



Women line up to snap up scholarships

Eighteen women have been given a unique chance to gain rewarding careers in the resources and oil and gas sectors thanks to new industry-sponsored scholarships at the Challenger Institute of Technology in Perth.

The Women in Engineering program is delivered in partnership with industry sponsor, Chevron Australia.

The students have received scholarships which will enable them to conduct their studies at Challenger's world class oil and gas simulated plant facility, the Australian Centre for Energy and Process Training (ACEPT).

A key focus of the course is to provide the women with an insight into engineering from a female perspective and to address barriers that might discourage women from entering an engineering career.

With a mentoring system in place, the women will be able to turn to their assigned industry experts via a dedicated online forum in which students can raise questions.

"We are thrilled to be able to offer additional support and guidance to the women by providing some of our female engineers to mentor and share their experiences and advice with those in the program," Chevron Australia general manager human resources, Kaye Butler said.

"The value a mentor provides to a

mentee and to the wider organisation and community is widely acknowledged here at Chevron.

"That is why we have a mentoring program available to all Chevron employees, and why we are very proud of our partnership with the Challenger Institute of Technology's Women in Engineering Program."

The one year Certificate III in Engineering has been specifically designed to provide women candidates with skills and employment prospects through a supportive learning program that includes visits to Chevron Australia's engineering and design offices.

"To have 18 women in this group is great progress, for as recently as three years ago the roles for women at this facility would have been very limited in both number and the scope of duties - most likely they would have only been seen behind the reception," said Challenger CEO Liz Harris.

"These women are now looking at a very positive future in the resources industry and are forging a path for women in the industry.

"Chevron has been a wonderful partner in this initiative and their support is a great reflection of how successful training can be when we work closely with our industry partners," Ms Harris said.

The course participants have come from a diverse range of ages and backgrounds, from 18 year old school leavers to mature age mothers.

And it's not just a wide range of ages which have made this intake of students particularly interesting.

Their academic experiences are also disparate, including Asian students seeking to enhance their overseas degree qualifications, working and home-based mothers to students who had previously studied sports science, music and other areas far removed from the world of engineering and resources.

"I was making progress in an Advanced Diploma in Contemporary Music when my aunty alerted me to the course being offered at Challenger," said Jessica Duchesne (18), from Rockingham, WA.

"I'd entertained the idea of studying engineering at high school but it had seemed out of reach.

"But the fact that this is supported by a major employer such as Chevron and offers such fantastic employment possibilities, I decided to take up the challenge.

"Eventually I would like to enhance my qualifications here by finishing an engineering degree."



We are thrilled to be able to offer additional support and guidance to the women by providing some of our female engineers to mentor and share their experiences and advice with those in the program

Chevron Australia general manager human resources, Kaye Butler



Learning curve: ACEPT Director Greg Guppy, student Courtney Taylor, student Jessica Duchesne, and Chevron student mentor Jenna Robertson.