

# Media Release

**The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC**

Minister for Training and Skills

Minister for Higher Education



Friday, 1 May 2020

## NEW HIGHER APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME ROLLS OUT ONLINE

Future leaders in the social services sector have logged on for their first online gathering as part of an innovative new higher apprenticeship scheme that allows participants to earn while they learn.

Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney welcomed 25 students of the Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management course via video link.

The higher apprenticeship initiative for Victoria's social services sector has been developed by RMIT and the Future Social Services Institute (FSSI) in close collaboration with industry. It is fully funded by the Victorian Government, which means participants do not pay any course fees.

It allows the higher apprentices, hand-picked by their employers for their leadership potential, to learn while doing on-the-job training to help them cement those leadership skills.

The higher apprentices already have experience working in the industry with their current employers, and the training will enable them to take on more senior management roles.

The course is one of two pilot schemes that have together received \$5.6 million in Government funding. The other pilot scheme, the Big Build higher apprenticeship, is being run by Swinburne University with participants from major construction companies based in Victoria.

Training in the higher apprenticeship in Social Services began on March 16 and has since been rapidly revamped to allow for greater online delivery with coronavirus restrictions.

FSSI and RMIT have re-sequenced the course to prioritise risk management, providing added value to the partner employers as trainees learn skills that will be particularly helpful during the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney**

*"This innovative model of training enables participants to earn while they learn, keeping them in a job – which is essential as we respond to the coronavirus pandemic."*

*"The social services sector is one of Victoria's fastest growing. We're ensuring Victorians get the right training they need to meet the demand for highly skilled workers in this sector."*

### **Quote attributable to RMIT Pro- Vice Chancellor Vocational Education Mish Eastman**

*"At RMIT we're focused on creating outstanding graduate outcomes and we're delighted to be delivering this high quality, nationally accredited pilot program tailored for working professionals as part of the Higher Apprentices program."*

### **Quote attributable to FSSI Director Micaela Cronin**

*"This is exactly what the FSSI was created for – to design world-best education programs for the social service sector and help train the workforce of the future."*

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