

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Water



Wednesday, 30 April 2025

VICTORIA'S FIRST ALL-ELECTRIC TAFE CAMPUS OPENS IN COLLINGWOOD

TAFE students will train in a world-class education precinct powered by 100 per cent renewable energy following the major transformation of an iconic TAFE campus in Melbourne's inner north, supported by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney today officially opened Melbourne Polytechnic's revitalised Collingwood campus, which will be the first all-electric TAFE campus in Victoria.

Students and teachers at the environmentally conscious site will benefit from new Auslan training spaces, computer and digital design labs, content creation rooms, painting and print-making rooms, front of house services, student services, a lecture theatre and a library.

As part of Melbourne Polytechnic's commitment to a net-zero future, all gas systems were replaced with electric alternatives during the campus upgrades.

The Collingwood project was supported by a \$40 million investment from the Labor Government's Building Better TAFE Fund. The upgraded campus will offer Free TAFE courses in priority areas including Auslan, cyber security and accounting. It will also deliver the Certificate III in Floristry.

Melbourne Polytechnic celebrated 10 years of delivering its highly regarded Auslan courses last year. Its Collingwood campus now includes dedicated spaces to train Victorians for careers supporting Deaf and hard of hearing communities.

It remains the only provider in Victoria offering Certificates and a Diploma in Auslan – essential pathways to interpreter training. Since 2013, more than 2,400 Victorians have graduated with Auslan qualifications.

Career opportunities in Auslan are growing, with graduates working as interpreters or in disability support, education, and community services. To meet this demand, the Labor Government added the Diploma of Auslan, Diploma of Interpreting (Auslan), and Advanced Diploma of Interpreting (Auslan) to Free TAFE in 2023.

The opening of this new TAFE campus comes as Peter Dutton and the Liberal Party are set to cut Free TAFE if elected, which will impact thousands of students across Australia and affect our ability to build more houses to meet the growing demand.

In Victoria, we know that Free TAFE works with more than 200,000 students already accessing Free TAFE since it began in 2019, saving them on average \$3,000 per course. To find out more about Free TAFE, visit www.vic.gov.au/free-tafe.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

"Students in Melbourne's inner north have world-class training facilities right at their doorstep, all powered by renewable energy – This campus is another excellent example of why TAFE is an equal first choice to university for students."

"We've added Auslan courses to Free TAFE to help make Victoria a more inclusive and diverse state, and to give more Victorians the skills for working with people who are Deaf or hard of hearing."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Metropolitan Region Enver Erdogan

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“This world-class, all-electric campus is a game-changer for locals—giving students in Melbourne’s inner north access to cutting-edge training in everything from Auslan to cyber security, all while supporting our clean energy future.”

Quotes attributable to Melbourne Polytechnic Chief Executive Officer Frances Coppolillo

“Melbourne Polytechnic is proud to launch our newly revitalised Collingwood campus, marking an exciting new chapter in a legacy that stretches back to 1912.”

“This revitalised campus stands as a shining example of how sustainable, accessible infrastructure, community connection and quality vocational education can come together to power a brighter future.”