



The Hon. Colin Brooks MP

Minister for Skills and TAFE

**Public Accounts and Estimates Committee
Inquiry into the 2026/27 Budget Estimates**

20 May 2026



Jobs, Skills,
Industry
and Regions

State of the Portfolio

Delivering a skilled workforce

- Since 2014, the Victorian Government has allocated more than **\$5.7 billion** to TAFEs and tertiary education, including **\$714 million** for Skills and TAFE capital projects.
- **More than 245,000** students have started a **Free TAFE** course, collectively saving more than \$816 million in tuition fees (as at March 2026).
- The **Victorian Skills Plan** states that at least **185,000** new workers are expected to enter the Victorian economy by 2028 and need a VET qualification.
- **\$459.4 million** invested in the 2026-27 Budget to provide opportunities for Victorians to get the skills they need, grow Victoria's economy and address skills shortages.





Our Achievements

Strengthening the TAFE network and improving confidence in the training system

Our performance measures for 2025-26 show:

- ➔ 13% more TAFE enrolments and 29% more Free TAFE enrolments than in 2022.
- ➔ More than 55,000 people enrolled in apprenticeships.
- ➔ The 6-year apprenticeship completion rate reached 63%, the highest in almost a decade, while the 4-year non-apprenticeship completion rate reached 53%.
- ➔ More than 60% of VET graduates report an improved employment status after training.

Our Achievements

Making training more accessible by removing the upfront costs through Free TAFE

Since its implementation in 2019, Free TAFE has supported:



60,300

Unemployed Victorians, at the time of training



24,700

Learners with disability



73,800

Culturally and linguistically diverse learners



141,600

Women



61,900

Learners in regional Victoria

Since eligibility for subsidised training and Free TAFE was expanded in 2023, more than 83,000 Victorians have reskilled — with more than 60% of participants being women.

*Students commencement figures until March 2026.





Budget Initiatives

Training places and apprenticeships

The 2026-27 State Budget includes funding for more training places that help Victorians get skills for in-demand jobs:

- **\$243.9 million** to deliver 59,000 more subsidised training places including around 15,000 more Free TAFE places.
- **\$5.8 million** to deliver support services to improve safety and increase the number of apprentices and trainees completing their qualifications.



Budget Initiatives

TAFEs

The Budget invests at least 70% of VET Funding into TAFE, including Free TAFE:

- **\$87.2 million** for the TAFE Services Fund to continue to provide wrap-around support services for TAFE students to help more people start and successfully complete their qualifications.
- **\$10 million** to make TAFE campuses more accessible for people with a disability and new equipment for clean energy training at Wodonga TAFE.
- **\$5.4 million** in partnership with the Australian Government to establish the VET Educator Academy.



Budget Initiatives

Centres of Excellence

Partnering with the Australian Government to strengthen our training system, including three new national TAFE Centres of Excellence:

- **\$50 million** for the Victorian Renewable Energy TAFE Centre of Excellence.
- **\$20.8 million** for the Home and Community Care TAFE Centre of Excellence.
- **\$30 million** for the Digital, AI and Technology TAFE Centre of Excellence.
- **\$6.5 million** to increase the VET workforce for clean energy occupations.