

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Training and Skills

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AUSTRALIAN-FIRST TAFE COURSE TO DIVERSIFY VICTORIA POLICE

A one-of-a-kind course funded by the Andrews Labor Government is giving more Victorians from culturally diverse backgrounds the chance to pursue rewarding jobs in the emergency services, creating a more diverse police force.

The *Policing Recruitment Pathway* TAFE course offered through Victoria University has helped dozens of African Australian students into employment at Victoria Police since it began in 2019.

The free 15-week short course was developed to improve cultural understanding, build better relationships between African Australian communities and police, and create a more inclusive and representative police force.

Students learn literacy and numeracy skills, personal fitness and an understanding of policing as a foundation to undertake the Victoria Police Academy entrance exam.

More than 110 students have enrolled in the course with many supported to pass the Victoria Police entrance exam and at various stages of the recruitment process. Some graduates have taken alternative pathways, including into the health industry.

Graduates are now working in a variety of roles including as Victoria Police constables, Protective Services Officers and Police Custody Officers right across Melbourne – in Williamstown, Dandenong, Melton, Sunshine, South Melbourne and Cranbourne.

Policing Recruitment Pathway is offered in partnership with Africause, Jesuit Social Services, AMES Australia, Maurice Blackburn Lawyers and Matchworks.

The Labor Government invested \$137,000 in this program as part of its record \$3.2 billion investment to rebuild TAFE and support universities and higher education to ensure Victorians have access to high quality education and rewarding career pathways.

Quote attributable to Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney

"This one-of-a-kind course is helping build relationships between culturally diverse Victorians, the community and the police force – while also giving more people access to skills and rewarding jobs."

Quote attributable to Minister for Police Lisa Neville

"This TAFE program is helping break down barriers to employment for African Australians – and also ensuring our police force is more inclusive and representative of the community it serves."