



**Hon Jacinta Allan MP**  
Premier of Victoria

**The Hon Brendan O'Connor MP**  
Commonwealth Minister for Skills and Training

**The Hon Gayle Tierney MP**  
Victorian Minister for Skills and TAFE

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Thursday, 9 November 2023

### **Free training for Victorians continues in 2024 under new deal**

The Albanese and Allan Labor Governments will deliver up to 62,800 extra Fee-Free TAFE places in Victoria, ensuring more Victorians get the skills they need, for the jobs they want.

Premier Jacinta Allan, Federal Minister for Skills and Training Brendan O'Connor and Victorian Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney today announced Commonwealth funding of almost \$107 million to give tens of thousands more people access to education and training in sectors needing workers.

Fee-Free TAFE supports training in areas of high demand, provides access to priority cohorts - including the most vulnerable - and helps students by removing financial barriers to study.

In Victoria, 143 unique occupations are in shortage, with construction, health services and early childhood care experiencing the highest number of occupations in shortage.

The free training push of 2024 will target sectors facing workforce challenges, with Fee-Free TAFE having already attracted a record 33,600 Victorian enrolments since the start of 2023.

So far Free TAFE enrolments in Victoria have supported:

- More than 13,600 enrolments in Care sector courses.
- More than 4,200 enrolments in Construction sector courses.
- More than 2,800 enrolments in Technology and Digital sector courses.
- More than 7,700 enrolments in other areas of national and state priority.

Victoria's most enrolled Free TAFE courses include:

- Diploma of Nursing with 4,833 enrolments.
- Certificate IV in Training and Assessment with 2,426 enrolments.
- Diploma of Community Services with 2,300 enrolments.

- Certificate IV in Cyber Security with 2,220 enrolments.
- Certificate IV in Accounting and Bookkeeping with 2,104 enrolments.

Free TAFE has been a game-changer across Victoria, with more than 152,000 students saving more than \$384 million in tuition fees since the program began in 2019.

Students in a Diploma of Nursing could save around \$15,400, students studying a Diploma of Community Services could save around \$7,800, and those looking to build a career pathway through a Certificate IV in Cyber Security could save around \$3,800.

The funding for Fee-Free TAFE is in addition to federal funding through the National Skills Agreement (NSA) of up to \$3.1 billion for Victoria.

Set to begin in January 2024, the landmark five-year National Skills Agreement (NSA) was developed under principles agreed by National Cabinet to embed nationwide cooperation and strategic investment across Australia's TAFE and training sector.

For the first time in history, a new National Stewardship Model will make sure students are getting the skills they need in areas of national priority – and industry is getting a pipeline of the skilled workers it needs most.

#### **Quotes attributable to Premier of Victoria Jacinta Allan**

*"We saved TAFE in Victoria, rebuilt a crumbling vocational education sector and then strengthened it with Free TAFE – now we're giving even more Victorians the chance to get great skills for a great job."*

*"Thousands of Victorians have already taken up the chance to go to TAFE for free, and we'll deliver even more spots to make TAFE a reality for an extra 62,800 Victorians."*

#### **Quotes attributable to Commonwealth Minister for Skills and Training Brendan O'Connor**

*"This Commonwealth investment of close to \$110 million in Victoria's skills and training sector will mean more than 60,000 people can access Fee-Free education and training for areas desperately calling out for workers."*

*"I want to acknowledge the Victorian Government and Minister Tierney as trail blazers in supporting students and industry with their Free TAFE program since 2019."*

*"Right across the country we need more nurses, more early childhood educators and more new energy and construction workers, this Commonwealth investment makes sure that can happen."*

#### **Quotes attributable to Victorian Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney**

*"The Allan Labor Government has expanded Free TAFE eligibility to those who already hold a diploma or degree or may have already completed a Free TAFE course previously. Now thanks to this national partnership, we can offer more Fee Free TAFE places to more Victorians. "*

*"TAFE is central to ensuring we've got the pipeline of workers we need across health, infrastructure, education and hospitality."*

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