

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
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SHORT COURSES MAKING IT EASIER FOR PLUMBERS TO GET SKILLS

The Allan Labor Government's investment in new Free TAFE short courses is making it easier and faster for plumbers to get the licences they need to join Victoria's construction workforce.

The TAFE Network, the Victorian Skills Authority and our next generation of plumbers have today launched National Skills Week at the refurbished Plumbing and Mechanical Services Training Facility at the Holmesglen TAFE Chadstone campus.

Now in its 15th year, National Skills Week highlights the importance of vocational training in Australia and how it leads to quality jobs.

The Labor Government is supporting the training sector and industry to work together to develop nationally recognised, flexible short courses called 'skill sets', which rapidly respond to emerging or evolving skills needs.

In 2025, seven plumbing skill sets were added to the list of Victoria's Free TAFE courses to help qualified workers meet the licensing or regulatory requirements they need for their job, without doing another full qualification. The courses are available across Victoria, including in Warrnambool, Morwell, Geelong and Bendigo.

Each skill set contains units from the Certificate IV in Plumbing and Services and is aligned to the Victorian Building Authority's plumbing licensing requirements. They are designed for people who have completed the Certificate III in Plumbing apprenticeship and who want to become licensed plumbers.

From January to June this year, there were almost 350 commencements in the plumbing skill sets.

More than 212,600 students have benefitted from Victoria's Free TAFE since it began in 2019, saving them on average \$3,000 per course.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

"As National Skills Week starts, I'm proud to share the success of our TAFEs and industry partners in providing the types of courses that workers need to get licensed and join the housing workforce."

"A skilled workforce is vital to achieve our housing and infrastructure goals. Through collaboration and innovation, we are ensuring that our training is fit for purpose and leads to real jobs."

Quote attributable to Member for Southern Metropolitan John Berger

"It's brilliant to see local plumbers gaining the skills they need through Free TAFE right here at Holmesglen. This investment is not just building careers – it's building the workforce we need to deliver more homes and infrastructure across our state."

Quotes attributable to Victorian Skills Authority CEO Craig Robertson

"Government's priorities in housing, infrastructure and the clean economy transition require a skilled, inclusive and modern Victorian workforce."

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“We’re focused on strategies to deliver knowledge and skills that strengthen economic growth, with Victorian TAFEs taking the lead, as well as making it easier for people to access training to up-skill and re-skill.”

Quotes attributable to Holmesglen Institute Chief Executive Mary Faraone

“The adaptive spaces at Holmesglen put learning on show in what is a completely refitted 3,200m² training facility. It includes new welding bays, mobile plumbing pods for flexible delivery and a large 25 metre sandpit for trench works bringing site plans to life.”

“We are pleased to offer one of the largest and most-advanced plumbing trade education spaces in Australia. The upgraded training facility is being put to immediate use to train the next generation of tradespeople in this area of critical need.”