

Hunter Trade College Ltd

Annual Report 2023



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Messages from Key College Bodies



Governing Body Chairperson

During my first year as Chair, it has been very rewarding to work closely with our CEO and lead a dedicated group of Directors. The outstanding leadership of our CEO together with the talent and dedication of our teachers and staff has resulted in another successful year for the College. Student outcomes, employee engagement and our strong financial position strengthen the capacity to further improve our facilities and course delivery.

There were several highlights during 2023, including one of our Year 12 student's performance at WorldSkills, placing third in this national competition. This great achievement reflects both our teaching excellence and student achievement of the College.

This year there was unanimous agreement from our employees to defer the enterprise bargaining process and join the independent schools bargaining process which is indicative of the College's high trust culture and will provide significant efficiencies around this process. The results of the staff survey further demonstrated the exceptional engagement of our employees and workplace culture.

With the future of work constantly changing and in the face of emerging technology, the College has commenced a project to future proof our course offerings. Electrotechnology and automotive program reviews were completed in 2023 with investment being made in these areas following Board consultation and approval.

During 2023, we have had an uplift in sponsorship to support our students for which we are very grateful. HomeWorld Group increased their contribution for scholarships to \$12,000 for Construction and Electrotechnology students. Spirit Super joined the Scholarship program, contributing \$6,000 to support scholarships for Metal and Automotive students.

A significant piece of work was undertaken during the year with the development of our five year strategic plan. Facilitated workshops were held with Directors, the executive leadership team and representative team members. This provided an important opportunity for sharing ideas, challenges and strategies for our future success.

The year has not been without its challenges, with enrolments and retention of students impacted by the government Boosting Apprenticeships and Traineeships Wage Subsidy and businesses in COVID recovery. Another financial challenge during the year has been the pay increases implemented by Department of Education in October, which the Board agreed to pass onto our teachers.

This year Director Betts took a leave of absence for 12 months vacating the Chair of the Board position. Upon accepting to role as Chair, I stepped down from the Chair of the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee and Director Libby Ford was appointed to this position by the Board. The Board welcomed Anne-Maree Willis to a position as Director. Anne-Maree contributes human resource expertise to the Board, including industrial relations, organisational design and development, project management and work health safety

I thank all of our directors for their time, valuable contributions and support during 2023. Your dedication and commitment to the staff and students of the College is very much appreciated.

Finally, the Board is grateful for the support and guidance that the Executive Team and staff provide. Their talent continues to place the College as a leader in the delivery of trade education as part of the Higher School Certificate.

Janet Lee
Chairperson

Chief Executive Officer



Hunter Trade College has served the community for sixteen years, enrolling over 2,000 students since opening. This year, we had a focus on strategic planning to take us through 2024 – 2028 and set the scene for expansion. Dr Dan White, former Executive Director of Sydney Catholic Schools, led workshops to guide the Board, Leadership Team and interested staff members through the first planning stages. The leadership team completed the planning with the input and approval of the board mid-year.

In addition to HomeWorld Group of Companies and Spirit Super Scholarships noted by the Chair, the Mentor Support Network provided scholarships for three students. We are grateful for the Network's ongoing support of our students facing financial difficulties. Scholarships help students with the cost of their learning, and most students use the funds for tools of trade and computing equipment.

Year 12 student Thomas Powell shone at the WorldSkills Australian National Championships in Melbourne, taking out the Bronze Medal for VET in Schools Electrotechnology.

The Australian Government's Counselling Support Grant extended throughout the year, enabling us to provide high-level support for students with complex wellbeing issues. Mark Davidson was the College Counsellor for the year before returning to his substantive position at the Rosewood Centre.

Staffing movements ebbed and flowed as we welcomed a new Assistant Principal whose leadership led to several new successful initiatives. A new teacher joined the Electrotechnology program. Our Office Coordinator, who had held several roles for nearly seven years at the College, left for a career change. Her replacement contributed extensively before resigning for family reasons and our new Office Coordinator hit the ground running in late 2023. Two staff members commenced parental leave late in the year. We employed a Student Learning Support Officer to support our students with significant learning barriers.

The Australian Government's Boosting Apprenticeship and Traineeship Wages Subsidy continued to impact our retention rates. An adjusted Census date assisted in stabilising income for the year. We achieved a Smart and Skilled Contract for traineeship funding. An increased focus on converting work placements into school-based trainees to reduce the retention risk will carry over into 2024.

In December, staff voted to move to the Independent Schools Multi-Enterprise Awards for 2025 rather than renegotiate the existing Hunter Trade College Enterprise Agreement.

Mr Andrew Betts served as Board Chair until the Annual General Meeting when he was granted leave of absence for the remainder of the year. The Board appointed Ms Janet Lee as its Chairperson. We are fortunate to have a strong, committed Board of Directors that provides valuable strategic governance, oversight, and support. On behalf of the College community, I thank our directors for their significant voluntary contributions over the year.

Our students and families are the heart of our College, for without them, we would not exist. I thank them for placing their faith in us to provide a quality educational experience in a safe, welcoming, supportive environment. Our teachers and support staff deserve commendation for their professionalism and dedication to our students and families. I thank them for their support throughout the year.

While the work of a CEO is challenging and demanding, it is incredibly rewarding to lead change and witness growth in the organisation and its people. As I close my sixth year as CEO with the College achieving strong outcomes, I reflect the year, remain grateful for the opportunity to continue this important work. I thank our directors and Chairpersons for their unwavering support of the Executive Team this year.

Mrs Mallory Gleeson

Chief Executive Officer

April 2024

College Context

Hunter Trade College is an independent, specialist senior high school. The College delivers vocational education courses in technical trades at Certificate I and II levels as a significant component of the Higher School Certificate (HSC). Dual registration as a registered high school with the NSW Education Standards Authority and a registered training organisation enables the College to deliver the HSC and vocational education and training on-site. Qualified teachers and trade work together in classrooms and workshops designed and equipped to industry standards.

The College commenced operations in January 2007 as the Australian Technical College - Hunter. Its creation aimed to address trade skill shortages in the Hunter Valley and provide quality education and training for young people aspiring to become tradespeople.

Our vision, purpose and values

Our vision

Hunter Trade College prepares students for successful trade careers through technical training within a quality Higher School Certificate program.

Our purpose

Hunter Trade College supports students to reach their potential through a safety-first focus, quality academic and technical courses, a supportive and inclusive environment and work-based learning opportunities.

Our values

We value:

- safety
- respect
- responsibility
- diversity
- integrity
- teamwork

Our cornerstones

- Respect for self and others at College and in the workplace
- Attendance - on time all the time, minimal absences
- Coursework completed safely and on time
- Dressed correctly at College and the workplace

Our aspiration for graduates

Our graduates will be confident and capable community members sought after by trade-based employers. They will be keen to engage in apprenticeship programs to develop themselves as competent tradespersons. Our graduates will join the next generation of skilled workers able to thrive in an environment of rapid technological change.

ASQA Registration

Hunter Trade College is a registered training organisation (RTO) with the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). The current registration period continues to August 2026. The national register of the VET sector in Australia, www.training.gov.au, lists the scope of registration. The College holds registration to deliver and assess:

- AUR20520 Certificate II in Automotive Servicing Technology
- AUR20720 Certificate II in Automotive Vocational Preparation
- AUR30620 Certificate III in Light Vehicle Mechanical Technology
- CPC20120 Certificate II in Construction
- CPC20220 Certificate II in Construction Pathways
- COC30220 Certificate III in Carpentry
- MEM10119 Certificate I in Engineering
- MEM20105 Certificate II in Engineering
- MEM20422 Certificate II in Engineering Pathways
- MEM30219 Certificate III in Engineering – Mechanical Trade
- UEE21720 Certificate II in Technical Support
- UEE22020 Certificate II in Electrotechnology (Career Start)
- UEE30820 Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician
- CPCWHS1001 Prepare to work safely in the construction industry
- RIIWHS204E Work safely at heights

Work Health and Safety

The College uses a direct consultation model, providing regular opportunities for workers to discuss health and safety matters at staff meetings. Smaller teams discuss safety matters specific to their area. The College trains all students to use the "Take 5" system of hazard identification, risk assessment and control. Students complete safe operating procedures on power tools, machinery, and equipment. Teachers use incident report feedback as lessons learned to reinforce why it is essential to work safely.

The Leadership Team reviews injury details and safety controls for incidents resulting in lost time, requiring medical treatment, presenting a high-level risk to staff or students, or recurring injuries. Lessons learned from these reviews help to strengthen and support our safety-matters culture.

The Board of Directors receives a WHS data report bi-monthly, including details about the type and location of the injury and the injury ratio¹. In 2023, the injury ratio was 2.27, a 44% improvement on 2022 outcomes and under the alert level (4.0). The main area of improvement was a reduction in injuries reported at industry-based learning that required medical treatment (MTI) or resulted in the student being unable to attend College on the day following the injury.

In 2023, approximately 61% of student injuries were hand injuries, and 94% were minor cut/laceration or strike/crush injuries at College. These injuries occur as students learn and develop skills using hand tools such as chisels, hacksaws, and files.

¹ number of injuries requiring medical treatment at a hospital or GP divided by the number of staff and students end January, multiplied by 100.

The College monitors the reporting of hazards. Our response to hazard identification and control percentage reports calculates the number of hazards reported with completed corrective actions. The alert level is 80%, and the target is 100%. In 2023, the College achieved 96% completion at the end of the calendar year, an increase of 3% from the previous year.

An external audit of our WHS system showed no significant improvement was required.

Education and Trade Training Facilities

Capital improvement items completed in 2023 included:

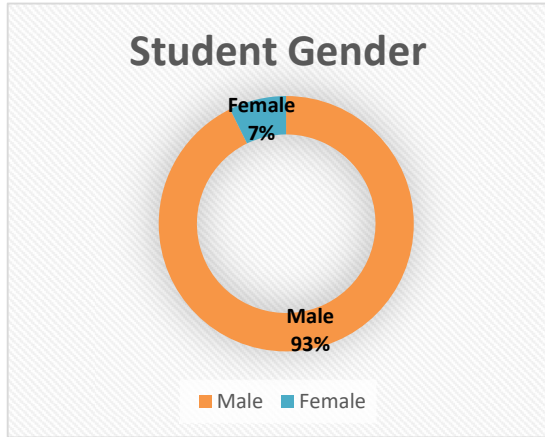
- 3D Printers – used in Computing Applications to print students work from Fusion 360
- Autel diagnostic tool for the Automotive Program. This tool connects to a car wirelessly or plugs into a car's On Board Diagnostic device. It scans for vehicle error codes and clears error codes once fixed via the car's electronic control module (ECM)
- Brake Lathe for Automotive. An off-car brake lathe used to machine disc warped brake rotors and drum brakes.
- Canon multifunction printer – latest technology printer/copier/scanner
- Carpet Tiles were added to upstairs trade classrooms to improve the acoustics and lessen the noise for those working in the workshops underneath
- Commbox audio/visual meeting device and smartscreen – this unit is primarily used for our video-conferencing needs via Microsoft Teams or Zoom
- Guillotine – this is a manual guillotine in our metals workshop with upgraded guarding compared to the unit that it replaced
- Residual Current Devices (RCDs) – Our electrician recommended installing these devices at each machine as well as at the distribution board (existing) as an additional safety precaution, which should further protect staff and students from electric shock.
- Water Tanks – three new plastic water tanks were purchased to replace ageing, rusting water tanks.



Student Characteristics

Enrolments

Month	2023	2022	Variance	% variance
February	215	231	-16	6.93 % decline
August	177	187	-10	5.35 % decline

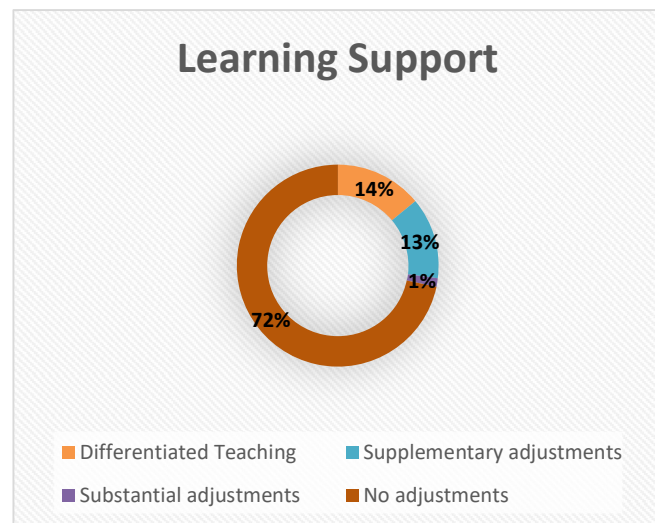
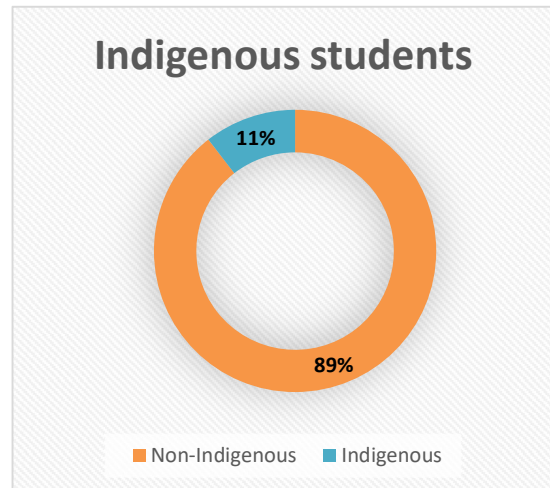


Total enrolments in February 2023 declined by 16 against the previous year. Year 11 enrolments increased by three, and students returning for Year 12 decreased by 19. There were ten fewer students in the August Census.

Total female enrolments decreased by 21%, with 11 girls in 2023 compared to 14 in 2022.

The Australian Government's Boosting Apprenticeship and Traineeship Wages Subsidy contributed to the declining retention rate. Local employers took advantage of the subsidy and offered first-year apprenticeships to more students than usual.

Twenty-four students identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, compared to 22 students in 2022, an increase of 9%.



Twenty-eight percent of students required support to overcome barriers to learning (31% in 2022), addressed by quality differentiated teaching practices and adjustments to learning and assessment activities.

The College continues to enrol students from a large geographic area, this year attracting students from 50 different schools. Students reside in Central Coast, Cessnock, Dungog, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Muswellbrook, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Singleton, and the Upper Hunter.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

The College has a strong client service focus and collects feedback from employers, students and parents. The executive team analyses feedback and reviews policies and procedures to ensure high client satisfaction with service provision. Executive staff operate an open-door policy, enabling all stakeholders to voice concerns.

Students

Student satisfaction information derives from one or more of the following each year:

- feedback surveys administered at the end of each term for mathematics, English studies, computing applications and work studies
- feedback surveys conducted at the end of VET units of competency
- mandated survey tools for reporting to the Australian Skills Quality Authority
- 'settling-in' surveys for new students
- anecdotal information from the Student Development Team

Feedback from these sources indicates that most students are satisfied with their experience at the College.

Parents

Parents and carers provide feedback to the College in various ways, from phone calls to emails and meetings with teachers or executive staff. In 2023, there were very few complaints. Overall, the analysis indicates a low dissatisfaction with most issues resolved.

Parents provided feedback through three parent-teacher sessions, during which they had an opportunity to discuss their young person's performance with teachers.

Parents and carers regularly contact teaching staff and work placement officers concerning their young person's progress. In addition, the College maintains a policy of frequent communication with parents and carers through newsletters and phone calls.

Teachers

Teacher satisfaction levels are identified and evaluated through staff meetings, regular informal and formal communications between staff and the College executive, and performance appraisals and surveys.

College staff members have regular opportunities to engage in feedback and input related to College operations and planning. In addition, the CEO analyses the staff satisfaction data to inform continuous improvement activities, strategic and annual operating plans, and setting performance targets and indicators.

In 2023, the College implemented a staff satisfaction survey covering multiple categories and benchmarked to other independent schools. Teaching staff returned satisfaction levels above 90% for engagement, values, child safety/risk reporting, supervision and health and safety. Category 80 – 89% included vision, resources, recognition, leadership and collegiality. The key areas for teacher satisfaction improvement were performance feedback and career opportunities, both at 40% satisfaction. Our 2024 operational plans address the weaknesses, and teachers will engage in the same survey in 2024 to measure movement in satisfaction levels.

Continuous improvement of client satisfaction levels

The College investigates and responds promptly to any complaints it receives. Where relevant, the College utilises complaint resolution as a source of continuous improvement of client satisfaction levels. College directors receive a formal complaint report bi-monthly at Board meetings.

The College maintains a Continuous Improvement Register, which utilises client feedback as an essential source of improvement identification.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Category (measured in August)	Number (FTE)
Academic (HSC) teachers	8.2
Trade (VET) teachers	5.4
Non-teaching (Support) staff	16.35
Male staff	14.56
Female staff	13.39
Indigenous staff	2

Teacher accreditation

Teacher Accreditation	Number of teachers (FTE)
Conditional accreditation – completing qualifications	-
Provisional accreditation – approved teaching degree, qualified to begin teaching	1.6
Proficient teacher – experienced teachers maintaining their accreditation	10.2
Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher – an advocate, mentor and leader in the teaching profession	-
Vocational Trainers, qualified to deliver nationally recognised training	2.4

Student Performance

Senior Secondary Outcomes

Outcome	Percentage	Change from last year
Students undertaking trade training	100%	-
Students who completed Year 12 and achieved a Higher School Certificate	96%	-4%

Records of School Achievement

Students enrol in vocational trade courses over two years, with most study patterns comprising four units of the student's preferred trade and two units of a second trade. Students may complete a Certificate II qualification.

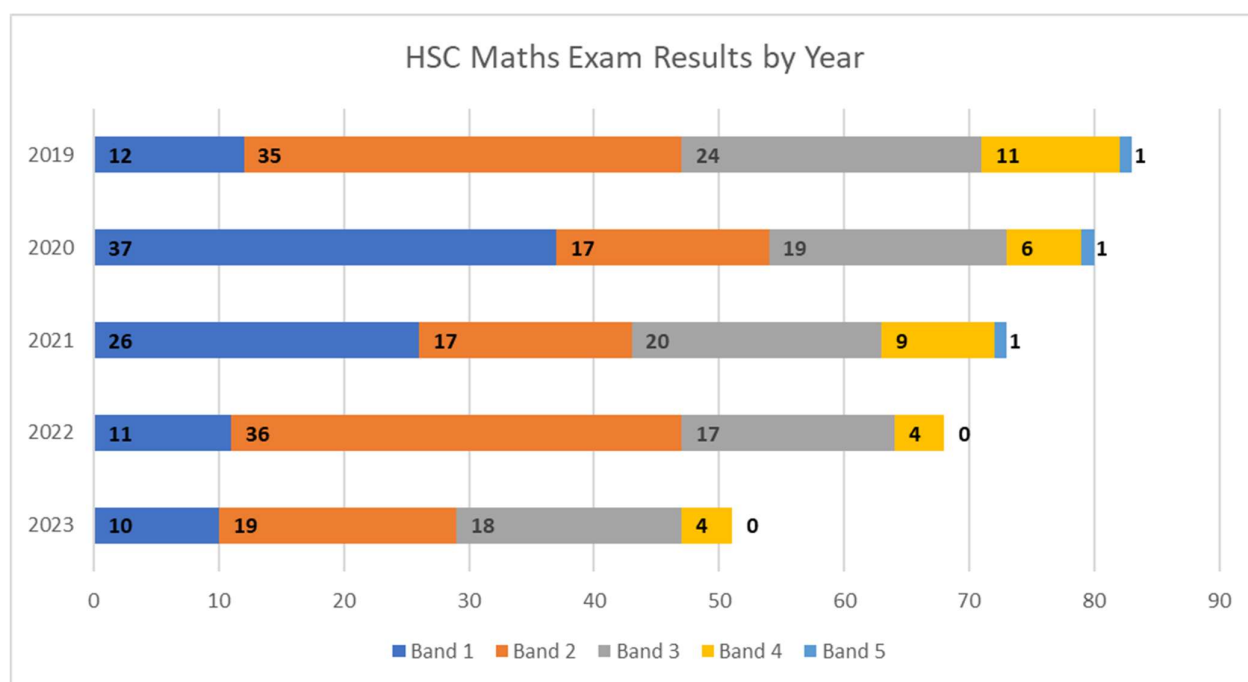
Students receive Statements of Attainment for competency achievement towards trade qualifications. These qualifications carry national recognition. Students achieving competency units from qualifications aligned to their trade career receive credit when commencing an apprenticeship after finishing their studies at the College.

All eligible students who withdraw before achieving the HSC qualification receive a Record of School Achievement (RoSA) showing the student's academic achievement record until the date they leave. The College requested that NESAS issue 61 students with RoSA credentials.

Credentials issued	Number or Percentage	Change from last year
Students achieving Certificate I level qualifications	7	Increase of 2
Students achieving Certificate Level II qualification	55	Decrease of 22
Students who achieved Statements of Attainment in VET units of competency	100%	No change

Mathematics Standard 2 HSC Examination Results

Examination	Year	Candidature	Comparisons to NSW student performance	
			Bands 3 - 6	Bands 1 - 2
Mathematics Standard 2	2023	51	College: 43% Statewide: 82%	College: 57% Statewide: 18%
	2022	68	College: 31% Statewide: 82%	College: 69% Statewide: 18%
	2021	73	College: 41% Statewide: 78%	College: 59% Statewide: 22%
	2020	81	College: 34% Statewide: 76%	College: 66% Statewide: 24%
	2019	83	College: 43% Statewide: 82%	College: 57% Statewide: 18%



The chart above shows the pattern of achievement for the past five years. The proportion of students achieving at Band 1 and 2 dropped by 12%; however, overall results lag the State average. These results reflect the concentration of students enrolling with lower-than-average mathematical capability.

Mathematics tutorials were available throughout the year, and teachers offered exam preparation sessions in early Term 4, before the HSC examination.

Teachers indicate that most students recognise maths skills as relevant to their trade training. However, not all are willing to apply additional time to revise and prepare for exams at home or attend tutorials. Therefore, contextualising HSC Maths to trade maths is a teaching focus.

Mathematics Standard remains mandatory for all students as mathematical skills are essential in a technical trade career.

Optional HSC exams

Two students elected to sit optional HSC exams for their trade course. Six students elected to sit the 2 unit English Studies examination, each returning a Band 3. Unfortunately, the College candidature is too small to make any valid statistical comparison to the NSW average results.

Subject	Number of students	Band achievement					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
2 unit Automotive	1	-	-	-	-	5	-
2 unit English Studies	6	-	-	6	-	-	-
2 unit Electrotechnology	1	-	-	1	-	-	-

English Studies

All students undertake English Studies. Six students sat the optional HSC English Studies exam. All remaining students followed a formal assessment program, with the results submitted to NESA and reported on their HSC result summary. Grades ranged from A to E. The English Studies course emphasises communication and literacy skills over literature, supporting students in trade programs.

Work Studies

Seventeen students completed Work Studies, all meeting the course requirements and gaining valuable career planning skills. Marks ranged from 20% -71%.

Industry-Based Learning (IBL)

92.4% of Year 12 students completed the minimum work placement days organised by the College and met course requirements. The remaining students transferred to Work Studies or Computing Applications courses.

Computing Applications

Two students completed a 2-unit Computing Applications course as a part of their Year 12 study program.

Minimum Standards Testing

In 2023, all Year 11 and 12 students could sit for the minimum Level 3 standard for NESA's mandatory reading, writing and numeracy testing. All Year 12 students complied with the Higher School Certificate award requirements. These tests offer an Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) benchmark against which the students can measure their literacy and numeracy skills.

Year 11 students completed all their minimum standards tests during the year.

2023 School-Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT) Data

Trade	As of 31 December 2023	
	Year 11	Year 12
Automotive	5	7
Construction	6	5
Electrotechnology	6	6
Metals and Engineering	5	4
Total	22	22

Most nationally recognised qualifications require students to engage in industry experience to meet assessment conditions. The timetable provides time dedicated to work placement or school-based traineeships to ensure students meet industry experience requirements without missing education and training time. In 2023, forty-four (44) students achieved school-based traineeships, a 16% increase over the previous year.

The school-based training contracts available to NSW students require students to complete between 100 days and 144 days of work with their employer as a part of their training contract. The College actively promotes students' involvement in these school-based training contracts.

Value Added Results

Qualitative feedback in employer work placement reports indicates students significantly improve employability skills due to the level of work placement.

Post-School Outcomes

Year 12 students

Category	Number or Percentage
Students participating in destination surveys	53 of 53 students
Participating students achieving an apprenticeship by March 2024	41 students (77.4%)
Participating students achieving other employment by March 2024	3 students (5.6%)
Participating students enrolled in full-time post-school study	0 students (0.0%)
Other outcomes ²	9 students (16.9%)

Post-school apprenticeship outcomes increased by 3.2% over the previous year, and students achieving other employment outcomes dropped by 62%. Students still seeking work six months after their HSC year rose by 28%.

² Other outcomes include students who are still seeking work at the post-destination survey date

Post-school outcomes for students who withdrew in 2023

Student Trade	Positive Post School Outcomes			Other ³	Total
	Full-Time Apprenticeship	Full-Time Employment	Full-Time Education or Training		
Automotive	9	3	2	3	17
Construction	17	6	2	7	32
Electrotechnology	15	3	3	6	27
Fitting/Fabrication	6	2	0	0	8
Total	47 (56%)	14 (17%)	7 (8%)	16 (19%)	84

Student Retention Rates

Category	Percentage	Change from last year
Year 11 students from February 2023 to August 2023	84%	1% increase
Year 12 students from February 2023 to August 2023	80%	2% increase
Year 11 students commencing in 2022 who completed Year 12 in 2023 ⁴	37%	3% decrease

Many parents and students view withdrawal from College to enter a full-time apprenticeship as a positive post-school outcome. The College also considers gaining a full-time apprenticeship as a positive post-school outcome. However, we remain concerned about the risks faced by students exiting before achieving their HSC.

Low apprenticeship completion rates feature in NSW. Industry apportioned some issues to first-year apprentices' poor literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills. The College curriculum explicitly teaches these skills to improve student skill levels and minimise the dropout risk.

Student Attendance

Category	Measure	Movement
Year 11 attendance rate	85.1%	-2.6%
Year 12 attendance rate	88.7%	+1.1%
Overall attendance rate	86.9%	-0.7%
Number of students achieving 100% attendance	1	-

³ Includes students withdrawing due to long term illness, moving to another region or not providing a withdrawal reason.

⁴ Contributing factors included students exiting to take up fulltime apprenticeships before completing their HSC.

Managing non-attendance

High attendance rates are essential to student work readiness and employability skills.

The College marks student rolls in period one of each school day. Parents of students absent in period one receive a text message alert asking them to confirm the absence and identify the reason and probable length. Parents who do not respond to the alert receive a letter requesting parental confirmation of the reason for the absence. The College records the absence details in its student management system.

Independent students who do not live with their parents or guardians are responsible for complying with College attendance requirements, including written confirmation of reasons for absence and providing documentation.

Students must submit doctor's certificates or other prescribed statements relating to absences that exceed three days or occur on the day of a scheduled assessment task.

The College implements an improvement plan for students whose attendance pattern may negatively impact their course performance. The plan identifies the corrective actions needed to address the issue.

The College organises work placement for students. Year 11 students have two scheduled days of work placement per week, and Year 12 students have three days per week. Students lodge timesheets verifying attendance on their work placement days.

School Policies

The following school policies are available on the College's website:

- [Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy](#)
- [Child Protection Policy](#)
- [Complaints and Appeals Policy](#)
- [Enrolment Policy](#)
- [Student Discipline Policy](#)
- [Student Welfare \(Pastoral Care\) Policy](#)

Policies undergo a three-year review as part of our quality management system. Earlier updates occur in response to changes in legislation and regulation and continuous improvement activities.

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

The College teaches the rights and obligations of young workers through English Studies and vocational HSC courses. Key areas include anti-discrimination, equal employment opportunity and work health and safety (WHS).

The College uses a WHS safety breach system similar to that used in most worksites to reinforce the need for WHS compliance. In addition, students participate in regular toolbox talks to support safety and responsible behaviour information and strategies.

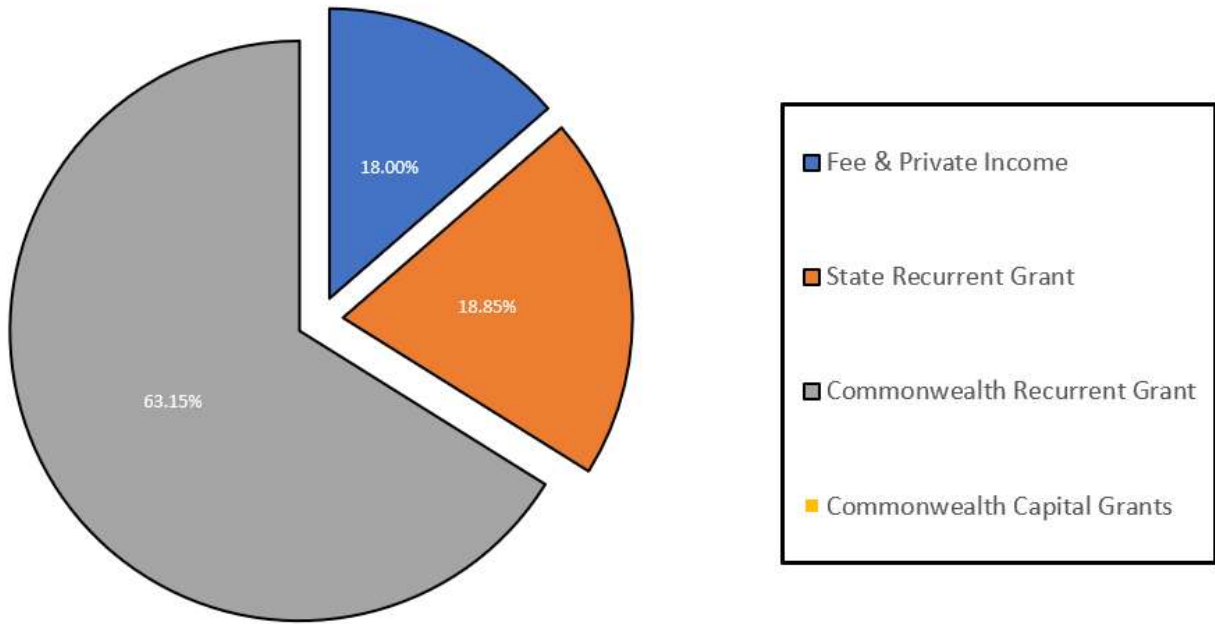
The College actively and consistently promotes respect as a cornerstone of the College values that underpin all College systems, policies and procedures.

The College conducts a student awards program based on student achievement of the four cornerstone values each term. Seeing so many students achieve these awards and demonstrate pride and confidence in their accomplishments is gratifying.

Financial Information Summary

College Income and Expenditure

College Income 2023



Recurrent & Capital Expenditure 2023

