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Students benefit from industry immersion in new Burnie facility

North-West students aspiring towards a career in advanced manufacturing are reaping the benefits of being immersed in the heart of Burnie's industrial precinct as they undertake their study.

The students are part of the first cohort enrolled in University College's new [Associate Degree in Equipment Design and Technology](#), delivered exclusively from the state-of-the-art Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) facility.

Initially forming part of the West Park campus building design, a new partnership with industry was forged to co-locate the OEM at the Tasmanian Minerals, Manufacturing & Energy Council (TMEC) Manufacturing Centre of Excellence in South Burnie.

University College Chief Executive Lee Whiteley said the outcome aligned with a commitment to provide students with regionally-distinctive learning experiences.

"We're thrilled to this week welcome the first intake of students to our new industry-aligned associate degree, developed specifically to meet the training and education needs of the region," Mr Whiteley said.

"Positioning the OEM facility in the centre of Burnie's industrial activity provides students with a greater connection to industry that will ultimately enhance their learning. They will be rubbing shoulders with industry every day as they expand their knowledge and develop and hone skills that prepare them for a career in the growing sector of manufacturing.

"The OEM builds on North-West Tasmania's advanced manufacturing excellence. It will be fitted out with state-of-the-art equipment and technology where students can design components that solve problems for real projects.

"Industry has welcomed the move to immerse students in the real world, and it will help foster increased pathways and partnerships that benefit the region."

The OEM occupies a section of TMEC's upper level and comprises an open study area, Design Studio, teaching space and University office.

With the cooperation of TMEC, University College students will also have the opportunity to participate in the other activities at the Manufacturing Centre of Excellence where the Simulated Work Environment (SWE) and the Advanced Welding Training Centre are also housed.

TMEC General Manager Kent Wyllie said the co-location was an important move for the industry.

"TMEC's role in the region is to facilitate industry engagement. We see the co-location of the OEM and University College students as a critical part in enabling the development of crucial workforce skills for the future of the industry," he said.

TMEC CEO Ray Mostogl also praised the co-location as a positive outcome for Tasmania.

"Seeing high-vis and tertiary education combining at the TMEC Centre of Excellence is a great outcome for Tasmania and creates a future-focussed outlook for how VET and University education can co-exist with industry," he said.

While the OEM will initially serve as a base for the new Associate Degree students, University College already has plans to engage more with the community.

"It is our intention to facilitate other activities at the OEM which could include evening short courses and micro-credentialing. We will also be exploring collaborations to encourage students from other disciplines to utilise the site," Mr Whiteley said.

Following industry demand, University College will now also offer a part-time delivery mode to meet the needs of individuals wishing to pursue the course who are already in employment.

Further information about the new Associate Degree can be found at:
<https://www.utas.edu.au/college/courses/associate-degree-in-equipment-design-and-technology>

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