

# Media Release

Hon Jacinta Allan MP  
Premier



Thursday, 7 March 2024

## FIVE YEARS OF FREE TAFE HAS SAVED STUDENTS MILLIONS

Since the Labor Government introduced Free TAFE five years ago, more than 157,500 students have had the chance to get skills they need for jobs they want – while saving \$436 million in fees.

Premier Jacinta Allan and Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney today met with trainees at William Angliss Institute in Melbourne to mark five years of the Free TAFE program.

William Angliss Institute offers courses in food, tourism, hospitality and events – boosting the state’s hospitality workforce with a pipeline of students undertaking their study, with Free TAFE providing vital cost-of-living relief.

Free TAFE saves students an average of over \$10,000 in tuition fees on a full qualification. Some students are saving more than \$30,000.

Over the last five years, more than 90,500 women and 44,500 culturally and linguistically diverse students have made the most of Free TAFE, as have 14,500 Victorians with disability and 38,000 unemployed people.

As of 2023, Free TAFE is expanded so all Victorians can upskill for in-demand jobs regardless of their existing qualification level – and study multiple Free TAFE courses within the same priority pathway.

In 2023, the most popular Free TAFE courses were the Diploma of Nursing, Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, Certificate IV in Cyber Security, Certificate IV in Accounting and Bookkeeping, and Diploma of Community Services.

Other popular courses in priority areas include the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care, Diploma of Building and Construction (Building), Certificate IV in Mental Health, Certificate III in Individual Support, and Certificate IV in Plumbing and Services.

Since 2022, there has been a 23 per cent increase in people starting a Free TAFE course – with Certificate IV in Cyber Security, Certificate IV in Accounting and Bookkeeping, Certificate IV in School Based Education Support, Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, and the Diploma of Nursing seeing the biggest spikes in enrolments.

The list of Free TAFE courses includes more than 80 qualifications in priority areas – with the list expanded this year to include the Diploma of Youth Work, Certificate IV in Kitchen Management, Diploma of Hospitality Management, and the Certificate III in Tourism.

Since 2014, the Labor Government’s investment in VET and TAFE has increased by 48 per cent, well above the national average of 27 per cent. Last year, a Skills Agreement was signed with the Albanese Labor Government that will see 62,800 more Free TAFE places funded over the next three years.

### Quote attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

*“Whether it’s hospitality or healthcare, there is huge demand for a skilled workforce across Victoria – and Free TAFE gives everyone the chance to get the skills they need for the job they want.”*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

*“We brought TAFEs back to life following the previous Government’s massive cuts, and now Free TAFE has been going strong for five years – supporting more than 157,500 students and saving them hundreds of millions in fees.”*

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