Vic's RMIT to drop courses and cut jobs

From: AAP

August 02, 2012 3:28PM

VICTORIA’S RMIT University has indicated it will have to axe some jobs and courses as a result of the state government’s cuts to TAFE funding.

The university’s TAFE director John Barnes said it was not yet clear how many jobs and courses would go and it was still assessing the impact of losing $20 million in government funding.

However, the university had already begun increasing fees for its government-subsidised TAFE places to test student demand and help them estimate the viability of programs, Mr Barnes said.

And the ability to increase fees would help mitigate the funding cuts in some areas, he said.

"There is no doubt that there will need to be changes, some programs will not remain viable, and some staff positions may no longer be needed as a result," Mr Barnes said in a statement on Thursday.

"We have deliberately not put a number on this reduction at this point because we want to see in detail what is necessary rather than 'guesstimating' on the basis of the overall cut to government funds.

"We have moved swiftly to put the new prices into the market, and to deal with the changes confronting students," he said.

Students and staff rallied outside RMIT’s CBD campus on Thursday as part of a continued campaign against the government's $290 million in cuts to TAFE funding in the 2012/13 budget.

National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) Victorian president Colin Long said it was claimed that more than 150 jobs could go at RMIT.

He said the protests would culminate with a mass rally outside the State Library on August 16.

Last month Swinburne University of Technology announced it would close its Lilydale campus in Melbourne’s outer east, and cut up to 240 jobs, after it lost $35 million of its TAFE budget.

Click here to view the story online at The Australian.