INDUSTRY TALK
FOR EMPLOYERS, APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES
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VU TAFE AS SOLID AS EVER

The University remains as committed to vocational education today as it was when its predecessor institutions opened their doors to students in Melbourne’s west in 1916. Since then, VU has become the largest provider of vocational and further education in Melbourne’s west.

VU TAFE Director and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Anne Jones said “VU’s loss of $32 million in State Government revenue means the University will need to discontinue a small number of TAFE courses and increase some fees. However, VU was already prepared for funding losses as part of the new competitive tertiary education environment and had developed a strategic plan to realign its course offerings.”

“We want to reassure the community that we are continuing to offer a wide range of respected TAFE courses that are accredited by both industry and government,” Professor Jones said.

“Our diploma courses offer excellent opportunities to pathway into degrees. Many of our TAFE courses and titles in up to 50 trade and skill categories. By participating, competitors represent their employer, their local community and gain the opportunity to enhance their career. The regional competitions were held in 2011 at VU. Successful participants from this year’s Sydney National Finals will go on to compete internationally and represent their country in 2012.

As one of the few dual-sector universities in Australia – offering both vocational (TAFE) and higher education courses – the University plans to reorganise its TAFE diplomas, some certificates and all of its higher education courses into specialised colleges by January 2013 to encourage seamless pathways from TAFE programs into higher education degree courses.

“We will make more of our dual-sector status by further developing pathways and improving opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds – a model that will clearly differentiate us from other tertiary institutions,” Professor Jones said.

At the same time, University management is developing strategies to minimise the impact of the funding changes on VU’s current and future students. Current students will be able to complete their courses and will not be affected for the remainder of the year by any fee changes. Students who enrol before 1 July 2012 are guaranteed current 2012 fees and can bypass the Victorian Government subsidy cuts which take effect from 1 July.

A wide range of TAFE courses are available for a mid-year start at current fees. Courses include accounting, digital media, business, IT, animal studies, massage therapy, fitness, plumbing, and building and construction.

“During this time of evaluation we are being as positive as possible about the changes and seeking creative ways to supplement this partial loss of government funding,” Professor Jones said.

For further information, please visit our website: education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/vetfaqemployer.htm

GEARING UP FOR WORLDSKILLS 2012

Victoria University competitors in the national competitive trade event, WorldSkills, are gearing up for the finals to be held in Sydney at the end of August.

Victorian competitors, including 12 finalists from VU, were invited to attend the first of two training camps held in April designed to prepare participants for the finals to be held over three days in Sydney from 30 August to 1 September.

The VU competitors are:

- Nathan Cossa - Electrical Installation
- Matthew Christoforou - Cabinet making
- Tyson Cowen - Welding
- Joel Cooper - Plumbing
- Kieron Dunn-Hammond - Restaurant Services
- Bradley Fellowes - Bricklaying
- Justin Gault - Carpenter (from Vet in Schools)
- Fabian Gouli - Dated Joinery
- Louis Hope - Turning
- Monica Lo - Restaurant Services
- James Ramos - Carpenter
- Brandon Wade - Carpenter
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WorldSkills is a cycle of competitive events allowing young Australian apprentices and trainees from the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector to compete for recognition and titles in up to 50 trade and skill categories. By participating, competitors represent their employer, their local community and gain the opportunity to enhance their career.

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WorldSkills recognises outstanding trade students.

“WorldSkills boosts skill levels and confidence at an international level. We assist entrants by providing extensive mentoring, coaching and specific skills training before the competition.”

For more information visit: www.worldskills.org.au

INNOVATIVE LEARNING IN THE WORKPLACE SPACE OPENS

Innovative learning in the workplace space opens. In December 2011, Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Dawkins officially opened the Building Consultancy (formerly known as the ‘Practice Firm’) at VU’s Newport Campus.

The new Building Consultancy is the result of an innovative collaboration between industry and the Higher Education and Vocational Education sectors at Victoria University. Complete with a six-star sustainable building rating, the Building Consultancy is providing Learning in the Workplace and Community experiences to a wide range of Higher Education and Vocational Education students.

The transportable building - designed to be relocated to any VU campus - itself provided students from several trade areas the opportunity to work in a “live” environment undertaking work in electrical, carpentry, cabinet making and plumbing.

Speaking at the opening, Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Dawkins said the Building Consultancy equips students with the real-world skills of self-regulated learning, teamwork and dealing with change through critical thinking and problem solving.

Professor Dawkins said the project was a testament to the University’s commitment to providing a distinctive curriculum approach to teaching and learning.

“[This project has led to the enhancement of student potential, professional and personal growth for staff, as well as the expansion of industry and community involvement in our institution],” he said.

Caroline Morrissey, Deputy Director of TAFE/ Executive Dean, Technical and Trades Innovation and Vice-Chancellor Peter Dawkins at the Building Consultancy opening.
OUTSTANDING STUDENTS RECOGNISED AT TAFE AWARDS

Victoria University celebrated the great achievements of its TAFE students at an awards evening at CUB Malthouse in June, recognising outstanding students and their endeavours.

Each year the teaching staff nominates extraordinary students for these prestigious awards. After a review of the submitted applications and extensive interviews by an independent panel, a list emerged of remarkable individuals willing to take control and make a change for a positive future.

Victoria University’s Chancellor George Pappas joined Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Dawkins, special guest the Honourable Lindsay Tanner, industry supporters, council members, VU staff, families and friends to celebrate the success of 30 students across the Vocational and Further Education sector of the 2012 Great Achievement Training Awards.

Mr Pappas reflected on his own journey, which like many of the attendees involved being a new migrant to Australia. “There are many of us here this evening whose lives have been positively transformed by migration. Education has the power to help all of us determine our own futures. VU continues its development as a respected and iconic institution, contributing to education, stimulating economic development and social equity.”

The students were as diverse as the courses involved but their stories had a common theme of determination to improve their lives and the future of their families through education.

The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged our industry partnerships; “one of the great things that make Victoria University distinct is our commitment to fostering positive working partnership with business and industry to meet the needs of an ever changing workplace.”

Victoria University would like to thank our industry partners and supporters that helped make these awards possible. Construction Equipment Australia, Position Partners, Ecohair Victoria University would like to thank our industry partners and supporters that helped make these awards possible. Construction Equipment Australia, Position Partners, Ecohair

UNDUSTRY EXCHANGE STRENGTHENS LINKS

In March, Victoria University’s industry partners toured the School of Construction Industries at the Werribee campus and the opportunity to meet staff and students at a BBQ.

The informal gathering gave representatives from CBUS, Milwaukee Tools, Paslode, Total Tools and the Housing Industry Association (HIA) the opportunity to show our staff and students the latest developments in tools and equipment.

Representatives from Job Services Australia providers – the federal Government’s national employment services system – were also on hand to strengthen links between students and potential employers.

Andrew Williamson, Associate Dean from VU’s International and Business Development Unit, which hosted the event, is impressed by the strong relationships forged between industry and VU. “Catching up with our industry partners at events like these is another opportunity for us to continue the conversation. We have an ongoing commitment to ensuring our students are job ready. This is one of the ways we are connecting to ensure that our courses are delivering the right training outcomes,” he says.

VU has strong partnerships with employers and the community. Industry has embraced VU’s programs, with employers from across the region offering our students meaningful employment opportunities.

WHOLE OF BUSINESS COMMITMENT FOR APPRENTICES

There is healthy competition for apprenticeships at industrial automation and electrical products and solutions supplier NHP, thanks to the company’s commitment to skills development and overall industry experience.

The company prides itself on providing apprentices with a broader knowledge base, they consolidate their skills in the manufacturing workshop and then move on rotation through the different departments of NHP, gaining business experience and valuable exposure in a range of areas such as supply chain, products and brands, engineering, sales, estimating and marketing.

The open interview process means candidates from all backgrounds are welcome to show their interest.

Industry talk spoke to three NHP apprentices at the national manufacturing and distribution centre based at Laverton to Victoria - David Fisch, Carlos Sanchez and Thomas Jacob - about their off the job electrical technical training at Victoria University and the opportunities available to them.

Receiving career switch for David

First year electrical apprentice David Fisch switched from studying Civil Structural Design to take up an offer of an apprenticeship at NHP. Daily discussions with his supervisor provides him with ongoing learning and a chance to show initiative, while understanding the different elements of the business supported his decision to change careers.

Moving on up for Carlos

Carlos Sanchez found his first position at NHP as a labourer through a labour hire firm. Moving on up for Carlos

Electrical Engineering at Victoria University. He believes if he puts his head down, finishes his studies and learns as much as he can this will give him a great start for the future.

Rewarding career switch for David

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Moving on up for Carlos

Carlos Sanchez found his first position at NHP as a labourer through a labour hire firm. While working at NHP he liked what he saw and identified that he wanted to be a qualified electrician. Now in his second year he is happy with the professionalism of training he receives on the job as personal safety and the safety of others is very important at NHP.

He has also been rotated through the production areas where he has obtained the career skills and knowledge to expand into other areas of the business should he choose to move forward. Later in his apprenticeship he is hoping for the chance to work with the Application Engineering or Service teams.

From domestic to industrial for Thomas

Thomas Jacob is a second year electrical apprentice and enjoys NHP’s emphasis on safety and clean premises which contributes to the great working environment. He enjoys working with the variety of informed people through various specialties in the production area and has learnt a number of skills that he would like to convert into the installation field in the future.

As well as completing his apprenticeship, Thomas is also studying the Advanced Diploma in Electrical Engineering at Victoria University. He believes if he puts his head down, finishes his studies and learns as much as he can this will give him a great start for the future.

During 2011, as students of VU, both Carlos and David were able to gain valuable experience as part of the team of students that completed the installation of the electrical wiring to the Building Consultancy, a transportable house built to simulate an office for the University’s Advanced Building students (see the Building Consultancy article in this edition). The two see this work as valuable experience as part of working at NHP.

NHP’s proactive stance when it comes to training young individuals with the skills they need to pursue a fulfilling career in the industrial electrical industry provides a unique and exciting environment. The company’s energetic and committed culture encourages contribution and enables everyone to fulfill their true potential. With 25 branch offices located throughout Australia and New Zealand, NHP provides the framework for its apprentices to reach their full potential whilst taking them to new and exciting places along the way.

For further information contact AUS - 1300 NHP.
CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FUTURES ON TARGET

The Sunshine Construction Futures project is right on schedule to be finished by its targeted completion date of December 2012.

The $44 million Futures project will house the newly announced Trades Academy which will be based at the Sunshine Campus and is a demonstration of VU’s trades training commitment which will focus on apprenticeships as well as pre-apprenticeship and VCAL programs for early school leavers.

The project will skill and re-skill Australia’s building and construction workforce. It will incorporate the training needs of a construction industry whose future rests on the ability of builders, architects and urban designers to accommodate the urgent demands of sustainability while embracing emerging technologies.

The project is currently in fit-out phase with works progressing well through the ground floor and level one including the workshop area with ground level concrete slabs now complete and enclosure is to continue over the coming weeks. South facade works are nearing completion with glass due for installation in late June.

The state of the art building and construction centre is the result of funds from the federal Government’s Education Investment Fund announced in mid-2010.

TOURS AVAILABLE

Victoria University’s School of Construction is pleased to offer tours of the new building. Visit our new building online; visit the link below and scroll to Construction Futures


Please contact the Head of School Peter Jacobson on 9919 8457 or peter.jacobson@vu.edu.au to arrange a time.

INDUSTRY CHOICE AWARDS MAKE-UP THE DIFFERENCE

Students from VU’s School of Service Industries Diploma of Specialist Makeups Services created a spectacular and interactive event in June — the Night of Notables — showcasing their skills to compete for Industry Choice Awards.

‘Live Art’ was the theme, held at VU’s hospitality training restaurant VenU, where students were responsible for creating a whole historical, literary or theatrical character from head to toe including wig creation and styling, prosthetics, costumes and make-up. Presented in the form of an art exhibition, guests walked through each installation and looked for clues to guess who each of the characters were.

Industry representatives attended the evening and provided a critique of the techniques used in the characters to select the award winners.

The winners of the 2012 Industry Choice Awards were as follows:

Special Effect Makeup (sponsored by L’Oreal)

Taryn Badley — Jemima (Cats the Musical)

Megan Burnside — Cleopatra

Megan Toppy — Ariel (The Little Mermaid)

Blissmon Gotthone — Marcus Caviness (Underworld)

Jenni Lee Carter — Rumplestiltskin

Wig Work (sponsored by WASP Hair)

Taryn Badley — Jemima (Cats the Musical)

Megan Burnside — Cleopatra

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT UNIT LINKS TO INDUSTRY

The Faculty of Technical and Trades Innovation’s Business Development Unit is available to facilitate partnership opportunities between employers, students, group training organisations, industry groups along with the community and schools within the Faculty.

The Unit undertakes work both domestically and internationally with skill development in construction, hospitality, tourism, engineering, industrial training and beauty services.

The Unit supports a team of six with diverse backgrounds and strong industry experience. Businesses during 2012 have already contributed to student learning by training according to industry needs ensuring they are employable and ‘work ready’.

Please contact the Unit on (03) 9919 7377 for further information or assistance.
CONTACT
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