



Further Information:

Helen Singleton
(02) 8314 7304
0412 136 169

MEDIA RELEASE
Tuesday, 16 Dec 2008

It's a GOLD Rush at Western Sydney Institute TAFE

Nirimba College- Western Sydney Institute (WSI) has been recognised as a leading Registered Training Organisation. It was awarded a Three Gold Star Rating for its ***Carpentry & Joinery*** and another three stars for its ***Bricklaying, Blocklaying and Roof Tiling*** courses.

The Star Rating Scheme is administered by The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence and recognises excellence in trade and skills training among TAFE and private Registered Training Organisations.

When asked what makes this course stand out from the rest, Rudi Meuwissen, Head Teacher, Bricklaying and Roof Tiling at Nirimba College, TAFE NSW, talked about the “flexible” and “student centred” approach to learning.

“Our students are able to complete their Certificate III in Bricklaying/Blocklaying or Certificate III in Roof Tiling in a flexible, self-paced, student centred learning environment. Students have access to a flexible Learning and Assessment Centre at Nirimba College with call-off rooms and individual practical work areas”.

Andrew Jones, Head Teacher, Carpentry and Joinery at Nirimba College, TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute commented on the “choice” and “skills” his students receive.

“Carpentry students are offered a choice of three structured study programs of electives at Nirimba College which will provide them with the particular skills required for employment in specialised construction fields”.

“Students may also select either a weekly or a block-release attendance pattern. A block-release attendance pattern permits more intensive knowledge and skills development which facilitates the achievement of competency in a shorter time”.

The Star Rating Scheme identifies the very best training providers, industry by industry, to enable employers, career counselors, potential students, and parents to distinguish excellence in trade training by evaluating training providers.

Industry areas within Registered Training Organisations which apply receive either a: One Gold Star; Two Gold Star; or Three Gold Star Rating to indicate that they have achieved excellent results for their students.

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

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

Evaluations are carried out against three broad criteria that were developed in partnership with the industry.

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.

Brian Wexham, Chief Executive Officer of The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence said that The Star Rating Scheme reassures students that they are selecting the most appropriate course.

“One of the biggest concerns when choosing a training organisation to attend is whether or not it will get people the job they want when they complete the course. Thanks to The Star Ratings Scheme, prospective students and employers now have a credible source to help them with their decision.

“The Scheme aims to recognise high performing registered training providers such as Nirimba College, and help individual schools and faculties understand exactly what their clients want from their training.

“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 industry needs” said Mr Wexham.

ENDS

About

The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence (The Institute) promotes the importance of trades and skills and recognises excellence in trades and skills education and training through:

- SkillsOne – an integrated platform of television programming, interactive website and media partnerships;
- The Star Rating Scheme, which awards high performing training organisations with Gold Star Ratings; and
- The Trades and Skills Teaching Awards which recognise excellence amongst teachers in trades and skills education and training.

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 & Construction
- Electrical
- Hospitality & Personal Services
- Manufacturing
- Metals & Engineering
- Mineral Resources
- Rural & 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.