

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Training and Skills
Minister for Higher Education



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NEW DIGITAL LITERACY PROGRAM TO SUPPORT CALD VICTORIANS

A new communication program is helping CALD Victorians improve their language and digital skills in preparation for further study and meaningful jobs.

Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney today visited Australian Multicultural Education Services (AMES) in Werribee to meet teachers and students and see the Digital Literacy pre-course in action.

It began at AMES in March to provide participants with a solid foundation to use emails and services like myGov, search for jobs, create strong passwords and understand cyber safety.

The Digital Literacy pre-course was started in response to the online transition of programs during the coronavirus pandemic and because many AMES clients had not used a computer or smart phone before arriving in Australia.

It was co-designed by people who were refugees and asylum seekers for migrants from places like Syria and Iraq, Burma, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Venezuela.

Neten Tshering arrived from Bhutan and lives in Diggers Rest with his family and joined the program to improve his English with the hopes of securing a job in the local community.

Myeongju Jeong moved to Australia from South Korea 9 years ago and works as a chef at a CBD restaurant. He wants to improve his English to make new friends and progress his career.

AMES is supported by the Andrews Labor Government and the Digital Literacy pre-course complements its existing settlement, language and employment services which are delivered to more than 50,000 clients each year.

The *Victorian Budget 2020/21* includes an unprecedented overall annual investment of \$1 billion to strengthen the training and skills system as it emerges from the coronavirus pandemic

It includes more than \$800,000 over four years for AMES to support Cultural Safety Training and the Career Mentors for Multicultural Learners program and further support to establish a Multicultural Learning Partnership to improve core skills in Victorian CALD communities.

Quotes attributable to Minister of Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney

"This is an important program that will ensure no Victorian is left behind – and that people from CALD communities have the support to improve their communication skills, enter the workforce, and live their best lives."

"We are committed to strengthening the skills and training sector to prepare people for the most in-demand jobs and bolster the economy as Victoria emerges from the coronavirus pandemic."

Quote attributable to AMES Chief Executive Officer Catherine Scarth

"AMES is thrilled to be supporting Victoria's multicultural community and refugees to improve their skills as well as access services, information and employment opportunities."