



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle



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TRADE APPRENTICESHIPS NEEDED IN NEWCASTLE'S SCHOOLS

Following a visit to Callaghan College at Jesmond today, the Federal Member for Newcastle Sharon Grierson called on the Federal Government to give more young people in Newcastle the opportunity to get a trade qualification while at school to help fix local skill shortages.

Federal Labor has called on the Howard Government to double the number of school-based trade apprenticeships by creating an extra 4,000 training places each year for Year 11 and 12 students.

Ms Grierson visited Callaghan College with Deputy Labor Leader and Shadow Minister for Education Jenny Macklin to discuss with teachers and students ways in which our schools could assist in solving our region's skills crisis.

"The Howard Government has neglected the skills and knowledge economy of our region for far too long," Ms Grierson said. "Newcastle has a youth unemployment rate of over 30%, even while our industries are crying out for skilled labour. We need a plan to help these young people gain the skills they need to find work."

"Our schools need support to take on more school-based apprentices in trades like construction, manufacturing and plumbing," Ms Grierson said.

"Under Labor's Trade Apprenticeship School Incentive Scheme, each school-based trade apprentice would attract 50 per cent more funding (\$5,250 per place instead of the \$3,500 they get now)," Ms Grierson said.

"The additional \$1,750 loading per student apprentice would go directly to the school community for things like to employing a school apprenticeship facilitator, improving trade facilities, buying new equipment or creating apprenticeship opportunities with employers."

"The Howard Government's response to the skills crisis is to import skilled labour from overseas," Ms Grierson said. "Labor's priority is to train Australians first."

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