The Abbott Government’s push to takeover of vocational education will only mean cuts to funding.

In comments to the TAFE Directors Australia National Conference in Hobart, Minister Simon Birmingham signalled that the Abbott Government was looking to takeover vocational education, including TAFE.

“An Abbott take-over is not reform, it will just mean more cuts,” said Shadow Minister for Vocational Education, Sharon Bird.

“Just like he has done in schools, hospitals and universities, as well as to apprentices, Tony Abbott will cut vocational education and training funding if he gets the chance.”

“Tony Abbott has already cut $2 billion in funding to the skills portfolio, including $1 billion in cuts to apprentices.”

“We know TAFE will be a thing of the past if Tony Abbott gets his hands on vocational education,” Sharon Bird said.

“Our TAFE system delivers courses no private provider would deliver, in parts of Australia that no private provider would service.”

“TAFE has given millions of Australians the education and skills they needed for the jobs they wanted, and should continue to play that vital role in our towns, suburbs, cities and regions.”

Labor understands the unique role of TAFE as our public provider and will work with the states and territories to provide ongoing guaranteed TAFE funding.

“Only Labor has guaranteed funding for TAFE in the future,” said Sharon Bird.

“Labor believes there is a place for contestable funding but we must get the balance right.”
“An Abbott take-over isn’t just a distraction from the Government’s failure to put forward a positive plan on TAFE, on apprentices and for the vocational education sector – it’s a plan to abolish TAFE all together.”

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