



MEDIA RELEASE

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TAFE sector welcomes federal government's Jobs and Skills Summit

Australia's TAFE sector has welcomed Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's announcement of a Jobs and Skills Summit in Canberra in September.

The TAFE sector looks forward to playing a central role in the revitalisation of key skills under the federal government's policy agenda, as it deals with employment and the skills need of current and emerging industries.

TAFE institutes across Australia will continue to deliver the majority of the high value, and often more complex qualifications that will be central to enhancing productivity and social outcomes.

The Centre for Future Work at the Australia Institute estimates that over Australia's post-war history, the TAFE system has made by far the largest contribution to VET, with an estimated 72.5% of Australia's current VET-qualified workforce having obtained their qualification from a TAFE institute.

The Chief Executive Officer of TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) Jenny Dodd said that the breadth and scope of TAFE is evident through its concentration in the most high-skilled qualifications, including apprenticeships and traineeships.

TAFEs are delivering over two thirds of the Certificate III in Electrotechnology – Electrician; Certificate III in Plumbing; Diploma of Nursing; and Certificate III in Engineering both for Fabrication and Mechanical Trade. TAFEs are delivering 87% of the Certificate IV in Cyber Security – an example of how TAFEs are responding to emerging industries.

TAFE's social and community obligations mean it has above average representation of students who identify as Indigenous, with a disability, and from low socio-economic backgrounds.

TAFEs are renowned for the range of training facilities including kitchens and restaurants and sophisticated equipment in areas such as automotive, building and construction, electrotechnology, manufacturing and design, and resources and mining.

Ms Dodd said that TAFEs deliver the majority of foundational, preparatory and pathway qualifications such as spoken and written English, tertiary preparation, and skills for education and training pathways.

TAFEs also have a clear focus on delivering nationally recognised qualifications and skill sets rather than stand-alone subjects.

"We sometimes hear that the TAFE sector comprises just 20 per cent of total VET student market, based on data from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), but this includes the large numbers of students enrolled in short duration units associated with statutory work requirements, such as First Aid, CPR and the Construction White Card," Ms Dodd said.

“With more than 500 campuses across Australia, TAFEs, as public institutions, must provide a wide range of options for vocational education and training, meaning they have much broader scope of qualifications than many other providers,” Ms Dodd said.

Ms Dodd said that TAFEs deliver training in regional, rural and remote areas, and are enmeshed in partnerships with industry, schools, employment providers and local communities. TAFEs also have active relationships with their university partners in order to meet the higher-level skills needed for the economy.

When it comes to the “heavy lifting” in delivering the skills Australia needs, TAFEs will continue to play their part through excellence in teaching, facilities and support, and an unmatched reputation for integrity in managing the great responsibility of training the next generations of skilled Australians.

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TAFE Directors Australia is the peak national body representing 29 TAFE institutes, including six dual sector universities with TAFE divisions and nine TAFEs that are also non-university higher education providers.