

**T**RAINING provider PEER is leading the way in apprentice training, providing flexibility and choice to ensure apprentices gain the skills they need, despite the current pandemic climate. It includes the capability to provide supported training from any location.

PEER has worked hard to develop and implement flexibility in the choice of training location, so it is equipped to quickly adapt to events such as the recent state lockdown brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Innovation and Skills Minister David Pisoni commends PEER on its training initiatives. "It's terrific to see training providers moving swiftly to digital tools to keep students learning while adhering to social distancing," he says.

PEER – a not-for-profit apprenticeship and skills recognition training, pre-vocational training, and VET in School's provider – delivers high quality apprentices and trainees to meet the skill development needs of South Australia.

PEER chief executive Peter Nolan says it is an Australian Training Award winner, and known for finding ways to deliver innovative solutions and provide flexibility and choice to employers and apprentices.

"We developed an advanced way of delivering training, and PEER is recognised for understanding what its customers want," he says. "Two years ago, we started a program of change – we looked at what our learners wanted and what their needs were. They wanted more flexibility and choice.

"We listened and put resources in place to develop capability in providing consist-

# It's about the right choice



PEER electrical trainer and assessor Theo Alexandropoulos trains student Nathan Davis online.

ent yet flexible training at any location." Mr Nolan says flexibility appeals to employers, especially in tougher times such as lockdowns. "We have had a lot of inquiries from employers in South Australia, who are concerned their apprentices won't complete their training on time," he says.

"Using our world-class interactive learning resources, apprentices can continue their studies at any location as well as at our state-of-the-art training centre.

"The key thing for us is to ensure all of our apprentices, complete their apprenticeship on time and on schedule."

As the latest lockdown unfolded in July, and schools closed their doors, PEER's training model accommodated VET students and apprentices to receive support to study from other locations.

This ensured no extension of training would be required, nor would any student or apprentice be disadvantaged.

"We were really on the front foot, having already developed the capability," Nolan says. "The day the lockdown started, our students continued their training, just from a different location – at home. There was no interruption to their training."

PEER is motivated to create new opportunities for flexible and personalised training for students beyond Covid-19.

"One of the challenges around South Australia has been students living in regional and remote areas," Nolan says.

"Our training capability means we are able to provide more training opportunities for our students and apprentices in country areas and that's what we're going to do next."

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