



Department of Education and
Early Childhood Development

Skills Victoria

Building Skills >> Growing Human Capital

Innovative partnership solutions



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Minister's Message



Victoria is a resource-rich state – and our resource is our human capital. Victorian businesses thrive and grow because of the ingenuity, creativity and high level of skills of their workforce.

This is why the Victorian Government is committed to ensuring that the training system is flexible and responsive to the changing needs of business, industry and all Victorians.

In this year's Budget, the Victorian Government has allocated an extra \$157 million for vocational education and training. This funding will enable more training opportunities for Victorians to get the skills that industry and business need in these rapidly changing times.

But to make the most of these investments, Victorian businesses need to play their part too. Victoria's future success will be built on strong partnerships between training providers and the organisations that benefit most from that training – Victorian business.

Since becoming Minister, I have been impressed with some of the novel ways in which training providers have engaged with industry. This is something that the Victorian Government will continue to support and encourage.

In *Building Skills >> Growing Human Capital* you can discover a series of examples of how Victorian training providers have worked with industry and employers to provide innovative, flexible and tailored training solutions to help enterprises of all kinds to succeed and flourish.

The \$22 million redevelopment of the Energy Training Centre at GippsTAFE's Chadstone campus to meet changing training needs and skill shortages in the energy sectors, and the mutually beneficial partnership between the RSL and Franklyn Scholar, are just two examples showcased here.

I hope you will find these collaborations of resources, expertise, knowledge and skills as inspiring as I do.

I look forward to working with you as we continue to strengthen Victoria's vocational education and training system.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Hall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Hon. Peter Hall MLC

Minister for Higher Education and Skills

Minister Responsible for the Teaching Profession

Innovative collaboration wins funding and industry support

Victoria University and the building and construction industry

The new Building Practice Firm is the result of an innovative collaboration between industry and Victoria University. Complete with a six-star sustainable building, the Firm is providing Learning in the Workplace and Community (LiWC) experiences to a wide range of higher education and TAFE students.

The building project, a joint venture of the University's VET (Vocational Education and Training) Faculty of Technical and Trades Innovation, and the higher education Faculty of Health, Engineering and Science, has received a \$182,000 Commonwealth Government grant and significant industry contributions.

“Our aim is to build and enhance strong pathways, from the VET sector to higher education, and from higher education to the VET sector, through collaboration and the incorporation of LiWC,” says Lyn Hannah, Manager Teaching and Learning for the Faculty of Technical and Trades Innovation.

Building construction

Construction of the portable building in Newport has already provided significant practical learning opportunities for carpentry, plumbing, painting and electrical pre-apprentices and apprentices, along with diploma and advanced diploma students in advanced building – design and surveying.

The building, which will be completed later this year and moved to Victoria University's Sunshine campus, comprises consulting and project management rooms, and a kitchen and bathroom.

It will house an Advanced Building Firm operating as a commercial venture providing LiWC for diploma, advanced diploma and degree students in engineering, building surveying and building design, along with learning opportunities for other students.

“The community and businesses will be able to access services offered at a reduced cost,” says Ms Hannah. “Students will be involved in a range of tasks, such as AutoCAD drawings for engineering works, design and surveying services.”

Strong industry support

Peter Turner, Acting Senior Program Manager, Construction Industries at the University, says industry has been “fully supportive” of the project.

“Donations of materials and advice have come from City Timber, Atkar, Trend Windows, Hutton Insulation, Bondor, building removalist Peter Johannesen, Paint Spot, Rheem, Caroma, Clark and Dorf.”



Rheem has now provided a heat-pump water heater for the Building Practice Firm, says Jon Palfrey, Rheem Australia's Training Coordinator for Victoria and Tasmania.

“I have great admiration for Victoria University's level of training commitment,” he says. “They are a leading deliverer of training, and what they've done at Newport is a great example of that. It's getting out of the theory component of the classroom and giving apprentices the opportunity to develop the kinesthetic learning that's so important in this area of plumbing.”

Sustainable horticulture receives major boost through Victorian training partnership

Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE and Protected Cropping Australia



Australia is now one of the world's largest producers of hydroponic lettuce and other vegetables, and 'controlled environment horticulture' is rapidly moving beyond niche status to

become the face of sustainable horticulture. This, in turn, has led to new and emerging skills being identified by the industry that are not met through the current national curriculum.

The rise of this industry is being driven by a number of forces: a far-reaching training partnership in Victoria, the demands of the supermarket giants for consistent vegetable production and quality, and growers who seek protection against droughts and floods. It also has the potential to save Australia's horticulture industry up to \$25 million annually on water and fertiliser, while reducing the environmental impacts of effluent-rich water.

Graeme Smith, Chairman of industry association Protected Cropping Australia (PCA), which has a close partnership with Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE (GOTAFE), says 29 per cent of vegetable farmers already use some form of controlled cropping.

"Since Cyclone Yasi and the floods in Victoria, NSW and Queensland, we've had an enormous amount of interest from field growers who are so frustrated by having to wait six to 12 months to re-plant because they rely on the soil. Controlled horticulture doesn't rely on soil, so could potentially be replanted the next day," he says.

Responding to new training needs

Since they first partnered in 2007, PCA and GOTAFE have played a major role in a review of all units in production horticulture qualifications from Certificate II to Advanced Diploma.

More than 60 units have been adapted or developed to encompass new knowledge and skills, and GOTAFE's Diploma in Production Horticulture for controlled environment horticulture is awaiting endorsement.

A second initiative in 2009, which led to the current National Greenhouse Wastewater Recycling Project, involved a pilot

Controlled environment horticulture encompasses hydroponic and greenhouse production and, with the use of new technologies and processes, is capable of strictly controlling fertiliser, water, effluent and power, resulting in the industry's most sustainable production methods.

training program with vegetable growers on the Bellarine Peninsula and a field trip to Holland to examine how Dutch growers recycled effluent.

Leigh Taig, who teaches controlled environment horticulture at GOTAFE, is now involved with PCA in developing a short technical management course for greenhouse and hydroponic growers, covering all major elements of plant physiology, environmental management and technology management.

"Our industry has grown by 15 per cent annually over the last five years," Mr Taig says. "We recognise the need for a National Centre for Controlled Environment Horticulture, and will continue working with PCA to achieve that goal."

The centre would offer facilities including centralised training, research and development, model business plans and resource efficiency initiatives.



"Twenty nine per cent of all vegetable farmers in Australia today already use some form of controlled cropping. It's a bigger slice of the industry than people realise."

Graeme Smith, Chairman, Protected Cropping Australia.

Police praise online mental health awareness training program

Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE and Victoria Police



An online pilot program for mental health awareness training has won praise from Victoria Police participants for its content and delivery, its ability to demystify suicide, and its virtual classroom, which enabled

participants to discuss their experiences in dealing with people affected by depression, drugs and alcohol.

The four-week program was collaboratively developed by Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE (GippsTAFE) and Victoria Police with innovation funding from the Australian Flexible Learning Framework and was delivered to 25 participants from Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Feedback showed 96 per cent of participants would be keen to participate in other training opportunities in a similar online format, and 84 per cent said their attitudes to suicide had changed as a result of the training.

Project Manager Malcolm Jolly, Innovation Team Leader at GippsTAFE, says, “the online training involved a facilitated model of delivery rather than simply being a self-paced resource”.

Facilitated model boosts engagement

“We’ve used this model extensively for many years. It encourages engagement, thus reducing the student dropout that can result in self-paced training,” Mr Jolly says.

Participants had a week to work through each module online and then participated in a facilitated “real time” virtual classroom, which utilised case studies, voice, text and PowerPoint presentations.

“When they had online discussions, the openness was phenomenal. Police were able to speak of personal experiences, so the virtual classroom became a great conduit for them. It also provided a strong connection to the theory being learned,” he says.

Sergeant Bob Carter, Manager of Victoria Police’s BlueTube and Online Learning, says the online delivery allowed participation from watch houses or homes, and was “very successful” in overcoming issues of distance and shift work.

“...this afternoon I have used the learning in relation to referrals for a young female who has been intoxicated whilst in charge of her child.”

Police Sergeant, Melbourne.



Questions, feedback and discussions

“A lot of police wouldn’t have had the opportunity to participate in any other way because of work commitments,” Sergeant Carter says. “The facilitated model also suited a lot of people, as anyone can have their say.

“It allowed police to put questions, get feedback and talk amongst themselves. It also built on the online content they had been working through.”

The content, which was based around aspects of the Certificate IV in Mental Health, was developed by a mental health specialist for Victoria Police, and a psychologist who was also the facilitator.

Innovative training delivers win-win for bilingual workers and community agencies

Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE and community agencies



Lin Ma arrived in Melbourne from China in 2006, and joined the NMIT Bilingual program in 2008 after studying English. Her internship with the Brotherhood of St Laurence led to a year's paid traineeship where she completed Certificate III in Community Services.

"I found the training helped improve my English levels, and it was very helpful for giving me work experience," Lin says.

Last year she won a further traineeship with the Brotherhood of St Laurence in administration, and is now completing Certificate III in Business Administration.

Significant improvements in cross-cultural understanding, communications and employment outcomes are being achieved through an innovative internship and training program for bilingual workers in the health and community sectors.

Much of this is due to the mentoring component of the English for Bilingual Health and Community Workers course, according to Anne Giddens, Further Education Development Officer with the Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT).

"It's important that students have someone in the workplace they know they can approach," she says. "There is so much hidden culture in workplaces - if you don't understand it, you can feel excluded or you can unintentionally put people offside."

Students may not ask for help

"Some students can be quite shy and reluctant to ask for help. They're very keen to please but may not have grasped something and, when the workplace checks on the task, nothing may have been done, or it may have been done the wrong way."

The program last year involved 16 students and 10 workplace hosts, including the Brotherhood of St Laurence Community Contact Service, Collingwood Community Information Centre, East Reservoir Neighbourhood Renewal Project, Metropolitan Fire Brigade Multicultural Liaison, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, North Yarra Community Health and Royal Women's Hospital Women's Health Information Centre.

Students completed Certificate II in Community Services Work and Certificate III in English as a Second Language (Employment) through a combination of comprehensive off-the-job training, study and a five-week internship.

Three students were recruited by the Brotherhood of St Laurence, two as financial inclusion champions and one with the Community Contact Program. Another has been employed by the Office of Housing, and one has applied for work as a bilingual health educator with the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health.

Program encourages further study

Other students are undertaking further study including youth work, health services and childcare, with the majority studying Certificate III in Community Services.

Christine Sammut, Enterprise Development Coordinator of the Brotherhood of St Laurence Community Contact Service, says the student workers are "fantastic".

"We have an information service on public housing estates, where there are very diverse communities. This enables us to use their language skills, and assist in linking people into the different services in the area.

"We employ a lot of people from bilingual backgrounds and deliver traineeships, giving them an opportunity to move into employment, understand the workplace and develop skills."

\$22 million energy training centre and training network focus on future training needs

Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE and the energy industry



The emerging training needs of the sustainable energy sector, and national skills shortages in electricity, gas and telecoms workforces, are driving a \$22 million redevelopment of the energy training centre at Chadstone Campus, an initiative of Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE (GippsTAFE).

Already delivering a rapidly growing number of courses prior to its final completion in mid 2012, the Chadstone Campus is being funded by the Commonwealth Government (\$16 million) and GippsTAFE (\$6 million).

“What we are building in Victoria will be unique in Australia,” says Campus Manager David Ellis. “It is a one-stop shop for gas, electricity and telecoms, designed and purpose built to deliver training - 24/7 if necessary, as it’s not subject to weather or light conditions.”

“The training is working well, and we will continue to fine tune it in response to the electricity distributors we contract to, and depending on the qualifications of each group of electrical technicians.”

Ken Lindorff, Skilltech/UXCMS’s National Metering Manager and Technical Training Manager

While the Campus is directly meeting new training needs for innovations, including Victoria’s smart meter installation program and optical fibre training for the National Broadband Network (NBN), it also chairs and leads the Energy Training Network.

Training for new energy sources

“The Network comprises seven TAFEs with an industry advisory board from the renewable and sustainable energy industries. We’re finding innovative and additional ways the TAFE sector can support training and up-skilling of the workforce to underpin Government objectives of supplying 25 per cent of energy from sustainable and renewable sources by 2020,” Mr Ellis says.

The Network is focusing on Sunraysia TAFE for workforce development for solar power stations in that area. It is also examining the training needs for clean coal technology, wind and other forms of alternative power generation.

At Chadstone Campus, the emphasis is on training for the gas and electricity sectors, as well as the smart meter program and NBN rollout. The first Certificate III in Gas Operations since the mid 1990s – when the gas industry was deregulated – is now being delivered.

“The average age of workforces in electricity and gas is the early to late fifties,” he says. “This aging workforce is ringing



real alarm bells in the gas industry, as they are very exposed to running out of labour in the next 10 to 15 years.”

While there is a need for basic skills training in these industries, more training is being delivered online and on-the-job, a trend which will continue to grow over the next few years.

Smart meters create huge training demand

The introduction of smart electricity meters in Victoria is contributing to a boom in electrical training, according to Noel Sutcliffe, Team Leader at Chadstone Campus.

“This year we have 130 new starters in electrical distribution, compared to 76 last year. We’re also delivering advanced meter training every week of the educational year, as about 400 people are being recruited into the industry each year to work on this project,” Mr Sutcliffe says.

Because of the huge demand for training, the Campus has been working very closely with its industry steering committee in the development of a training solution that enables existing electricians to become qualified to install and test the new meters.

The training model for the Course in Complex (AMI) Electrical Meter Installation has been reviewed, modified and adapted as training has progressed, particularly the use of online delivery.

Although most electrical apprentices are IT-savvy, mature-age entrants do not always have the necessary skills in the use of the hand-held digital terminals used in workflow management in the field. While the Campus is endeavouring to support these

needs, its online training modules also assist in identifying those entrants with satisfactory skills, who can be recruited by the industry then continue with online and classroom training.

“Not every electrician is cut out to be an advanced meter technician. That’s why our online modules are useful for industry in identifying good recruitable targets,” Mr Sutcliffe says.

NBN rollout

The Chadstone Campus has already conducted three courses for the NBN Company and has a further two scheduled. National units of competency are being delivered in power awareness, working safely near electrical assets, and optical fibre installation, jointing, testing and commissioning.

Training will be ramped up as the network is installed, with induction training delivered online for employees of NBN contractors. The Campus is also working closely with industry in developing new training pathways for the telecoms sector over the next 10 years.

A Certificate IV in Telecommunications is being introduced this year, along with an Advanced Diploma of Management, which can be upgraded to a degree course at the University of Ballarat.

“These courses are targeted at people in our industries who may have come up through the ranks and want to formalise their experience,” Mr Ellis says. “We’re encouraged by companies who want to look at this holistic career development in the NBN sector, so we’re establishing training pathways from the basic skills to team leadership and line management.”



RSL Legacy creating new management program for its brightest future leaders

Franklyn Scholar Group and RSL licensed sub branches

A new, customised Diploma of Management program for the “brightest of the bright” in the Returned Services League’s (RSL) 68 licensed sub-branches in Victoria will provide long-term career pathways for future leaders, and position the RSL as an employer of choice with young people.

The Diploma, which has been developed by the RSL and Franklyn Scholar registered training organisation FS Learning, commenced in March this year with 20 participants, who are expected to complete their qualification in October.

RSL ethos embedded into program

Brian Cairns, Chief Operations Officer with RSL Victoria, says the League wants to develop long term career opportunities that will attract and retain talented young people.

“It’s important to invest time and energy into these people, because they will become the next generation of managers in the RSL. The Diploma of Management is a nationally recognised qualification, but we have embedded the RSL ethos into the program so people will understand what it is to be in charge of an RSL sub-branch.

“We’ve taken a fairly unique approach to the program, as there is a mentor for each of the eight units rather than for each participant. The mentors will guide students through their unit, and give them a clear idea of how that unit will relate to them in the RSL.”

The “travelling classroom”

Janet Stuckenschmidt, General Manager of FS Learning, says the program has been structured as a “travelling classroom” that will see the students undertake each of their training units in a different RSL.

City and regional RSL sub-branches have been chosen to reflect both size and diversity, including the flagship Frankston sub-branch.

“The mentors are subject matter experts who assist with development from the start of the journey and continue to provide support throughout sessions. Participants will be able to talk to them about problems or issues in their workplaces as they complete the assessment for each unit,” Ms Stuckenschmidt says.

The program uses adult learning principles and takes into account the various educational backgrounds and experience of the participants. It includes work-based projects that



will contribute to continuous improvement to existing RSL processes, practices and culture.

Quantifiable objectives have been negotiated and set on individual plans, including a 90 per cent completion rate and measurable outcomes for each participant, such as an increase in technical capability or business performance.

“I’ve learned about prioritising using ‘importance’ versus ‘urgency’ models, and will use time management skills more effectively.”

Program participant

Collaborative training delivery strengthens Barwon Health and The Gordon partnership

The Gordon and Barwon Health



Barwon Health is already one of the largest and most comprehensive regional health services in Australia, and its evolution as a major Victorian teaching hospital has led to innovative training partnerships both with Deakin University and The Gordon.

With clinical teaching facilities on site at Barwon Health, Deakin University is about to graduate its first cohort of doctors from what is Victoria's first regional medical school.

A strong training relationship has been developed with The Gordon, which was last year announced as Barwon Health's preferred VET (vocational education and training) provider. The Gordon provides a very wide range of training, from clinical qualifications to training for support staff, much of which is delivered collaboratively with Barwon Health.

The relationship between the two organisations dates back to the late 1990s, when the Certificate IV in Nursing was first delivered. In 2010, The Gordon enrolled its first Diploma of Nursing students, who undertake their clinical placements within Barwon Health.

Collaborative training model

Yvonne Hewitt, Director of Education and Training at Barwon Health, says that, while the workforce of health professionals was being developed in the higher education system, there was a gap around the people who support these staff.

"The Gordon is right here with this strong health and community services school. It didn't necessarily have expertise in certain areas to run courses. We at Barwon Health

do, but we didn't have the program design expertise and RTO status to deliver them. So the Gordon does the instructional design and develops the programs, and we populate some of the teaching with our relevant experts.

"We share delivery in terms of balancing teaching expertise and clinical expertise. It's a collaborative way of working with our neighbours to meet our workforce needs and, at the same time, enables them to expand their scope."

Certificate and short courses

Online induction for contractors has been developed and delivered to Barwon Health. Other courses include Certificate III in Health Services Assistance (flexible delivery model delivered at Barwon Health with Barwon and The Gordon staff), Certificate III in Health Administration (also flexible delivery), Certificate IV in Allied Health, First Aid, Food Safety and Infection Control Cleaning, according to Sharon Pellas, Senior Manager in Education Development: Innovation at The Gordon.

"One of the objectives of this partnership is to provide shared expertise, knowledge and skills from the two organisations," Ms Pellas says. "We are able to utilise venues both at The Gordon and Barwon Health, for example, using Barwon Health to provide realistic infection control training.

"Blended learning strategies are used for most of the courses, including onsite delivery at Barwon Health, tutorials, self-paced work, workshops and on-the-job practice with Barwon Health staff. Assessment is practical and related directly to the workplace."





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