

# Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC  
Minister for Training and Skills  
Minister for Higher Education



**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Friday, 8 February, 2019

## FREE TAFE KICKS OFF IN GEELONG AT THE GORDON

Geelong students and job seekers are getting into training through the Andrews Labor Government's Free TAFE program, with more than 600 students already enrolled in Free TAFE courses at The Gordon, a jump of 28 per cent compared with those courses at the same time last year.

Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney also announced a new partnership between the Labor Government, The Gordon Institute and Jamie Oliver's Ministry of Food Project, to boost healthy eating habits across the community. It is the first time anywhere in Australia this project will be embedded into a TAFE environment.

The Labor Government will also provide \$1.7 million from its Workforce Training Innovation Fund to help fund the program.

The project will involve 18 cookery and hospitality apprentices and trainees and deliver courses that give people the skills and know-how to buy fresh food and turn it into tasty and healthy meals.

The announcement further strengthens The Gordon and more Free TAFE enrolments are expected thanks to the \$172 million program which is making 30 priority TAFE courses and 20 pre-apprenticeship courses tuition fee free from this year.

Almost 3000 Free TAFE students have started their training in January at TAFEs across Victoria – close to three times the number who commenced training in the same courses in January last year.

The Gordon is offering TAFE 43 Free TAFE courses across its campuses ranging from the Advanced Diploma of Accounting to the Diploma of Nursing, as well as apprenticeship pathway courses in automotive, construction and horticulture.

Free TAFE for Priority Courses reduces the financial barrier for eligible students wanting to train in the courses that lead to the jobs that are most in demand from Victorian employers.

Students can save up to \$2,500 for some pre-apprenticeship courses and up to \$5,000 for Certificate IV courses. For high cost courses such as a Diploma in Nursing or a Diploma in Building and Construction, students will save more than \$10,000 through the Free TAFE initiative.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney

*"Free TAFE will make it easier for Geelong students to get the training they need to get jobs across a range of industries that are crying out for more skilled workers."*

*"It's so great to see thousands of students starting their Free TAFE training and developing skills that will keep Victoria growing — courses like nursing, engineering, plumbing, and building. In January alone we've seen almost three times as many students start in priority courses compared with the same time last year."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Geelong Christine Couzens

*"Not only are we investing in the projects our state needs, we're investing in the people we need to deliver them."*