

Re:act road safety program brings TAC and WorkSafe Victoria together to work with TAFE students.

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The Re:act road safety behaviour change program continued its growth in the TAFE sector today, launching in Melbourne with Holmesglen TAFE.

Proven to raise awareness and change behaviour among young road users, Re:act has run in universities since 2016. Throughout 2021, Re:act is launching across TAFE colleges in Australia, focusing on a key road and workplace safety risk for young drivers: fatigue.

Holmesglen is the second TAFE college to run the Re:act program, following North Metropolitan TAFE in Western Australia. Colleges in Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and New South Wales are expected to also run the Re:act program this year, making it a truly national program.

Re:act TAFE challenges graphic design students to create a campaign that raises awareness among 16-24 year old road users of a critical road safety issue. Local program partners, WorkSafe Victoria and the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) along with creative behaviour change agency Hard Edge, provide feedback to students throughout development before selecting the most effective campaign. The selected campaign is developed for public execution via media partner oOh!media's digital assets, including on TAFE campuses and in regional areas.

Re:act and **Hard Edge** Founder Andrew Hardwick said giving young people a voice in road safety, and creating opportunities for positive peer-to-peer communication, had proven to be key strengths of the program.

"Involving TAFE students and apprentices is a critical next step in improving road and workplace safety for young people and we are delighted to see such a positive collaboration between Re:act, TAC and WorkSafe Victoria," he said.

“As part of extending the Re:act program into TAFE, graphic design students will build on their own perspectives through research with apprentices and fellow students. Whether they’re a student working in hospitality until 2am or an apprentice plumber up at 5am, drowsy driving is a significant safety risk.

“This makes the insights Re:act uncovers about how to engage this hard-to-reach audience with safety messages incredibly valuable for our road and workplace safety agency partners.”

WorkSafe Executive Director of Health and Safety Julie Nielsen said fatigue increased the chances of workplace injuries and young people especially could be at risk.

“Research shows that young people may be more vulnerable to sleep loss, leading to increased levels of fatigue and placing them at greater risk of injury,” Ms Nielsen said.

“WorkSafe’s own research also shows young workers can be hesitant to speak up about safety issues and often lack experience and knowledge about their rights. Young workers, particularly those in precarious employment, may be willing to ignore health and safety concerns, including the signs of fatigue, if it means securing or keeping a job.

“Which is why WorkSafe is proud to join this awareness raising program and help young workers stay safe on the road.”

TAC Head of Road Safety Samantha Cockfield said the TAC was committed to providing young people with the tools to be safe drivers, and to educate them on how to avoid risks like fatigue.

“We know young people can be tired from work, study and busy social lives but it is critical that they identify the dangers and avoid driving drowsy because the outcomes can be tragic.

“Drowsy driving is a major factor in road trauma in Victoria and with young drivers already at a higher risk due to inexperience, programs like Re:act are so important in helping them identify and minimise their exposure to further risks.

“A safe journey always starts with a good sleep the night before and if you feel drowsy when behind the wheel, pull over and rest because it can take hold quickly and your body can’t fight sleep.”

Visit reactforchange.com to learn more about the Re:act program.

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An initiative of Hard Edge, the annual Re:act program challenges local higher education students to create a behaviour change campaign that raises awareness among 16-25 year old road users of a critical road safety issue where they are overrepresented.

A panel of university or TAFE, road and workplace safety, and industry partners selects the most compelling road safety campaign in each state, which is then developed and launched on university or TAFE campuses and oOh!media’s digital assets, including its landmark billboards.

Now in its sixth year, Re:act ran in 2020 in Melbourne with Swinburne, UTS in Sydney and, for the first time, Brisbane, through QUT. The program also expanded internationally into London, at University of the Arts London. In 2021, the Re:act program will once again run in each of those institutions and grow further in Australia, running in Perth for the first time with Curtin University as well as in TAFE campuses across Australia. There are further plans for international expansion into Europe, the United States and South America.

Re:act is an initiative of
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