

The Magical Kingdom of TAFES

TAFES are magical worlds. You can enter the TAFE world without a huge amount of qualifications, and come out the other side with work-ready skills in anything from wool-classing to 3D modelling. Accounting even. Plus, the exchange rate in this magical TAFE kingdom is amazing – your money goes a long way in The Magical Kingdom of TAFES. *Smart Start reports.*

What are they all about?

Up-to-date training

TAFE courses are designed and updated with help from industry – the people who may be your future employers.

'Work-ready' training and education

TAFE courses teach practical skills and knowledge so that you perform well in the workplace, whether you're starting, changing or climbing your career. Courses, which are often designed around things called 'units of competency', are directly related to jobs and careers.

Loads of choices at loads of places

TAFES offer well over 1000 courses in everything from Aboriginal Studies to Zookeeping. There are literally hundreds of TAFE facilities throughout Australia – including many in isolated locations. Many TAFES also operate distance and online learning facilities.

Flexibility and accessibility

TAFES adapt their training to suit the needs of their communities. They deliver in all sorts of places – in the workplace, in schools, in Aboriginal communities – and go to great lengths to ensure that as many people as possible have access to their programs.

Where did they come from?

'TAFE' used to stand for Technical and Further Education. But these days it just really stands for 'TAFE'. It's all about getting skills for the 'real' world.

TAFES are run by state governments and offer education and training designed to be hands-on. Each state or territory has a slightly different way of doing things and administering things. But TAFES are all after the same sorts of things: education and training that is affordable, that is attainable, and that has a practical or hands-on angle.

You might have heard the term 'VET' which means vocational education and training. That's what TAFES do – they concentrate on education and training that is focused on a career or job or, in other words, a vocation.

So the 'hands-on' angle doesn't mean it's only for plumbers and carpenters. There are TAFE courses for marketing and accounting and everything (see the list starting over the page). But what it does mean is there is an emphasis on applying the skills and knowledge you have gained in the 'real' world – workplace skills, attitudes and competencies.

Costs?

TAFE fees are not outrageously high, and are only a fraction of the real cost of study.

A very, very rough guess: certificate II might cost somewhere around \$300; an advanced diploma might cost somewhere in range of \$1400-\$2000 per year. Fees differ a great deal from state to state. Some states calculate charges by the 'classroom' hour: from \$1.50 to somewhere around \$3 per hour. Some have a flat fee.

HECS doesn't cover TAFE fees, but there is a newish HELP loan for VET study (see page 50) which may work for you and operates on the same basis as HECS.

Some TAFEs offer loans to students who are having difficulty coming up with fees; some TAFEs may even waive their fees. Make sure you contact them because lack of money should not stop you!

(TAFEs also offer commercial courses with full fees.)

Who teaches?

Teachers of course. Well, yes and no. TAFE teachers are people who either have worked in the industry area of the course, or still work in that industry area. That means they know the skills that are needed in the workforce. And even better, they usually know lots of people (employers) who might be able to help you out. It doesn't matter how clever the education and training programs are, TAFE teachers make it happen because they have their 'hands on' the pulse.

TAFE contacts

- ACT: www.cit.act.edu.au; 02 6207 3188
- NSW: www.tafensw.edu.au; 131 601
- NT: www.cdu.edu.au; 08 8946 7766
- QLD: www.tafe.qld.gov.au; 1300 30 8233
- SA: www.tafe.sa.edu.au; 1800 882 661
- TAS: www.tafe.tas.edu.au; 1300 655 307
- VIC: www.tafe.vic.gov.au; 131 823
- WA: www.tafe.wa.edu.au; 1800 999 167

What about?

- Aboriginal studies
- access to work, training and educational opportunities
- accounting
- advertising
- advertising media - applied fashion design and technology
- aged care work
- agriculture
- agriculture
- alcohol and other drugs work
- animal care and management studies
- animal studies
- animal studies
- animal technology
- arboriculture
- architectural technology
- architectural technology
- aromatherapy
- art
- asset maintenance (cleaning operations)
- assisting in nursing work in acute care
- audiometric assessment
- automotive mechanical technology (light vehicle)
- automotive mechanical technology (motorcycle)
- automotive sales (parts interpretation)
- automotive vehicle body (specialising in paint preparation)
- automotive vehicle servicing
- aviation airline transport building studies
- aviation flight operations
- baking hairdressing
- bar skills
- beauty services beauty therapy
- bookbinding and finishing
- bookkeeping
- business
- business (legal)
- business arts and info tech
- chainsaw operations
- chemical application
- chemical risk management
- Chinese
- civil engineering design
- clothing production
- command instrument rating - theory
- commercial cookery
- community services work
- companion animal services

The Magical Kingdom of TAFEs verses the Evil Empire of Universities

TAFEs and unis haven't always got on well. Universities tended to think of TAFEs as a snotty-nosed little ratbags.

But things change. TAFEs have changed and society has changed too. TAFEs and universities compete for students. Some TAFEs offer degrees, while some universities offer diplomas.

As a general rule, TAFEs offer certificates and diplomas; universities offer degrees and above.

TAFEs try and teach practical skills so that students are ready for the workforce when they graduate. Universities have a slightly different approach. For instance, a uni degree in marketing will teach a lot of theory behind psychology and the way people think and buy stuff PLUS you'll look at any other subjects like anthropology or zoology that you want to mix into your degree. A TAFE marketing diploma might concentrate on marketing principles, research, market opportunities, profiling the market and analysing consumer behaviour, as well as looking at business skills like reporting on financial activity and establishing business networks.

That's why thousands of university graduates study at TAFE to add practical skills to their knowledge, and thousands of students study at TAFE and uni at the same time.

Getting into TAFE

TAFEs are all about inclusion not exclusion. That doesn't mean they will let anyone study any course. But it does mean they will help open doors for you rather than lock them. TAFEs often accept your work history and life experiences as 'qualifications'. TAFEs also offer extensive recognition processes so you can knit your TAFE training into your other study.

TAFEs are run differently in each state and territory, so you'll definitely have to contact a local campus (some contact details are in the breakout box back a page).

For most TAFE courses. You don't have to apply – you just need to enrol. But you will need to make sure you meet the minimum entry requirements. These requirements are sometimes education-based (i.e. completion of Year 12) and sometimes they are work-based (i.e. if want to study Commercial Cookery you might have to have a job in a kitchen).

For some popular courses.

You need to apply to study some courses that are in high demand, and attach documents to your application. You may also have to audition, sit a test, or submit a portfolio.

WHY WAIT?

Good question. Don't wait. Do a TAFE course as part of your school studies. Or, think outside the box: do a TAFE course as well as your school studies. That will give you an amazing insight into the real world, a head-start on a qualification, and contact with a whole new group of mates.

See page 28 for information about studying TAFE courses as part of school.

- companion animal services
- competitive manufacturing
- computer aided drafting - computer hardware engineering and servicing
- computer for the office
- conservation and land management
- conveyancing
- costume
- court and parliamentary reporting and captioning
- customer contact
- design and fabric printing
- desktop publishing
- detail drafting concepts electrical engineering
- dry cleaning
- electrical technology
- electronics and communications
- electrotechnology building services
- electrotechnology servicing
- engineering
- engineering (heavy and light fabrication)
- engineering (mechanical)
- English for academic purposes
- English for employment
- English for further study
- English for vocational purposes
- environmental studies
- equine nursing
- ESOL education support
- event management
- farm mechanics
- farming small areas
- farriery
- fashion design
- fashion design industry practice
- financial services
- fishing industry, recreational services
- floristry studies
- flux core arc welding
- food processing
- footwear production
- footwear repair
- French
- gas metal arc welding
- general construction ohs induction
- German
- goat production
- graphic design production
- graphic pre-press
- greyhound racing
- hairdressing
- harness racing driver
- headwear/millinery
- horse breeding
- horse racing industry
- horticulture (turf)
- hospitality management
- hospitality supervision
- HSC
- human resources
- HVAC - refrigeration engineering
- Indigenous land management
- Indonesian
- information technology (networking)
- introduction to Microsoft office
- investigative services
- Italian
- Japanese
- kitchen operations
- Korean
- laboratory techniques
- laboratory technology
- landscaping
- language, literacy and numeracy
- laundry operations
- library/information services
- locksmithing
- make-up services
- management
- management communication
- manual metal arc welding
- manufacturing technology
- marine (mechanical)
- marine engine driving
- maritime operations
- marketing
- medical administration
- mental health work
- mentoring in the community
- mortuary theatre practice
- music
- music industry
- music industry (technical production)
- natural area restoration & management
- naval architecture
- non-destructive testing
- nursing (enrolled/division nursing)
- nutrition and dietetic support
- occupational health and safety
- optical dispensing
- optical technology
- organic production
- organic soil management
- outdoor power equipment
- painting and decorating
- panel beating
- parks and gardens
- pathology specimen collection
- •patisserie
- pest management
- photo imaging
- photography
- pottery and ceramics
- preparation for vocational and further study
- preparatory mathematics and science
- printing
- printing and print finishing
- production horticulture
- professional dog grooming
- programming
- property valuation
- public relations
- racing administration (steward)
- racing jockey
- racing trackrider
- real estate
- recordkeeping
- refrigeration and air conditioning
- responsible conduct of gambling
- restaurant licensees
- restricted electrical work
- retail
- retail management
- retail nursery
- retail operations
- rural production studies
- safety checking electrical appliances
- screen printing
- security operations
- sheep and wool production
- sign writing
- skills for work and training
- small business management
- software development
- Spanish
- spatial information services
- stablehand
- statistics
- sterilisation services
- structural design
- structural engineering
- tertiary preparation
- textile fabrication
- tourism (guiding)
- tourism (international retail travel sales)
- tourism (operations)
- tourism (sales and marketing)
- tourism (tour wholesaling)
- vehicle painting
- vehicle presentation
- vehicle trimming
- veterinary nursing
- visual merchandising
- website design
- website development
- welding
- wholesale nursery
- wool classing
- wool clip preparation
- wool handling
- workplace hygiene
- youth work
- zookeeping