

Media Release

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



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BACKING INCLUSIVE TAFE TRAINING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

The Allan Labor Government is supporting TAFEs to improve training for people with a disability, making Victoria's world-class training system more inclusive and accessible for all Victorians.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney visited The Gordon's East Geelong TAFE campus to announce \$540,000 in grants through the Victorian Skills Authority's Local Skills Partnerships Program. The program supports TAFEs and other institutions to collaborate with industry to address training challenges.

TAFE enrolments by people with a disability are lower than for people without a disability. To help address this, \$150,000 has been granted to The Gordon TAFE to develop a disability awareness program. It is piloting the program with automotive apprenticeships.

The Gordon TAFE will develop digital materials and courses to support employers and teachers with inclusive practices. A program will also be designed for students to build confidence and help them advocate for themselves. This will improve training outcomes and create a better TAFE experience for automotive apprentices with disability.

This targeted support for disability inclusion complements the work already underway on The Gordon's Centre of Excellence in Disability Inclusion - a landmark initiative backed by the Labor Government to leverage the role of Geelong, home to the NDIS, WorkSafe and TAC, as an inclusive employment hub.

The Gordon recently published the Co-Created Vision for the Centre of Excellence in Disability Inclusion, meaning people who have lived experience of disability have a seat at the table to co-design the Centre – setting a new benchmark for providing accessible, industry-relevant vocational training that leads to employment.

The Labor Government has provided \$36 million in funding for The Gordon TAFE to deliver the new Centre of Excellence, which is expected to open in mid-2027.

Since 2024, a series of workshops have shaped the Centre's shared vision for a more inclusive TAFE system. These workshops have included students, families, disability advocates, educators, employers and government partners. The Gordon is now working closely with these groups to develop the Centre's operating model.

The Government's investment in the Centre is through the Building Better TAFE Fund, which is ensuring students in Victoria have the best facilities to train in, close to home.

The Local Skills Partnerships Program is also funding \$200,000 to the Kaiela Institute, which is addressing skills needs in engineering and early childhood in the Goulburn Murray region. Wodonga TAFE has also been granted \$190,000 to partner with The Gordon to expand Transport and Logistics courses in the regions.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

"Our policies and investment in skills and training are helping more Victorians start and complete qualifications, including more young people, people with disability, regional Victorians and early school leavers."

"We're proud to support The Gordon with the Centre of Excellence in Disability Inclusion, which is a groundbreaking project to boost employment outcomes for people with disability."

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Quote attributable to Member for Geelong Christine Couzens

“This investment is about making sure every Victorian—regardless of ability—has access to high-quality training and the opportunity to thrive in the workforce.”

Quotes attributable to The Gordon Chief Executive Officer Joe Ormeno

“We’re proud to launch this bold, co-created Vision for the Centre of Excellence in Disability Inclusion. This is more than a Gordon initiative—it’s a statewide commitment to building a TAFE system where every learner can thrive.”

“As a Network Centre of Excellence, we’ll work with government, industry, and people with lived experience to lead inclusive practice, drive policy reform, and create lasting change.”