

# Media Release

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



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## 40,000 TRADIES QUALIFIED AND READY TO WORK IN VICTORIA

The Allan Labor Government is building the pipeline of skilled workers Victoria needs, with more than 40,000 Victorians gaining a Trade Paper showing they are qualified and job-ready to build our growing state.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney visited Melbourne Polytechnic's Heidelberg Campus today to celebrate the milestone and congratulate some of the newly qualified tradies on receiving their Trade Paper.

A Trade Paper is a certificate awarded to those who successfully complete a recognised apprenticeship in Victoria, along with relevant formal training through a TAFE, trade school or registered training organisation.

The previous Liberal Government scrapped Trade Papers as part of their savage cuts to TAFE and training, making it harder for apprentices to get a job.

Peter Dutton confirmed that, given the chance, the Liberal Party would cut Free TAFE. Brad Battin and the Liberal Party cannot be trusted with TAFE and cannot be trusted to back the tradies who build the new houses, hospitals, roads and rail that Victorians need.

Since 2019, Labor has backed more than 40,000 workers to receive their trade papers – enough to fill Federation Square four times over. Trade papers are issued for 121 different qualifications, with carpenters, electricians and plumbers topping the list and making up almost half of all tradies who have received their papers.

Free TAFE has been a gamechanger for Victorians, with more than 200,000 students saving on average \$3,000 per course – getting the skills they need for good, stable jobs or get back into the workforce while putting money back in their pocket.

Skilled workers are in high demand in Victoria, thanks to the state's pipeline of housing and transport projects and our transition to clean energy – creating thousands more jobs for skilled tradespeople.

According to latest figures from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research, almost 95 per cent of people who completed training for a trade occupation in 2024 were employed after qualifying.

The Allan and Albanese Labor Governments are investing a combined \$50 million to establish the Future of Housing Construction Centre of Excellence at Melbourne Polytechnic's Heidelberg Campus – the first training facility in Australia focused exclusively on Modern Methods of Construction courses and Industry 4.0 techniques.

For more information about Trade Papers, visit [vrqa.vic.gov.au](http://vrqa.vic.gov.au).

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

*"We are building a strong pipeline of skilled workers in Victoria to deliver the houses, hospitals, schools, road and rail that Victorians need."*

*"Unlike the Liberal Party, we will always stand up for tradies and their families – we've made it easier for them to find a good, stable job with trades papers and Free TAFE, and Victoria now has 40,000 more workers at the ready."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Ivanhoe Anthony Carbines

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*"At Melbourne Polytechnic in Heidelberg, we're training the next generation of skilled tradies – supporting them graduate with the qualifications they need to build more homes for Victorians."*

**Quotes attributable to Melbourne Polytechnic Chief Executive Officer Frances Coppolillo**

*"Melbourne Polytechnic is proud to have played a role in reaching the milestone of 40,000 Trade Papers issued in Victoria."*

*"As demand for skilled trades continues to grow, we are answering the call, offering targeted, practical training pathways aligned with employer needs."*

**Quotes attributable to fourth-year shopfitting apprentice at Melbourne Polytechnic Luca Mascaro**

*"Many of the shopfitting skills are transferable so there are plenty of opportunities for me to explore once I complete my certificate."*

*"For those thinking of starting an apprenticeship, if you put your best foot forward, you can get countless opportunities, even competing at World Skills or attending a skills showcase in Japan."*

**Quote attributable to fourth-year carpentry apprentice at Melbourne Polytechnic Lucas Heritage**

*"Learning how to build a house from the ground up is important, which is why I like my carpentry apprenticeship. Carpentry is one of those trades where you can just do anything, there are so many options for me to explore and to do, which is kind of cool."*