

Vocational Education - Graduates give top marks to TAFE SA

Cara Jenkin *The Advertiser* April 16, 2011

TERTIARY education institution TAFE SA has an almost flawless record of satisfaction among its graduates, with research showing 95 per cent would recommend its courses to others.

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research finds graduates would recommend the training they received while studying a course at TAFE SA as well as the campus facilities at which they trained.

It compares with the national average of 89 per cent of graduates who would recommend their tertiary institution to others.

TAFE SA Adelaide South managing director Stephen Conway says the 2010 Student Outcomes Survey results reveal its efforts to provide students with skills relevant to their careers are working.

"TAFE SA offers a variety of ways to support career opportunities that lead to good jobs through internships, industry placements, practical workplace experience and awards," he says.

TAFE SA has 48 campuses in three regional networks of South Australia - two in the north and south of the metropolitan area and one encompassing country areas.

It is part of the State Government's Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.

It aims to provide vocational education and training because of a State Government commitment for all South Australians to have the skills required for the future growth of existing, new and emerging industries.

It has measures to modernise and renew its courses, including to provide more choice to students.

Conference consultant Renee Jolly is one of the TAFE SA graduates who believes the training she received was pivotal to her career success. Ms Jolly, 29, had wanted to work in the meetings and events industry since high school but could not gain access to vocational education and training subjects in her final years of study.

When she finished school in 1998, she enrolled at TAFE SA, first to study an Advanced Diploma of Tourism then an Advanced Diploma of Events.

It is a two-year, full-time course covering presentation, staging and financial skills as well as marketing, logistics and business technology.

"I volunteered to work at several events, which were not only great experiences but also gave me a real taste of the industry and made me even more determined to be a part of it," she says.

Her first job involved working on meetings and conferences while working in administration at WorkCover Corporation.

She now is not-for-profit medical education association sapmea's convention assistant developing health-education programs for organisations. This year Ms Jolly was named Meetings Events Australia 's Consultant of the Year.

"I believe the experience that I've gained, the relationships I've built and now this award put me in good stead to continue contributing to this great industry," she says.

"TAFE 's close relationship with the events industry was crucial in the early part of my career and gave me a solid foundation in knowledge, skills and experience."

Ms Jolly recommends students consider undertaking TAFE SA courses.

"TAFE courses cover a wide range of topics and skill sets that can be applied in any working environment," she says.

JOB STATS

Percentage of graduates employed after training

* New South Wales 73.6

* Victoria 76.3

* Queensland 76.6

* South Australia 76.5

* Western Australia 80.1

* Tasmania 80.2

* Northern Territory 80.2

* ACT 88.7

* Australia 76.3

Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2010