



## TRAINING

# Students ready for workforce

By Jessica Whiting

TRENT Potter was on the verge of dropping out of school last year.

"I was a bit over it (school)," Trent, 16, says.

"It wasn't really engaging me. None of the work seemed relevant."

Then a flyer from the Australian Technical College landed in his letterbox and he attended an open day at the Christie Downs-based college.

"It just seemed perfect for what I wanted to do – I've still got Year 12 behind me this way."

Trent, of Melrose Park, is one of 140 students at the ATC who on graduation will have both SACE and Certificate Three level training, equivalent to a first year apprenticeship.

After trying the different trades on offer at ATC, Trent decided to study metal fabricating.

ATC principal **Jim Fenoughty** said the college tailored SACE subjects towards trades to keep kids interested in studying.

"Rather than studying Shakespeare they do resumes, applications, reports – so it's developing their language and interview-



ing skills," Mr Fenoughty told the *Southern Times Messenger*. Students are assessed on such criteria as punctuality, initiative, and enterprise.

"So their assessment is against their employability and readiness for the workforce, rather than their subjects," Mr Fenoughty said.

Most of the 80 Year 11 students will be placed in apprenticeships by August, with 18 already finding spots, a take-up rate that Mr Fenoughty said was the best since the college opened in 2007.

Since then almost 60 students have graduated and more than 75 per cent of them have gained full-time apprenticeships.

From the end of June, the college will be run by Catholic Education SA, since federal funding is due to finish at the end of the year.



**BRIGHT FUTURE:** Trent Potter, 16, is studying metal fabrication at the Australian Technical College. Picture: Stephen Laffer QYX26059