



Myth-busting campaign to change perceptions

A NEW campaign is challenging “outdated mindsets” about vocational education and training in south-west Victoria.

South West TAFE’s new myth-busting campaign aims to change perceptions about the role of the VET system. Titled Perceptions are not reality; the campaign highlights TAFE’s critical role in today’s society and its success in meeting current and future employment demands.

It follows a report released by the Skilling Australia Foundation that shows nine of the top 10 occupations predicted to have the highest jobs growth are in vocational training areas.

SW TAFE chief executive Mark Fidge believed TAFEs were sometimes underappreciated because of misconceptions and confusion grounded in a lack of awareness.

“Perceptions are widely out of step with the reality of TAFE achievements,” Mr Fidge said.

“Ideally we want young people and their parents to talk about TAFEs in the same positive way as

universities when planning a career path.”

The campaign busts myths that TAFE graduates earn low wages, struggle to find work or that the system is a thing of the past.

It shows that the average full-time income for a TAFE graduate is comparable to a university graduate, more than 78 per cent of TAFE graduates are employed after training, and more than nine in 10 trade apprentices have jobs after finishing training.

The campaign is based on research by Mark

McCrimble for Skilling Australia Foundation and confirms Australia’s VET sector continues to deliver outstanding results and outcomes.

Mr McCrimble described the sector as “the first foundational rung in Australia’s future economic prosperity”.

Skilling Australia chief executive Nicholas Wyman said the VET sector delivers excellent results for students, industry and the economy but Australian public perceptions are out of step

with the reality of its achievements.

“TAFE training can help to fill the skills gap Australia is experiencing,” Mr Wyman said.

Mr Fidge said students with TAFE qualifications can work in growing sectors such as healthcare, tourism, and hospitality.

“What you get at TAFE is hands-on practical industry experience and training from industry professionals that improves job prospects and prepares you for a career in these growth areas,” Mr Fidge said.

At the same time TAFEs also provide a pathway to university courses.

The new campaign also reflects extensive local customer research which highlighted a gap between perceptions of TAFE and the current reality.

SW TAFE’s student satisfaction and employment outcomes are above state and national benchmarks.