



## **Port Augusta's Uni Hub open for business**

27 February 2020

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Uni Hub Spencer Gulf officially opens its doors in Port Augusta tomorrow, bringing with it a new era in tertiary education for the region.

The new community-owned tertiary education centre will be officially opened by Member for Grey, the Hon Rowan Ramsey MP at 2pm.

This follows the opening of the Port Pirie campus, which began operations 12 months ago.

The Port Augusta Uni Hub kicks off the 2020 year with 24 students across its programs.

Fifteen students have enrolled in a range of bachelor and Masters degrees. An additional five students are studying in the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) program – an enabling course that provides a pathway for people wishing to gain entry to and excel in higher education.

A further four school students are taking advantage of the Start University Now (SUN) program which enables them to begin university studies while still at school.

These new students build on the small number of existing Port Augusta students who studied last year through the Port Pirie campus.

Degrees on offer at the Uni Hub include psychology, nursing, education, social work and business as well as Masters degrees in Education and Business Administration (MBA).

The qualifications are delivered through the Uni Hub's university partners CQ University and Flinders University.

Uni Hub Spencer Gulf board chair Brenton Vanstone said the opening of the Port Augusta Uni Hub followed months of work by local business and community representatives who were passionate about providing local people with local university options.

"We are really excited about having a presence in Port Augusta," Mr Vanstone said.

"Uni Hub Spencer Gulf gives people a local opportunity to start or further their university study without leaving the region.

“The Uni Hub supports students every step of the way – from the enrolment process with the universities and orientation week through to ongoing support throughout their studies with face-to-face mentoring, tutorials and industry placements.

“It means students don't have to 'go it alone'. They are provided with a supported learning environment and a place they can go to study either individually or with other students who are completing the same university degree.”

Mr Vanstone said the Port Augusta campus aims to play a key role in growing local skilled workforce and professionals from within the region to ensure a competitive and self-relevant economy and community.

“Our 2019 Port Augusta industry survey highlighted significant shortages in professional workers, particularly roles requiring bachelor level qualifications,” he said.

“When you consider only 7.9 per cent of Port Augusta have a university level qualification, compared to 18.5 per cent across South Australia, we have quite a bit of catch-up.

“We have listened to local employers and have worked with our university partners to develop course offerings to help address these local skill shortages.

“At the last census only 3.1 per cent of Port Augusta residents were currently studying at university level, compared to 16.2 per cent of South Australians. Uni Hub will make university study much easier and much more accessible.

“Our goal is to grow our own local workforce and help address issues around sourcing and retaining skilled people in our region”.

Port Augusta's Uni Hub Spencer Gulf campus is located at 9-39 Carlton Parade.

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