



PRESS RELEASE

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Coffs Harbour TAFE recognised for excellence in trade skills training

Trade skill qualifications are in high demand, but how can students and their parents ensure the skills they gain in the classroom will be recognised by industry and future employers?

The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence today announced the rollout of the Star Rating Scheme. The Scheme will recognise excellence in trade skills training among TAFE and private training providers, with a Star Rating.

The North Coast Institute of TAFE was one of the first training providers to take part in trials of the Scheme, and has been recognised with a Two Gold Star Rating for Metals and Engineering.

Elizabeth McGregor, Director of the North Coast Institute said, "The recognition we have received validates our position as a leading choice in training for the metals and engineering industry sectors here on the New South Wales North Coast."

Brian Wexham, Chief Executive Officer of The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence thanked the North Coast Institute for participating in the trials and congratulated them on an exemplary outcome.

"The Scheme aims to recognise high performing registered training providers such as the North Coast Institute, and help individual schools and faculties understand exactly what their clients want from their training.

"It is a national initiative which will help promote and advance the quality and relevance of vocational and technical training for the trades in Australia," said Mr Wexham.

The Scheme recognises and awards high performing registered training providers with a One Gold Star, Two Gold Star or Three Gold Star rating, with Three Gold Stars being the highest level of recognition.

"The Star Rating Scheme is an industry driven initiative and has been developed by The Institute and industry to provide a platform that will deliver the vocational training outcomes required to meet their needs," said Mr Wexham.



“The Scheme will also make it easier for students and their parents to ascertain which registered training providers have been recognised at an industry level, within their field of interest.

“Employers will also be able to assess the quality of trade skills training that graduates hold from each registered training organisation rated within the Star Rating Scheme,” said Mr Wexham.

Throughout August and September, a number of registered training organisations took part in trials of the Star Rating Scheme.

“The results of the trials indicate that we have a very high standard of trade skills training in Australia, and this should be recognised,” said Mr Wexham.

Ms McGregor supported the Star Rating Scheme and said it was an effective way of addressing Australia’s skills shortage.

“TAFE New South Wales North Coast Institute was very pleased to be able to support the Star Rating Scheme and take part in trials for the Institute for Trade Skills Excellence.

“We found the process to be a valuable addition to our own internal quality processes and regular self-assessment work, and a great mechanism to maintain our focus on providing excellence for our customers.

“During this critical labour shortage period, we welcome initiatives that seek to identify and meet specific industry needs - such as the Star Rating Scheme. They help us ensure that our apprentices and trainees have the right skills to contribute to the region’s economy,” said Ms McGregor.

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The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence (the Institute):

The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence promotes and advances learning, teaching and training in Australian trades education and elevates the status of traditional trades and trades education as a career choice. The Institute is an industry led, Federal Government funded group that promotes the advancement of learning, teaching and training in Australian trades education. The Institute is



owned through its key stakeholders Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), the Australian Industry Group (AI Group) and the National Farmers Federation (NFF).

Brian Wexham, Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:

Mr Wexham has been a Director of Worldskills Australia Inc since 2002 and has taken a keen interest in emerging skills shortages and the quality of trade training in Australia.

His background in media, advertising and publishing is extensive and includes executive roles with The Times and The Sunday Times in London, board positions with The Observer and the Today newspaper, London. He is also the former Chief Executive of Lonhro Media Group PLC East Africa and more recently was the Chief Executive of APN Educational Media (Australia and New Zealand).

The Star Rating Scheme:

The Star Rating Scheme will identify the very best training providers, industry by industry. It is a way to enable employers, career counsellors, potential students, and parents to distinguish excellence in trade training by evaluating training providers. Industry areas within RTOs which apply will receive either a One Gold Star, Two Gold Star, or Three Gold Star rating to indicate that they achieve excellent results for their clients.

It's also about creating a better informed market which will expect high quality, and thereby help to lift the quality bar on training.

The Star Rating Scheme focuses on the following eight areas of skill shortage:

- Automotive
- Building and Construction
- Electrical
- Hospitality and Personal Services
- Manufacturing
- Metals and Engineering
- Mineral Resources
- Rural and Farming

Evaluations are carried out against three broad criteria that were developed in partnership with businesses that employ tradespeople.

The evaluation process includes an initial self evaluation by the relevant faculty or school, followed by a site visit to schools or faculties who demonstrate potential to achieve a One Gold Star, Two Gold Star or Three Gold Star rating.