

Media Release

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



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FREE TAFE STARTS AT SUNRAYZIA TAFE MILDURA

Students and job-seekers in northwestern Victoria are starting courses through the Andrews Labor Government's Free TAFE program, with more than 300 students having begun their training at Sunraysia Institute of TAFE.

The number of students undertaking Free TAFE courses has more than trebled compared to the same time last year.

Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney today visited Sunraysia Institute of TAFE's Mildura campus, where more enrolments are expected following the \$172 million Free TAFE program that is making 30 priority TAFE courses and 20 pre-apprenticeship courses free from tuition fees from this year.

During the visit, Minister Tierney also announced two projects would receive funding under the Regional and Specialist Training Fund.

More than \$100,000 will be invested to deliver a Course in Transport and Logistics Pathway for driving operations and general transport and logistics, and almost \$50,000 will mean that staff in four of Mildura's not-for-profit aged care providers will be able to undertake Certificate IV in Leadership and Management.

The Regional and Specialist Training Fund targets training to specific requirements within regional areas. This ensures that support for training is industry led and boosts jobs and opportunities within specific local communities.

Sunraysia Institute of TAFE is offering 37 Free TAFE courses across its three campuses. The most popular Free TAFE courses at the TAFE include: Diplomas in both Community Services and Nursing, Certificate IV in both Education Support and Community Services and Certificate III in Individual Support.

Thousands of Victorians are on the way to getting the skills they need to secure jobs in high-demand industries, with more than 19,000 students enrolled in Free TAFE courses across the state, driving a doubling of commencements compared to the same TAFE courses at the same time last year.

Students can save up to \$2,500 for some pre-apprenticeship courses and up to \$5,000 for Certificate IV courses. For higher level courses such as a Diploma in Nursing 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:

"We are making training more accessible and affordable for Victorians. The increased number of students at Sunraysia Institute of TAFE is showing the popularity – and importance – of the Free TAFE program."

"Not only does the Free TAFE program help job seekers to find ongoing work, it also provides a steady stream of workers for industries in northwestern Victoria with skills shortages."