Queensland University to establish a dual sector education facility by merging the Central Queensland Institute of TAFE and the Central Queensland University. Previous to this bill there was no provision to allow for the operation of dual sector educational facilities, thus forcing universities and state vocational educational and training providers to operate separately. To negate any confusion, for some time universities have been able to deliver vocational education training courses by establishing registered training organisations and being accredited in the VET courses. Dual sector entities will be different because they will be permitted to use the protected term 'TAFE' in relation to their vocational education and training courses.

However, to achieve this there certainly needs to be a significant transfer of public assets such as land, buildings, student enrolments and staff to the Central Queensland University to establish this dual sector facility. This will be done under a framework of governance, requiring accountability and reporting to ensure that the government's policies are achieved and that the entity remains viable into the future.

The provisions within the bill will provide for: submission of quarterly reports on operations to the minister; powers for the minister to request information and give direction to the dual sector entities; and provisions for operational plans and the capacity for payment of an annual return on the dual sector entity's vocational education and training operations to the state if appropriate.

We live in a world which presents an enormous number of challenges and there is a lot of cutthroat competition. Education is the key to economic prosperity, preparing the next generation for the real world. By having the Central Queensland University and the Central Queensland Institute of TAFE coming together you are drawing the talents of both of those sectors into one area, so that is going to be very beneficial.

Now I will move on to the Further Education and Training Bill 2014. This government gave a firm commitment at the last election to build our four-pillar economy. To do this we need qualified workers who are up to the task. The Further Education and Training Bill 2014 continues the government's focus in reforming the Queensland vocational education and training sector by making apprenticeship and traineeship systems in Queensland more flexible and simpler. This is about working with industry and improving skills for better job outcomes.

The bill repeals the Vocational Education, Training and Employment Act 2000 and establishes a new regulatory framework for traineeships and apprenticeships. We need to be in tune with modern

working environments to enable flexibility. The old legislation restricted employment to those under the age of 21. Under the new bill, a young person will have access to many more flexible pathways, which include training pathways, to gain necessary qualifications. Furthermore, the bill reduces time frames for the lodgement of training contracts. This will allow the employment status of trainees and apprentices to be formalised as soon as possible and will bring them in line with other jurisdictions.

To cut red tape and reduce complexity, the suspension and cancellation of training contracts under the old system will be replaced by a much more simple system that emphasises agreements between both parties rather than a decision of the chief executive. The bill also combines the three separate processes for suspending a training contract into an overarching process for suspension which is agreed to by both parties. The government must also continue to provide support for both parties to resolve any potential disputes.

I think the key aspect to this Further Education and Training Bill is the issuing of certificates of achievement. Not all employers can commit to a three- to four-year apprenticeship. These certificates allow training experiences to be documented and recognised in accordance with required learning outcomes.

This creates a new high degree of flexibility that meets today's changing work environments. Furthermore, these certificates will demonstrate the completion of work based training, highlight the skills obtained to increase employment opportunities, and help potential employers access skills that they need for their businesses. I thank my fellow committee members, particularly the committee chair, Rosemary Menkens, for her fantastic effort. I also thank the minister for bringing this legislation forward. It is very much needed and school leavers and people trying to change their career paths will certainly appreciate this great piece of legislation.