

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Water



Wednesday, 15 January 2025

TWENTY THOUSAND MORE CARPENTERS, ELECTRICIANS AND PLUMBERS

The Allan Labor Government is delivering the skilled workers Victoria needs to meet its housing targets, with more than 20,000 carpenters, electricians and plumbers getting their Trade Papers since 2019.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney today welcomed the news and encouraged newly qualified tradies to display their Trade Papers with pride because they're as valuable as a university degree.

A Trade Paper is a certificate awarded to those who successfully complete a recognised apprenticeship in Victoria, along with relevant formal training through a TAFE, trade school or registered training organisation (RTO).

Since the Labor Government reintroduced Trade Papers in 2019, 7,388 carpenters, 7,027 electricians and 5,641 plumbers have gained their qualifications – that's 20,000 qualified tradies with the skills to build the homes Victorian needs.

More than 11,300 people completed a trade apprenticeship in 2023-23, an increase of 24.5 per cent compared to 2019-20 and 20,400 people started a trade apprenticeship in Victoria in the same period – an increase of 22.4 per cent.

Across the state, there are more than 54,800 trades apprentices currently gaining their qualifications – an increase of almost 19 per cent.

Many of the plumbers who have recently qualified are choosing to complete further training short courses to meet licensing or regulatory requirements in their field, so they can get into work sooner.

The Labor Government is adding seven new short courses in plumbing to Free TAFE in 2025. These short courses will mean plumbers can undertake the specific units they need to start work, easing the skills shortages the industry is facing.

Victorians can access Free TAFE courses without the cost of tuition fees, even if they already hold a VET qualification or degree. There are no limits on the number of plumbing licensing short courses a person can complete in a year.

For more information about Trade Papers, visit vrqa.vic.gov.au. For more information about getting an apprenticeship, visit apprenticeships.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

"Carpenters, electricians and plumbers are vital for our community, economy, and for building the homes we need – so we're focusing our training investment to make trade apprenticeships fairer, safer and even more worthwhile."

"There has never been a better time to consider a career in the trades – it's a rewarding, secure and well-paid career. Gaining your qualifications through an apprenticeship sets you up to earn while you learn on the job."