



# BUDGET 2008 - 2009 READY FOR THE FUTURE MEDIA RELEASE

No. 22

## HELPING STUDENTS GET READY FOR THE FUTURE – VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Minister for Education and Training, Andrew Barr, today said the Stanhope Government is continuing to help ACT students be ready for the future with continued and additional investment in vocational education and training and skills.

Mr Barr said the 2008-09 Budget sees investment in programs and infrastructure at the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) as well as our colleges and additional funds to meet demand for Australian Apprenticeships.

“The Stanhope Government is committed to providing opportunities for all Canberrans to increase their skills and believes that investment in vocational education and training is essential if we are to be ready for the future,” Mr Barr said.

“In this Budget we are investing heavily in new infrastructure at the CIT. We will provide \$9 million for a new horticulture facility at the Bruce Campus that will provide a state of the art environment for students and greatly add to the vibrancy of the campus. In addition, we have invested \$900,000 for the feasibility and design of a new Trade Skills Centre at Fyshwick and the redevelopment of the CIT’s Reid campus as outlined the Reid Master Plan.

“In an effort to ensure Canberra is ready for the future, the ACT Government is investing an additional \$2.495 million over four years in CIT to deliver an additional 35,000 hours in training. This will be delivered by a variety of methods including traditional classroom teaching, flexible learning, distance education and recognition of prior learning. It will also fund growth in demand for the new CIT Vocational College.

“CIT will also benefit from a \$1 million technology and major equipment upgrade that will see more modern and professional equipment provided to students so they are training on equipment that is at least the standard they would be expected to use in the workplace.

“In addition, we will increase funding to meet the demand for Australian Apprenticeships through additional User Choice funding of \$4.169 million over four years.

“This will help tackle the local impacts of the national skills shortage and ensure we are meeting the demand from Canberrans for training in the future.”

Mr Barr said the Stanhope Government recognises that we need to develop more innovative ways for Canberrans to gain skills and qualifications and this Budget funds programs such as the CIT Vocational College as well as support for students with a disability at the CIT, and extra support for career and vocational learning in our public college system.

“The Stanhope Government is committed to providing a number of different pathways for students to gain training and skills and this Budget provides \$3.440 million for staffing support in each ACT College to improve student access to careers programs and vocational learning. The teachers will move between high schools and colleges in an area to help transition students and support pathways planning. They will also be responsible for reviewing and managing a range of VET programs and for expanding and improving current careers activities in colleges,” Mr Barr said.

“Students attending the CIT Vocational College will also benefit from an extra \$1.037 million over four years for programs designed to support students into a successful transition to work. The funding will see staff dedicated to providing additional support beyond the classroom provided to students to help them link with the broader CIT community as well as organising activities to assist students with development.

“In addition, \$300,000 over four years will be invested to support the growing number of students at the CIT with a disability. This funding will see additional equipment such as specialised computer monitors with adaptive software provided to assist with learning.”

Mr Barr said investment in vocational education is essential to combating the current skills shortage, but also to ensure Canberra is ready for the future.

Statement ends

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