

# 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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## INCREASING THE AUSLAN TEACHING WORKFORCE IN VICTORIA

The Andrews Labor Government has added courses in Auslan to the signature Free TAFE list, helping more Victorians become Auslan interpreters and creating a stronger and more diverse community.

The Labor Government has invested more than \$4 million through the *Victorian Budget 2022/23* to make the Diploma of Auslan and the Advanced Diploma of Interpreting (Auslan stream) available fee-free from 2023.

The work of Auslan interpreters during the pandemic showed just how critical this interpreting work is for the wider community. This boost to the interpreter workforce is a crucial step in better connecting Victorians who are deaf or hard of hearing and creating a more inclusive Victoria with a local pool of expert interpreters.

The diploma course will be delivered by Melbourne Polytechnic and provides a foundation to students to become an Auslan interpreter, while the advanced diploma will be delivered by RMIT and is the recognised qualification to become a certified Auslan interpreter.

The two courses build on the one-of-a-kind Certificate IV in Training and Assessment in Auslan offered at Melbourne Polytechnic.

Free TAFE was introduced by the Labor Government in 2019 and has helped make rewarding career pathways a reality to more than 100,000 Victorians from different walks of life – saving them more than \$240 million in course fees.

The initiative has grown to more than 60 courses, ensuring training continues to meet key government priority areas and skills demands while also boosting the Victorian economy.

The Labor Government invested \$103.1 million in the *Victorian Budget 2022/23* to give more Victorians training for the jobs they want while giving more employers the skilled workers they need to grow their businesses.

Since 2014, the Government has made a 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.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney

*“This is an important investment that will have a ripple effect throughout our community by boosting the number of Auslan interpreters and making Victoria a more inclusive and diverse place.”*

*“Free TAFE is a game-changer for Victoria – it helps make world-class training more accessible to more jobseekers, provides skilled workers for local business and boosts our economy.”*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Anthony Carbines

*“Our new Free TAFE courses in Auslan will meet the specific language and cultural needs of this group of students, broadening access to education and employment opportunities.”*

### Quote attributable RMIT Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Alec Cameron

*“Today’s announcement will go a long way to satisfying the increasing demand for Auslan interpreters, directly help students train in meaningful careers, and provide a pathway to high-demand industries.”*

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