

Building and Construction Trades Capabilities Statement

Since 1887 | 139 years of tradition

A photograph of three construction workers in a blue-tinted setting, likely a construction site. They are wearing yellow shirts, safety glasses, and hard hats. One worker is holding a large sheet of paper, possibly blueprints, and the other two are looking at it. They are also wearing tool belts and gloves. The background shows wooden framing and structural elements of a building under construction.

the
Gordon

The Gordon is the largest and oldest standalone TAFE in Victoria servicing two of the fastest growing regions in Australia – Greater Geelong and Wyndham City.

Based in Geelong, the institute has a strong reputation as the region's trusted TAFE at the forefront of innovative training practices, working diligently with industry and stakeholders to identify and implement the best and latest techniques, methodologies, and initiatives that create engaging, inclusive, and high-quality training content delivered to more than 14,000 students each year.

Accredited and non-accredited training products are designed to meet industry needs, including qualifications that align with in-demand industries such as construction and clean energy, and are continuously reviewed by industry experts to ensure they are compliant and reflect current practices.

Workforce alignment is driven by strong connections and mutually beneficial, partnerships and collaborations with:

- Industry bodies
- Employers
- Secondary schools
- Universities
- Unions
- Community groups.

This delivers an education and skills mix that moves with the changing face of the economic and social landscape. Extensive consultation with these groups ensures agile, quality and innovative training is available to the current and future workforce and provides students from all demographics with clear pathways to further study and exciting careers.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Gordon respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we learn and work, paying our respects to their ancestors and Elders – past, present and emerging – who have nurtured knowledge, culture and community on these lands for countless generations.

We recognise and honour the continuing connection of First Peoples to Country, and we are committed to fostering a learning environment that respects and celebrates their enduring cultural heritage.

Our campuses are located on the lands of the following Traditional Custodians:

Geelong City campus – Wadawurrung Country	East Geelong campus – Wadawurrung Country	Werribee campuses – Wadawurrung, Woiwurrung and Boonwurrung Country
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139 years of successful operations

Officially founded in 1887, operating as a Mechanics Institute and night trades' school from inside a humble single-storied hall at our main City Campus in Geelong's CBD, The Gordon is a local icon and continues to build on its history of success. It is constantly evolving with the vision to be the first choice in our markets and a leader in vocational education and training. Continued investment has seen re-development of its campuses over the decades with modernised, future-focused facilities, dedicated to the enhanced delivery of modern training packages. These facilities are crucial to building our capacity to meet the increasing demand for training places across more than 350 programs.



4

campuses. The Gordon is one of Victoria's largest vocational education and training (VET) institutes.

750+

staff members.

12,000+

students studying amongst The Gordon's four campuses.

3000+

apprentices, accounting for 37% of our student population.

1887

The Gordon has been a leading industry training provider since 1887.

60%

of students reside in the wider Geelong catchment region.

From Tools to Transformation: The Gordon's Construction Leaders Shaping Tomorrow's Workforce

The Gordon's construction management team, based at the East Geelong Campus, knows first-hand that a career in the trades is more than just being “on the tools”. This expert team of licensed tradespeople, former business owners, and educators now serves as senior leaders. Their extensive experience allows them to effectively manage construction training programs and guide the next generation of local workers.

Andy Bugeja

Director – Industry, Trades and Environment Education Excellence

After more than two decades in the plumbing industry, Andy took on a new leadership role in 2024, overseeing Industry and Trades at The Gordon. His extensive experience as a business owner for 12 years and a plumbing teacher for three gives him a unique understanding of what it takes to achieve a successful career in the building industry. Andy's leadership is instrumental in fostering strong cross-organisational relationships that align with the community's vocational needs and government objectives, particularly by integrating innovation and renewable energy into future workforce training. He is a member of the Geelong Construction Skills Council and The Victorian Construction Trades Directors Forum.



Lorenzo Ernstzen

Carpentry and Construction Portfolio Manager

Lorenzo transitioned to teaching at The Gordon in 2017, following nearly two decades of experience in the construction industry. His extensive background encompasses hands-on instruction, supervisory roles, and self-employment, providing him with a comprehensive understanding of the sector's challenges and opportunities. This deep industry insight now drives his vision for skills innovation and excellence in vocational education. As Portfolio Manager, Lorenzo focuses on enhancing instructional methodologies and strategies to promote student engagement and success. He maintains a keen focus on workforce planning and operational leadership and is committed to building strong relationships with industry, employers, and community organisations, thereby ensuring construction programs consistently meet industry standards and requirements.

Andrew McKinnon

Plumbing Portfolio Manager

As the Portfolio Manager for Plumbing, Andrew is proud to be in a position where he can make a valuable contribution to the development of young plumbers at an organisational and systemic level. He leverages the skills and knowledge gained from his 35 years' experience in the plumbing industry, including 30 years' operating his own business in Geelong. Andrew joined The Gordon seven years ago as a teacher, finding the transformation and growth in students - and the success they achieve after training at the East Campus - to be extremely rewarding. He is actively involved in the National Hydrogen TAFE Network and Hydrogen Skills Needs Committee.



Building Trades Portfolio Managers from left: Lorenzo Ernstzen (Carpentry and Construction), Andrew McKinnon (Plumbing), and Andy Heath (Electrical).

Andy Heath

Electrical Portfolio Manager

Andy became Portfolio Manager in 2024 after teaching at The Gordon since 2008. His involvement in the renewable energy industry spans more than 15 years, initially attracted to its rapidly evolving nature as a field that was then considered 'new' and 'emerging'. An A-grade electrician by trade, Andy's background in automation and electronics suited the design elements associated with the programming and commissioning of inverters and battery charging systems. He currently sits on the Solar Energy Installers Association of Victoria (SEIA Vic) committee and continues to be a strong advocate for building a sustainable energy future.

“

The Gordon's top five apprentice programs are in the construction industry - one of the top three employing industries of the Barwon region. The Gordon has 3000+ active apprentices and trainees across 44 different courses, accounting for approx 37% of our student population.

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Specialists in Building and Construction Trade Training



Commitment to producing job-ready graduates

Teaching of trade subjects - building construction, plumbing and carpentry - started in 1891.

The Gordon's Construction Trades program enjoys a solid reputation for quality training, industry knowledge and broad ranging construction expertise. The institute is committed to this industry which is projected to grow significantly and remain in-demand well into the future.

The institute's capabilities, expertise, and experience to design, develop and deliver specialised curriculum within this provides a high standard, job-ready local workforce equipped with the technical and soft skills needed to confidently work in the construction industry.

Fully qualified, skilled, knowledgeable and experienced teachers train over 4500 individuals from across the region in construction trades every year. Ranging from secondary school students starting their careers to licensed tradespeople looking to upskill into senior roles, all learners are provided with full wrap around support to ensure they achieve their career goals.

Quality training delivery continues to grow and strengthen thanks to robust long-term relationships established and maintained with strategic partners, trusted suppliers and industry experts over decades.

The Gordon is deeply involved with the region's construction industry, known as a quality training provider of construction trade qualifications and priding itself on successful, long-held working relationships with industry and stakeholders.



For generations, The Gordon has been at the heart of trade training in our region, setting benchmarks for quality, safety, and craftsmanship that others measure themselves against.

The results speak for themselves:

- **Plumbing registration pass rates of 90-95% (vs ~70% Victorian average)**
- **Carpentry completion rates above 90% (vs <50% across Victoria)**
- **Electrical A-Grade pass rates around 70%, consistently higher than state benchmarks**

These aren't just numbers. They represent decades of investment in people, facilities, and industry partnerships that have kept Geelong's trades at the very top.

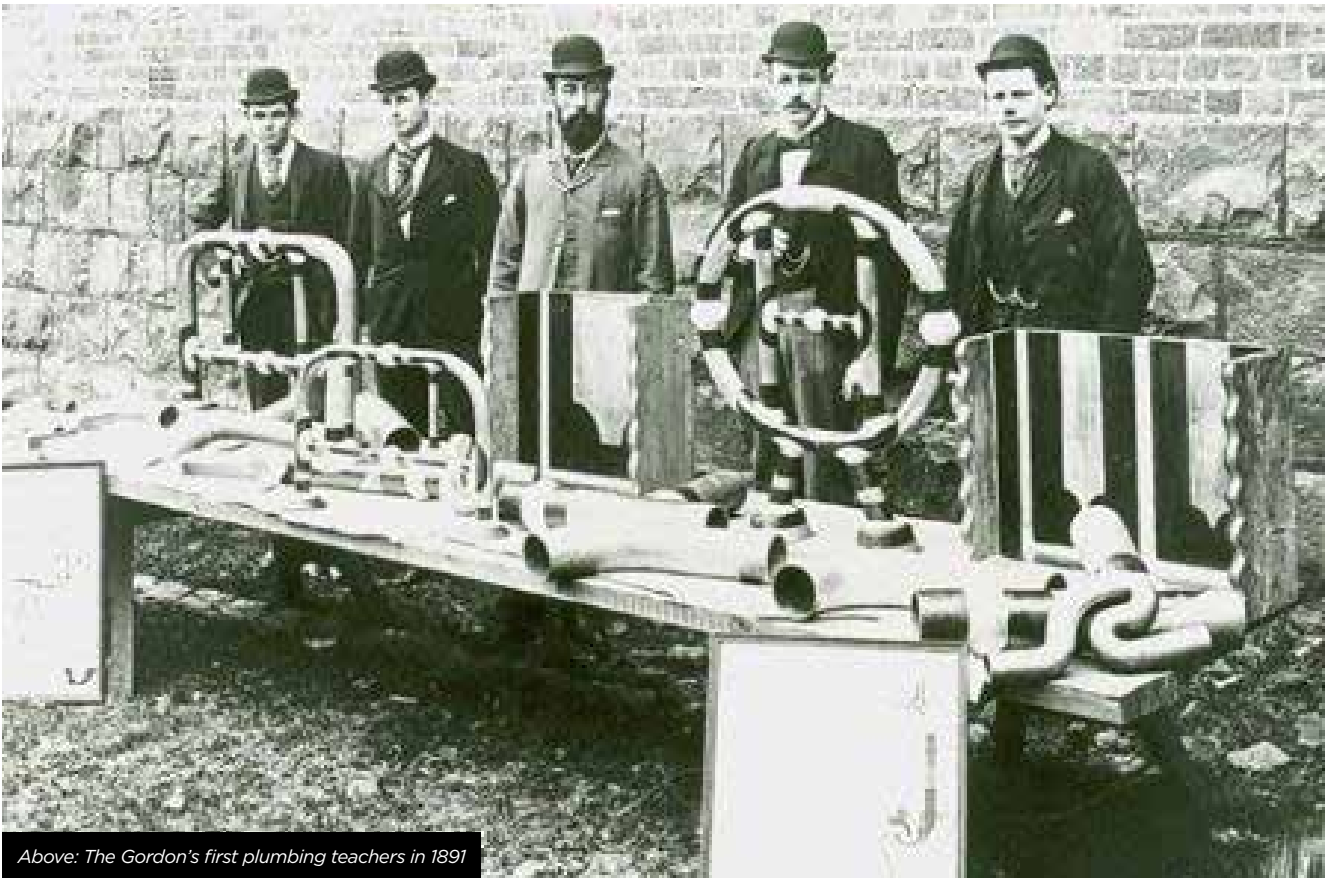


**Industry, Trades & Environment
Director, Andy Bugeja.**

In 1999, The Gordon's Building and Construction Centre was relocated from Moorabool St in Geelong CBD to the current East Geelong campus following \$5.2m in government funding to expand technical training from this site.

A proven track record of successful training outcomes

- An established teaching team of experienced and knowledgeable tradespeople who are student-focused.
- Regular industry training and information sharing provided to teachers to ensure their awareness of new developments and innovations.
- Regular communication with industry partners and suppliers ensures the latest construction materials are used and best practice methods are taught.
- Training delivery is supported by a comprehensive network of reliable suppliers.
- Dedicated to maintaining best industry practice and high-quality standards of training.



Above: The Gordon's first plumbing teachers in 1891

Leading the Training of the Region’s Future Construction Workforce

Housing supply	Supporting regional development
 Draft housing targets: 163,600 more homes across the five G21 municipalities by 2051, with 139,800 homes to be built in Greater Geelong alone.	Every year The Gordon is training people of all demographics and stages of career in carpentry, electrical and plumbing trades to help build a strong pipeline of workers that support the Victorian Government’s housing targets. The institute is well positioned to support the region’s skills and training needs with its largest volume of students enrolled in electrical, plumbing and carpentry courses, including approx. 1700 apprentices, in 2025. This is significant as a larger workforce is needed to meet the skills needs of the billions of dollars in projects planned, in progress and approved for the region.



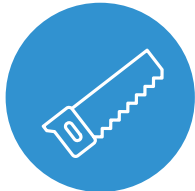
The Gordon’s top five most popular apprentice programs are in the construction industry — one of the top three employing industries of the Barwon region.



Enrolments in courses that pathway into in-demand occupations within the construction industry have steadily increased from 2022-2024.



The most popular courses are within in-demand construction programs: electrical, carpentry and plumbing.



In 2025, 260 VDSS students enrolled in Cert II Building & Construction (Carpentry), leading enrolments in in-demand industries.



The Vocational Education and Training (VET) Delivered to Secondary Schools (VDSS) cohort increased by 25% (502 students) in 2025. Some courses, such as plumbing, have significant demand. And students are added to a waitlist.



Over 170 VDSS students annually across Barwon and Wyndham, directly feeding into carpentry and construction pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships.



VETDSS – Carpentry is delivered to 190+ students in Geelong 170+ students annually in Wyndham



Certificate II in Electrotechnology (Pre-vocational) has the highest number of VDSS students. Electrical occupations are critical to the clean energy sector.

Trade	Student Numbers	Industry Employers
Carpentry	800+	190+
Plumbing	1160+	280+
Cabinet Making & Joinery	160+	60+
Bricklaying	45+	20+
Painting & Decorating	35+	15+
Electrical	2365+	300+

East Campus - Geelong's construction training hub

The Gordon's Construction and Trades program has a well-deserved reputation for meeting the needs of students and the community it serves, constantly evolving to meet the region's skills requirements and provide high levels of confidence that the institute is best placed to continue training the construction workforce.



Above: Located in Boundary Road, just 10 minutes' drive from The Gordon's Geelong City Campus, our spacious East Geelong Campus is the trade training hub where all trade courses are delivered. The campus offers ample free parking and is home to quality training facilities including the new Renewable & Clean Energy Innovation Training Hub currently under development.

End-to-End Construction Skills Development

The East Geelong Campus is the trade training hub where all the practical skills needed to construct a house from start to finish are taught.

This campus is home to purpose-built construction training facilities and simulated worksites with access to modern tools, equipment, materials, digital learning platforms and virtual design technologies. Facilities are designed to prepare every student with valuable hands-on experience.

The trade courses delivered at this campus include building design, bricklaying, carpentry, plumbing, electronics and electrical, joinery, painting and decorating, and landscape construction. All students have access to a wide range of wrap around services from point of admission and enrolment, such as Counselling, Mental Health, Disability & Inclusion and Aboriginal Education Support. These services continue throughout the student journey to assist with progression and course completion.

Building Industry Talent Pathways

The Gordon regularly hosts events throughout the year, including Apprenticeship & Traineeship Engagement events that are designed to support the construction industry. These are ideal for employers who want to:

- Meet pre-apprentice students who are ready to start an apprenticeship
- Promote your business and job opportunities to a broad range of people interested in apprenticeships & traineeship pathways
- Promote your organisation
- Raise awareness of current or future roles
- Connect with a wide range of potential employees.

Showcasing Construction Skills on a National and International Scale

The Gordon has a long and proud involvement with WorldSkills, officially joining the prestigious international championships of vocational skills when it was established in 1982. Since then, many East Campus across various skill sets have found success at national and international levels and the calibre of The Gordon's staff is also showcased at these events with several highly skilled teachers taking on roles as judges both nationally and internationally.

Recent WorldSkills achievements by Gordon construction students include carpentry apprentice, Trey McAuley, who represented Australia at the 47th WorldSkills International Championships in Lyon, France in 2024, and Mechatronics student Arnold Shanahan who won Gold at the 2025 National WorldSkills Competition in Brisbane.



Carpentry Class 1909.



Carpentry classes first began in 1909 and continues to be a popular course at The Gordon



New generation of local building and construction trade workers training at East Campus



Why partner with us?

The Gordon works in partnership with employers, group training organisations, Apprenticeship Connect Australia providers, secondary schools and other agencies, to support work-based training options for students. These partnerships deliver positive results and create robust delivery models for further industry engagement across the region.



The institute builds collaborative partnerships that drive successful outcomes through open and clear communications and a thorough understanding of industry requirements



Further opportunities for industry to engage with secondary schools and promote Building Trades and Renewable Energy careers through:

- The Gordon's contracts with 65 schools.
- Geelong Tech School liaises with all schools in Geelong, currently partnering with 33 Secondary Schools across the Geelong Region. This comprises all sectors including Government, Independent, Catholic, Specialist Schools and Alternative Education Providers.
- A school liaison officer within The Gordon Marketing team engages with 30 secondary schools in the Geelong and Western District and attends expos and events at over 100 schools a year.



Client-focused customisation

Work with The Gordon to develop training and determine if the training can be accredited.



Course development and mentoring

Assist with developing internal training and provide delivery and quality guidance.



Future-ready industry-leading training

Enrol students and/or employees into The Gordon's public courses.



Remain competitive

Upskilling opportunities to strengthen and broaden the skills of workforce



Maintain compliance with legal and regulatory requirements

Broad range of licensing courses available



Build future workforce capabilities

Develop pipeline for your employment needs through Pre-Apprenticeships, Pathways and VET programs



Tailored learning

Individualised student support for learners with different needs



Influence strategic direction and foster innovation

Opportunities to be involved in Advisory groups



Strengthen clean energy opportunities

Current and emerging skills and workforce development priorities in clean energy revolve around the most prominent industries including construction.

Driving Regional Skills for the Clean Energy Transition

Collaborative Investment in Future Energy Skills

Skills for a Clean Energy Future

The Clean Energy Training Hub (CETH) has opened at the East Geelong campus. Serving the Barwon Region and Western Victoria, the hub focuses on delivering industry-relevant training aligned with Federal and State clean energy priorities. A collaborative investment between Geelong Tech School, government, industry and The Gordon, the hub will support workforce upskilling across several industries and construction trades including electrotechnology, carpentry and plumbing, to meet growing demands for skills in renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. It will provide school-to-work pathways, in conjunction with the Geelong Tech School, and support multiple program areas across The Gordon. In 2027, CETH will host the new Certificate II in Renewable Energy.



New Vocational Education and Training (VET) Certificates in Renewable Energy

Dedicated, entry-level qualifications that provide a comprehensive foundation in renewable energy technologies and applications are critical to developing the future workforce. The Gordon is leading the development of Certificate II in Renewable Energy Technologies and Applications, designed to:

- Provide foundational skills aligned with industry needs.
- Inspire secondary school students to pursue careers in clean energy.
- Support diversity by engaging underrepresented groups including First Nations students and those with disabilities.
- Enable cross-sectoral collaboration and knowledge sharing across the Victorian TAFE network.

Leading the Region in Safe, Future-Focused Electrical Training

In 2026, The Gordon's electrical students will benefit from a new level of safety and innovation in their training, thanks to a grant from EnergyAustralia's Community Grants Program.

The funding enabled The Gordon to purchase an Infinispark Alternate Supplies Board – a state-of-the-art training system that simulates real-world solar and battery energy setups without the risks associated with live voltage.

As the region's leading provider of electrical training and licensing, The Gordon plays a vital role in preparing the local workforce for the growing renewable energy sector.

The new equipment will allow students to safely practice isolation procedures used when working on homes fitted with solar panels and batteries, an increasingly important skill as renewable energy use continues to rise across the community.

Pioneering Sustainable Plumbing Solutions

The plumbing portfolio plays a key role in representing the Barwon region within the National Hydrogen TAFE Network, helping address emerging hydrogen-industry skill needs.

In partnership with Barwon Water, The Gordon is also leading sustainable training by introducing the Hydraloop system-saving up to 85% of household water use - and is the first provider in Victoria to deliver training on this technology.

Recognised Excellence in Social Procurement and Workforce Inclusion

Inclusive construction training for priority job seekers

The Gordon wins prestigious industry collaboration award for transformative employment pathways in construction.



Victorian Training Awards 2025 winner: The success of the GEESP program was a collaborative effort among organisations driven to positively reshape lives among the community's most vulnerable.

The Gordon won the Industry Collaboration category of this year's prestigious Victorian Training Awards for the Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre (GCEC) Early Engagement Social Procurement (GEESP) program.

GEESP is a co-designed initiative tackling entrenched unemployment launched in 2024. The project models a life-changing approach to embedding inclusive employment pathways within an infrastructure project, the construction of the multimillion-dollar Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre. The project was co-designed by Development Victoria, GROW, gforce Employment + Recruitment, and Built, with training delivered by The Gordon.

Directly targeting First Nations people, migrants, women and ex-offenders, GEESP also focuses

on those experiencing long-term unemployment. Participants undertook the Certificate II in Construction Pathways, which provided foundational construction skills. Barriers were addressed with wraparound supports including trauma-informed teaching, foundational literacy and mentoring, as well as issues such as transport and housing insecurity. Lives were reshaped into positive futures with new apprenticeship opportunities. An 85% completion rate with 72% gaining employment, demonstrates the high impact of industry, education, and employment services working together to achieve long-term economic and social equity outcomes. The GEESP program is a replicable model for embedding social value in construction and other in-demand industries.

At the 2025 Australian Training Awards in Darwin, The Gordon was recognised for its collaborative work on the GEESP project.



The Gordon carpentry teacher, Chris Dickeson (third from right) with participants of the award winning GEESP program.

Chris Dickeson, a seasoned carpenter and vocational educator, delivers trauma-informed construction training to disadvantaged youth at The Gordon TAFE. Since 2024, he has led Geelong's GEESP program, blending life skills with Certificate II in Construction Pathways. His innovative methods, including literacy support and a Job-Ready Toolbox, helped over 18 students secure apprenticeships and 38 gain employment. Chris's work exemplifies how vocational education can drive social change and empower learners through respect, support, and high-quality training.

“

It's a real honour to be recognised. My passion is helping young people build practical skills and self-belief. Seeing students succeed, especially those who may not have thrived in traditional settings, is the most rewarding part of what I do. Every learner deserves high-quality education.

”

Construction teacher Chris Dickeson, 2025 Victorian Training Awards Teacher/Trainer category finalist



Victorian Training Awards finalist 2025 Construction Teacher Chris Dickeson



Championing Women in Construction: Breaking Barriers and Redefining the Industry

The Gordon is taking the lead on an industry-wide challenge to dismantle barriers, shatter stereotypes, and open the doors for more women to step confidently into trade and non-traditional careers.

There is no quick fix to increasing the gender balance in the workplace other than to continue to educate and promote inclusivity for all, particularly for employers and encourage them to employ women.

The Gordon is a strong advocate for women in trades and works hard to attract females into male dominated industries such as construction by addressing negative perceptions, promote inspiring career opportunities for women, and support inclusive and diverse workplace practices.

Women in Construction

Construction is Australia's number one most male-dominated industry with only 12% of the workforce identifying as female and with less than 2% of on-site roles occupied by women.

Current women apprenticeship numbers The Gordon:

- Carpentry & Construction – 4.5%
- Electrical – 5.2%
- Plumbing – 1.9%
- Painting & Decorating – 22%

The Gordon supports the Victorian Government's Women in Construction Strategy and its priorities to attract, recruit and retain female workers. The Strategy is designed to increase women's participation in the trades and semi-skilled 'blue-collar' work in Victoria. Construction is Australia's number one most male-dominated industry with only 12% of the workforce identifying as female and with less than 2% of on-site roles occupied by women.

Women-only taster workshops

Tradie Tasters designed specifically for females can be offered by the Carpentry and Construction portfolio in a safe, supportive environment where participants learn basic skills such as plastering, use of hand tools and fixing techniques, levelling and measuring, advanced cutting and drop saw use.

These sessions explore skills and discover strengths, sparking ambition and create pathways into pre-apprenticeships, Certificate IV, Diploma and industry-aligned qualifications.

Participants are equipped with skills, safety awareness, confidence and are connected to real opportunities showcasing to industry that the talent they need is already here, ready to be trained, and ready to contribute.



The Gordon is a strong advocate for women in trades.

Reshaping Plumbing: The inspiring journey of Geelong's Trailblazing Female Plumber



Above: Plumber Jaime Woollett, left, with former Minister for Skills & TAFE Gayle Tierney

In a trade long dominated by men, Jaime Woollett is reshaping expectations and driving change. As the founder of Equality Plumbing Geelong, she is proving that women can excel in plumbing while creating pathways for others to follow.

Jaime's entry into the trade began with five years working in plumbing supplies, where she built technical knowledge and discovered a passion for the industry. A major family event at age 23 prompted her to seek a stable, long term career, leading her to begin a plumbing apprenticeship through The Gordon. "It was the best decision I've ever made," she reflects.

What motivates Jaime most is the dynamic, hands on nature of plumbing and the ability to work closely with clients. A natural people person, she thrives on problem solving and variety, from installing hot water systems one day to roofing or drain work the next. "There's never a dull moment in this trade," she says.

Jaime completed her apprenticeship in 2022-2023 and continued her training through Certificate IV and licensing courses. Her business officially launched in 2023, supported by years of preparation. "During my apprenticeship, I worked most nights to earn extra money and build a reputation," she explains. This dedication allowed her to invest in tools, equipment, and a strong foundation for her future business.

The vision behind Equality Plumbing Geelong is deeply personal. Throughout her apprenticeship, Jamie faced negative comments and frequent doubt simply because she was a woman in a male dominated field. Determined to create a better experience for others, she established her business to offer a safe, inclusive workplace and to encourage more women to pursue trade careers.

Today, Equality Plumbing Geelong includes a female employee, supportive male colleagues, and two work experience students. Jaime's goal for the next 12 months is clear: continue growing a diverse team and provide a welcoming pathway for women entering the industry.

The community response has been overwhelmingly positive. Many customers value the option of female plumbers, with women in particular expressing increased comfort and trust. This reinforces the need for greater representation and choice in the trade sector.

Jaime's message to women considering plumbing is simple: "Take the leap." She emphasises resilience, problem solving, and determination over physical strength, adding, "You're not alone - there are support networks and women ready to back you every step of the way."

Equality Plumbing Geelong stands as more than a business; it is a commitment to inclusion, capability, and a stronger future for women in construction.

“

Acknowledging the current male dominance of the industry, Jaime asserts: "... We need more women to step up, break barriers, and show what we're capable of... You can absolutely do this!

”

- Pioneering plumber, Jaime Woollett



Training the next generation of local building & construction trade workers

Shaping Tomorrow's Workforce: Innovation and Sustainability at East Geelong Campus

The East Geelong Campus in Boundary Road is defined as the hub of trades where innovation and sustainable practices are driven across all training programs.



Compliance, Accreditation, and Quality Assurance

- Nationally accredited qualifications under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- Compliance with ASQA and other regulatory bodies
- Continuous improvement processes and student feedback mechanisms
- Commitment to equity, access, and inclusive learning



Tradies safe from AI takeover

Research from Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) (released August 2025) identified potential impacts of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the workforce. Construction and building trades, such as plumbing and electrical, are considered safe from AI displacement of jobs due to the complex, hands-on, problem solving and physical nature of the work in unpredictable environments.



Carpentry and Construction Excellence



Carpentry, bricklaying, painting, cabinet making, joinery - it's highly likely that a Gordon student will have a hand in nearly every home being built across this region



Portfolio Manager,
Lorenzo Ernstzen

A career in building and construction involves the planning and building of diverse structures, from houses to infrastructure, offering hands-on trades and managerial roles. Specialisations range from residential to heavy construction, with prospects of moving into roles like site supervision, project management, or health and safety.

The Carpentry and Construction Portfolio at The Gordon is designed to provide end-to-end career pathways across Victoria's most in-demand building trades. From school engagement to apprenticeship completion and supervisory qualifications, the Portfolio supports learners from all backgrounds, particularly culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and Vocational Education and Training (VET) Delivered to Secondary School (VDSS) into sustainable, licensed careers.

The Gordon's model for structured training pathways creates clear, vertically aligned pathways that prepare school-aged and career-starting learners for trade entry with basic skills, safety, and hands-on experience.

Industry-aligned, high-volume trades support residential and commercial construction with strong completion rates and employment outcomes.

The Gordon is heavily invested in its students with strong wrap around services to support students at risk of non-completion, including learners with additional needs. An inclusive culture is achieved through a range of services available to all students, while targeting those who are most in need to ensure their success in the construction industry.

Upskilling

Post-trade and Supervisory training are available for qualified tradespeople wanting to upskill into site managers, supervisors, and licensed builders.

Barwon region:

1,104

Construction Managers needed by 2034

Wyndham region:

46.7%

population growth driving infrastructure and housing projects.

Source: Victorian Skills Authority

Construction and safety centre

Construction students enjoy world-class facilities equipped with classrooms and indoor and outdoor construction spaces to simulate industry environments and expectations.



I completed my own training at The Gordon, so I'm confident in the level of training my apprentices receive. The flexible structure makes it easy for both myself and the apprentices and having a well-trained apprentice is important to me. I'm comfortable sending them out on their own, knowing they've received the training and background knowledge at The Gordon in areas we don't always get to cover on the job.



Matt Golightly
Golightly Construction



Entry-Level / Pre-Vocational
22614VIC Certificate II in Building and Construction (Carpentry & Bricklaying streams)
VETMSF20522 Certificate II in Furniture Making Pathways
MSF20322 Certificate II in Cabinet Making and Timber Technology (proposed)
Apprenticeship-Level Qualifications
CPC30220 Certificate III in Carpentry
CPC33020 Certificate III in Bricklaying and Blocklaying
CPC30620 Certificate III in Painting and Decorating
CPC31920 Certificate III in Joinery
MSF30322 Certificate III in Cabinet Making
Post-Trade & Supervisory
CPC40120 Certificate IV in Building and Construction (Building)
CPC50220 Diploma of Building and Construction (Building)
SCACW00001 Construction Induction Card



Above: A Gordon construction student using a drill in 1975



Above: A carpentry class at The Gordon in 1909



Above: Gordon carpentry students build a sledge caravan for Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE), a former program that established permanent stations in the Antarctic and sub-Antarctic regions, in 1956.





Setting the Benchmark in Electrical Training

The East Geelong campus is the region’s sole provider of training and licensing for local electricians, including specific high demand roles like solar photovoltaic (PV) installers - a trade considered by the Victorian Government as the top employing occupation within the clean energy sector (Source: Clean Economy Workforce Development Strategy 2023 - 2033, Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions). The Gordon was one of the first training providers to implement renewables training into the Certificate III Electrotechnology qualification.

The institute also offers inspiring pathways into electrical and clean energy careers through the Geelong Tech School and the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Delivered to Secondary Students (DSS) program.

More than 10 courses currently delivered by The Gordon are considered a ‘Clean Energy Course’ on the Australian Apprentices Priority List, including electrical.

Why Hiring Pre-Apprenticeship Electrical Graduates Gives Employers a Competitive Edge

Hiring an electrical apprentice who has just completed a pre-apprenticeship program provides employers with the assurance that the individual has learned foundational and essential skills, increased confidence, and a commitment to the trade, making them more job-ready and more likely to complete the apprenticeship. About 140 electrical students complete a pre-apprenticeship at The Gordon each year, in addition to VET courses.

These individuals are more attractive to employers, potentially leading to a faster start on the job. There are several advantages for employers:

- Reduces workload on the recruitment process – removes the requirement to advertise on Seek and other job sites.
- Access to a large pool of job-ready employees – basic training has been completed allowing them to contribute faster.
- Proof of commitment - A pre-apprenticeship certificate demonstrates the individual is serious about a career in the electrical trade.
- Reduced training costs - Savings on the initial training time and costs, as much of the foundational work has already been done.

Most pathways into the top employing occupations within the energy sector are through VET, with electricians topping the list at 42.8%. Electrical is one of the most popular career choices at The Gordon which currently has 715 apprentice electricians and another 260 students studying electrical through VET in schools. As many top employing occupations in the Clean Energy industry require only VET qualifications, it is also ideal for people with transferable skills such as mechanics, electricians and other trades.

Future-Focused Electrical Training Capability

The Gordon is enhancing electrical safety and renewable energy training with new technology funded by EnergyAustralia’s Community Grants Program. The Infinispark Alternate Supplies Board will allow students to safely practice solar and battery isolation procedures, supporting workforce readiness in the growing renewables sector.

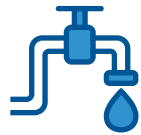
The Gordon has trained electricians since 1918.

COURSES
22682VIC Certificate II in Electrotechnology (Pre-vocational)
SCACW01851 Class 2 Restricted Electrical Licence (REL)
SCNAW00013 Safe Working Practice (SWP) Tutorial
SCNAW00015 Continuing Professional Development for A Grade Electricians
SCNAW00016 Continuing Professional Development for Restricted License Holders (D Class)
SCNAW01359 Licensed Electricians Theory Assessment (LET)
SCNAW01360 Safe Working Practice Assessment (SWP)
SCNAW01607 Test & Tag Electrical Cord Connected Appliances and Cord Extensions
SCNAW01716 Class 2 Restricted Licensing Assessment
SCNAW01792 Licensed Electrical Theory Tutorial
UEE30820 Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician
Coming in 2026:
Split System installation
Contractors licence course
Renewables



Above: Electrical Portfolio Manager Andy Heath (centre) showing students how to safely practice solar and battery isolation procedures





Industry-Ready Plumbing Skills Development

A rewarding, in-demand career

Combating misconceptions

Plumbing is more than just fixing toilets and unplugging sinks. The trade encompasses a much broader range of services and specialisations that offer diverse career paths with strong job prospects, particularly with the future housing targets, infrastructure boom and demand for sustainable solutions. These include installation, maintenance, or repair of gas appliances and systems such as hydrogen, LP and natural gas, domestic and commercial heating and cooling, roofing, sanitary and drainage, and water systems. This work often involves complex procedures and requires specialised knowledge to ensure proper installation and hazard prevention such as gas leaks or flooding.

The plumbing portfolio at The Gordon currently has 712 of its 1155+ students employed as apprentices at approx. 280 plumbing companies across Greater Geelong and Wyndham (as at November 2025). This highlights the institute's wide industry networks and in-depth working relationships that can be leveraged to influence and drive positive large-scale change across industry, particularly in the Barwon region where the institute holds 100% market share for the Certificate III in Plumbing, the formal trade qualification needed to become a registered plumber.

90%

Building and Plumbing Commission exams are required at both registration and licence level. The Gordon has an 90% pass rate.

Mental Health Awareness in a male dominated industry



While The Gordon's plumbing portfolio continues to address outdated stereotypes and promote successful female plumbers as role models (see **Case Study Jaime Woollet on page 17**), the immediate workforce will remain predominantly male with 98% (850+) of plumbing students enrolled at The Gordon being male, and more than half of them aged between 19 and 25. This brings to light the challenges of mental health, particularly among young males, who often face higher rates of depression and a lower likelihood of seeking help compared to their female counterparts.

The Gordon is committed to mental health awareness and offers training in this sensitive and complex topic for both employers and students. This generation plays a vital role in the future of the trade and with poor mental health on the rise it is crucial that workplaces evolve to better equip and support workers by creating a more inclusive environment where young men feel comfortable seeking help and can thrive both professionally and personally.

Research highlighted by Victorian industry body, Master Plumbers, shows a disproportionate rate of mental illness in construction – they are six times more likely to die from suicide than an accident at work. The Gordon is best placed to drive systemic change as the only TAFE provider in the region training the next generation of local plumbers.

“

Our apprentices coming from The Gordon are driven and ready to work from day one. With strong training and guidance from their teachers at The Gordon, we're confident that they're set up for long, successful careers and help raise the standard of our industry.

”

Jayden
Aquatap Plumbing

Plumbing, like electrical, is a licensed trade, and with The Gordon the main plumbing training provider in the region, the institute is the go-to local TAFE known widely for its commitment to researching, identifying and addressing the critical skills needs of the plumbing industry.



At the Hydraloop launch in September 2025, from left: The Gordon CEO Joe Ormeno, The Gordon plumbing teacher Simon Wilson, Minister for Skills & Tafe and Minister for Water, Gayle Tierney, Member for Geelong Parliamentary Secretary for First Peoples, Christine Couzens, and The Gordon Plumbing Portfolio Manager Andrew McKinnon.

There is a growing focus on sustainable plumbing solutions like greywater systems and rainwater harvesting. The plumbing program features a unit on the prevention of backflow and other sustainable water practices, aligning with Geelong Region Alliance (G21) water security priorities of the future, and plans to introduce hydrogen training.

HYDRALOOP – Smarter water management training

In partnership with Barwon Water, The Gordon has introduced the Hydraloop, a system that collects, treats and re-uses water from showers, baths, washers and dryers, heat pumps and air conditioning units – this system can save up to 85% of total house water consumption. Originating in the Netherlands, The Gordon is the first in Victoria to offer training in this system.

In 2026 plumbing department will offer:

22569VIC **Certificate II in Plumbing (Pre-apprenticeship)**

PLUMLICSS1 **Plumbing Licence for Common Units Skill Set**

PLUMLICSS2 **Plumbing Licence in Drainage Work Skill Set**

PLUMLICSS3 **Plumbing Licence in Gasfitting Work Skill Set**

PLUMLICSS4 **Plumbing Licence in Mechanical Services Skill Set**

PLUMLICSS5 **Plumbing Licence in Roofing (Stormwater) Work Skill Set**

PLUMLICSS6 **Plumbing Licence in Sanitary Work Skill Set**

PLUMLICSS7 **Plumbing Licence in Water Supply Work Skill Set**

CPC32420 **Certificate III in Plumbing (General Plumber Roofing & Mechanical)**

COURSES



The plumbing portfolio has a key role in representing the Barwon region as a member of the National Hydrogen TAFE Network, a collaborative effort between TAFE institutions across Australia to address the skills gap in the emerging hydrogen industry.



Real skills.

Real experience.

Real outcomes.

Contact us

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