

skillset. senior college

Annual Report 2017



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Messages from Key School Bodies

Chairman's Message

2017 saw us entering our third year in the life of Skillset, having truly come of age with our first Year 12 Graduating cohort. Skillset Senior College seeks to provide an opportunity for students to learn in a caring, safe and nurturing environment. With an enrolment now of just over 70 students, our school has grown into presenting its own identity, developing a sense of pride and acceptance of achievement amongst our students.

The last twelve months has seen the Board of Skillset Ltd and the personnel of the school working towards a separation of the school into its own entity. This has meant a renewal of our registration with the variety of governing bodies associated with ensuring all schools meet stringent standards in all aspects of their organisation. We thank the officers of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) who visited and assisted in this transfer of registration from Skillset Ltd to Skillset Senior College. We now have registration to continue as a school for a further 5 years.

This has also enabled us to now become registered as a full member of the Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales (AIS) providing additional support for our staff in gaining Professional Development opportunities, as well as tapping into other support systems the AIS has in place for schools such as ours.

The adult learning environment created within the school has formed an extension to the Skillset Ltd business platform, where "Your Future Our Focus" is the key vision of all elements within the business. We are able to develop our facilities, in cooperation with Skillset Ltd, to better deliver a relevant and rewarding curriculum for our students, and we are continually expanding options with the wealth of knowledge and experience of our teaching and support staff.

In keeping with the growth of the school we have now established a SSC Board, who are responsible for the management and governance of the school. As the school continues to grow, it is envisaged that this Board will grow too, reflecting a stronger link to the communities we draw our students from.

I encourage you to take time to read this Annual Report, and in doing so reflect on the successes of our first graduating class, the professionalism of our teaching and support staff, and the long term commitment we have made to making a difference in the lives of young people within our communities. Skillset Senior College is committed to this challenge and we seek your support as we do so into the future.



Ian Tooke BEd.; Dip.Teach.; Grad.Dip. (Computing Science); Cert IV TAE
Chairman
Skillset Senior College School Council

Principal's Message

It is a great pleasure to present my third Annual Report for the Skillset Senior College. 2017 is our first year where we can truly say we have achieved our original purpose of providing an alternative senior school pathway to the HSC for the young people of our region. Very significantly, we had the privilege of seeing twelve of our students graduate with their HSC, a proud moment for the school and for all of those great young people, their families, friends and carers. Indeed, the significance is heightened when we reflect on the fact that all our graduates are the "first-in-family" to attain this qualification, with many students pushing through significant personal and educational challenges to achieve what they have, a proud moment for the whole school community to acknowledge.

This year saw the organisational structure of the school strengthen in tandem with increased enrolments and student needs. Our teaching staff, and learning and support staff, grew as the school welcomed over 70 students across the year, which is currently our school's capacity. Roles covering pastoral care, foundation skills, administration and grounds-keeping were a welcome addition to the school's staffing profile, and have added to the core teaching roles in terms of the professional delivery of student-centred services. I acknowledge the Manager of Education, Abbey Barrett, whose guidance, advice and support for her staff have underpinned the enormous successes the school has achieved throughout the year.

In terms of curriculum, the introduction of the Agriculture Program lead by Mark Whitfeld has provided a practical, interesting and vocationally relevant key learning area for our students to engage in, with many positive comments received from students throughout the year. Introducing animals into the life of the school allows students to not only learn new knowledge and skills, but can also change their focus away from internal anxieties towards "the other", and entrenches good mental and physical practices in the pursuit of giving care and being responsible for the welfare and good condition of our school animals. Witnessing the love for, engagement in and enjoyment of the Agriculture program has certainly been a great highlight for 2017.

"...2017 is our first year where we can truly say we have achieved our original purpose of providing an alternative senior school pathway to the HSC for the young people of our region..."

The completion of works - provided for by the federally funded Association of Independent Schools Block Grant Authority - has also been a highlight, with the school's beautiful and modern covered outdoor learning area now fully complete. This, added to the other significant classroom improvements, provides a modern and well-resourced physical learning environment within which students can grow personally and thrive educationally.

This year also saw the School Council make the decision for Skillset Senior College to become a separate legal entity. This will satisfy our compliance requirements far more transparently, and allow us to be full members of the Association of Independent Schools - an organisation with whom we are proud to align. This ownership change has also prompted the need for a full school inspection process by NESA, the NSW Authority responsible for school registration and curriculum accreditation. I acknowledge the excellent work of all staff in their preparation for this inspection due in early 2018, and thank Meg Hitchick in particular for her invaluable operational support.

I would like to acknowledge the Skillset Board for their continuing support and the Chair of the School Council, Mr Ian Tooke, for his ongoing contributions and support. I would also like to thank and acknowledge all our

teachers and support staff, for the continuing passion, kindness and dedication they bring to our school every day. They continue to inspire our students to be the best they can be, and continue to bring the life-changing gift of education to this place of learning and change. Our students also deserve our sincerest thanks for making a commitment to invest in themselves by completing their senior schooling. We look forward to an exciting 2018 where we will further develop the school programs and infrastructure to ensure we remain focused on the future, our staff and most importantly the reason we are all here, our students.



Craig Randazzo BA (Psych., Ed.); Adv. Dip. Mgmt.; FIML; MAICD
Principal

Contextual information about Skillset and Skillset Senior College

About Skillset

Skillset is an innovative, regionally based not-for-profit organisation delivering an integrated range of services throughout NSW and beyond. We work with individuals, businesses, industry and communities to increase their success through our three business units: Skillset Education, Skillset Workforce and Skillset Environment. We have structured our organisation this way to deliver the best outcomes possible; ensuring our services are clustered around our clients, participants and students to provide the highest positive impact possible for those we serve. As well as an accredited independent school, Skillset is an Apprentice Employment Network provider as a registered Group Training Organisation (GTO) and is the largest employer of apprentices and trainees in Western NSW with over 450 young people employed by Skillset annually.



Skillset Senior College

First Accredited by NESA: September 2014
Opened in: January 2015
Re-registered: September 2015 (Stage 5) for 5 years
NESA Number: 78096

Skillset Senior College offers young people of the central west region a new approach to high school education, in an adult learning environment. Some fast facts about our school, Skillset Senior College:

- is a Special Assistance School
- is at capacity with 70 enrolments
- caters to years 10 to 12 students, who have fallen out of main stream education
- has an SES score of 85
- aims to reengage disadvantaged young people with the love of learning
- features small class sizes, with a maximum of 17 in year 10 with at least two teachers in each class
- has a large Indigenous cohort with around 30% identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders
- has close links with community including Headspace, housing providers and public mental health agencies
- caters for young people for whom school-refusal and mental health challenges have been major problems



A wellbeing focus, combined with small class sizes and a safe, supportive environment make for a positive school experience.

Skillset Senior College - Aim, Purpose and Values

Skillset Senior College strives to provide young people with the opportunity to re-evaluate their current situation and achieve success in a smaller and more supportive secondary education environment. We aim to give our young people a chance to achieve a high quality education, at least equal to that available in mainstream education systems.

There are some important differences in approach, compared with other local independent senior high schools. Skillset Senior College offers students the opportunity to complete their Year 10 Record of School Achievement (ROSA) and HSC in small supportive environment, which the focus on programs to meet individual student needs. Smaller class sizes, staff working with students to develop an individual education plan, and partnerships with a range of local community support organisations to work with the school are some of our key strategies for success. In 2017 we graduated our first ever HSC class which was a thrilling milestone for the school, and has provided life-changing opportunities for some previously disengaged young people.

Our mission is to create engagement through relationship, and to work alongside our students to develop the values of respect, resilience and responsibility.

Aim

To provide a psychologically safe and supportive learning environment, where young people re-engage in education, develop the desire to learn and the skills to succeed at school and in life.

Purpose

To provide new educational opportunities for young people, through a flexible educational framework that supports and understands their needs, in a real world context.

Values

The Board and staff of Skillset are motivated by the role the organisation plays in building social cohesion and sustainable communities, by facilitating skills acquisition and learning.

We are focused on the future and aim to provide opportunities for young people to lead full and productive lives in the communities that we serve.

We reflect Australian national values of fairness, tolerance, a strong work ethic and the core democratic belief that everyone has an intrinsically valuable contribution to make. We have an emphasis on sectors of society that face disadvantage to enable them to make their contribution.

We aim to run a viable and progressive organisation that sets best practice benchmarks to achieve our goals. Our employees must be safe, well supported and have opportunities to reach their potential.

Our business practice must be sustainable so that future generations can enjoy the privileges and opportunities we enjoy.

Student Outcomes

Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

Course	School Total	State Total	School A(%)	School B(%)	School C(%)	School D(%)	School E(%)	School None(%)	State A(%)	State B(%)	State C(%)	State D(%)	State E(%)	State None(%)
<u>English 200 hours (300)</u>	32	85187			25.00	25.00	50.00		12.08	27.72	37.35	16.24	5.56	1.04
<u>Mathematics 200 hours (323)</u>	32	85285		6.25	37.50	43.75	12.50		15.18	23.33	31.43	22.13	6.99	.93
<u>Science 200 hours (350)</u>	32	85169			31.25	50.00	18.75		13.12	24.30	36.81	18.43	6.47	.86
<u>Australian Geography 100 hours (4015)</u>	32	84896			62.50	37.50			12.89	26.04	36.62	17.36	6.30	.79
<u>History 100 hours (4007)</u>	32	85138			37.50	62.50			13.57	27.22	35.59	16.60	6.20	.82
<u>PDHPE 100 hours (2421)</u>	32	23460		3.13	53.13	40.63	3.13		16.36	34.59	34.79	10.20	3.39	.67

Preliminary Course (Year 11) Results

Course	School Total	State Total	School A(%)	School B(%)	School C(%)	School D(%)	School E(%)	School None(%)	State A(%)	State B(%)	State C(%)	State D(%)	State E(%)	State None(%)
<u>English Standard 2 unit (11130)</u>	16	33735		18.75	37.50	18.75	25.00		2.94	19.10	48.78	22.70	5.81	.67
<u>Mathematics General 2 unit (11235)</u>	15	40157	13.33	33.33	20.00	26.67	6.67		7.09	20.31	35.16	24.92	11.54	.97
<u>Senior Science 2 unit (11320)</u>	16	5326	6.25	12.50	25.00	43.75	12.50		5.48	21.80	39.47	22.83	8.75	1.67
<u>Agriculture 2 unit (11010)</u>	16	2030			50.00	37.50	12.50		16.45	26.31	33.00	16.35	7.09	.79
<u>Information Processes and Technology 2 unit (11210)</u>	16	3439	18.75	56.25		18.75	6.25		15.85	30.39	34.72	12.33	6.16	.55
<u>Community and Family Studies 2 unit (11060)</u>	16	10965		6.25	43.75	43.75	6.25		10.78	25.07	35.80	19.63	7.40	1.33

HSC Results

Course	Course	Students Included	Students Omitted	E.M. Mean	State E.M. Mean	School/State Variation	Z-score
<u>Ancient History 2 unit</u>	15020	12	1	41.28	71.67	-30.39	-1.97
<u>Community and Family Studies 2 unit</u>	15060	10	1	52.88	72.71	-19.83	-1.69
<u>English (Standard) 2 unit</u>	15130	12	1	49.72	69.19	-19.47	-1.71
<u>Information Processes and Technology 2 u</u>	15210	10		53.16	71.71	-18.55	-1.33
<u>Mathematics General 2 2 unit</u>	15235	9	1	36.73	68.51	-31.78	-2.10
<u>Senior Science 2 unit</u>	15340	11	1	58.91	70.91	-12.00	-.92

Course	School Total	State Total	School Band 6 (%)	School Band 5 (%)	School Band 4 (%)	School Band 3 (%)	School Band 2 (%)	School Band 1 (%)
<u>English Standard 2 unit (11130)</u>	16	33735	0.00	0.00	0.00	16.66	50.00	33.33
<u>Mathematics General 2 unit (11235)</u>	15	40157	0.00	0.00	0.00	22.22	0.00	77.77
<u>Senior Science 2 unit (11320)</u>	16	5326	0.00	0.00	9.09	45.45	36.36	9.09
<u>Ancient History 2 unit (15020)</u>	16	2030	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	33.33	66.66
<u>Information Processes and Technology 2 unit (11210)</u>	16	3439	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.00	50.00	30.00
<u>Community and Family Studies 2 unit (11060)</u>	16	10965	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.00	40.00	40.00

Senior Secondary Outcomes

2017 was the first year of delivering a HSC program as structured by NESA. The subject offerings for this first cohort were English (Standard); Mathematics (General); Senior Science; Ancient History; Community and Family Studies and Information Processes and Technology.

The 2017 Year 11 cohort (Preliminary Course) subject offerings were English (Standard); Mathematics (General); Senior Science; Agriculture; Community and Family Studies and Information Processes and Technology. The introduction of the Agriculture forward program represents a big step forward in the development of the College, with significant investment into infrastructure and human resources to support this.

Professional Learning and Teacher Standards

All teaching staff met the professional requirements for teaching in NSW according to the following categories:

Category	Number of Teachers
Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines	7
Teachers having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications	0

NESA Teacher Accreditation Status	Number of SSC Teachers
Lead Teacher Accreditation	0
Highly Accomplished Teacher Accreditation	0
Proficient Teacher Accreditation	1
Provisional Accreditation	4
Pre-2004 Teacher accredited at Proficient level	2
Not accredited with TAA	0

In 2017, staff attended the following training events:

Training Event	Number of Staff Attended
Alesco Annual Conference 2017	9
Mental Health First Aid	8
Moonshot Thinking Presentation	8
Giftedness Workshop for Teachers	8
Using PowerPoint – Strategies for effective teaching	8
AIS Teacher Accreditation process	4

Workforce and Student Profile

Workforce Composition

In 2017, Skillset Senior College employed:

- 1 x Principal
- 1 x full-time Manager
- 2 x full-time teachers (KLA – Maths; IPT; Agriculture; Social Sciences)
- 5 x part-time teachers at 0.8 FTE (KLA – Science; English; History; Social Sciences; PDHPE; Maths; Learning and Support)
- 1 x General Assistant / Learning Support at 0.6 FTE (Term 4)
- 1 x Bursar
- Administration support provided by Skillset admin team

Workforce Qualifications

Principal: BA (Psych., Ed.), University of Sydney; Adv. Dip. Mgmt. (IML); FIML; MAICD

Manager: BA (Psych), University of Sydney; Grad.Dip.Couns.; PACFA Reg. (Clinical) ACAP

Teacher 1: BAppSc, Canberra University; Grad.Dip.Ed., Charles Sturt University

Teacher 2: BInfoTech, Charles Sturt University; Grad.Dip.Ed., Charles Sturt University

Teacher 3: BAppSc, Hawkesbury Ag College; Dip. Ed, Sydney Teachers College

Teacher 4: BEd, Charles Sturt University

Teacher 5: BTeach (Primary) & BPsych, Charles Sturt University

Teacher 6: BA (English), Syracuse University USA; MA (Teaching), University of Delaware USA

Teacher 7: BSC, Macquarie University, Postgrad Dip.Ed, Charles Sturt University

All staff who interact in any way with students have also completed 'Working with Children' checks.



Teachers work alongside students across a range of disciplines in a flexible, student-centred environment, helping them to develop academic, social and life skills.

Student Profile

In our third year of operation, Skillset Senior College commenced with 68 enrolments across Year 10, 11 and 12. The NSW Minister for Education has granted Skillset Senior College Special Assistance School status, which recognises that our school primarily assists students with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties, who are better suited to an alternative learning environment. Nearly 25% of students have a diagnosed disability. Over 30% of students identify as Indigenous.

Many of these young people have actively sought a place at Skillset Senior College, as they felt unable to participate and learn in a conventional school environment. For some students, the small size of the class increases engagement; for others it is about the individual and holistic approach we take to student wellbeing.

Each year, Skillset Senior College takes on a new cohort of students and their individual differences, home life situation and possible educational barriers will have a different impact on each young person. Keeping the young person engaged in their own progress and learning is of prime importance, if we are to see good outcomes. Many students face serious barriers to attendance at school, including some students with daily homelessness concerns or at best unstable accommodation.

Student Attendance and Retention

Attendance

Year	Enrolment Days	Attendance Days	Non-Indigenous Attendance	Indigenous Attendance	Total Attendance
10 (federal census October)	1284	854	65.19%	71.21%	66.53%
11 (full year)	1740	1298	72.65%	81.65%	74.60%
12 (full year)	1577	1081	72.65%	57.58%	68.55%

Management of Non-Attendance

Due to the nature of our cohort, non-attendance and school refusal have the potential to significantly impact on our student population.

The school follows compliance guidelines by sending attendance letters so that parents/caregivers are aware of the dates students are absent. Parents/caregivers are always encouraged to discuss attendance matters with the school, and build an attendance plan with relevant teaching and support staff.

Skillset Senior College employs the following strategies to address school non-attendance and to minimise the effect of this on student outcomes.

- Effective roll-marking procedures, complemented by a text messaging service to alert parents/carers when their student has not attended school
- Timely follow-up of unexpected or unexplained absences by phone call, message or email
- Clear communication of expectations regarding attendance to the student body, including a guideline that requires students to remain on campus at all times during the school day, and no unsupervised temporary departures (such as a visit to shops)

- Provision of food, drink, simple medical and basic hygiene supplies on campus to encourage attendance even when these aspects may be a challenge for students
- Assistance with navigating the public transport system, including support to access bus passes, timetables and safe transport options
- Individualised plans and case management for students with risk factors for sporadic attendance, in partnership with parents/carers and other key stakeholders such as mental health services.

For students who have a significant pattern of non-attendance, Skillset Senior College provides flexible opportunities and additional learning support, to ensure that students have the best chance of success. Assessment delivery is tailored to ensure maximum participation even for students for whom irregular attendance is a significant barrier to learning.

Retention

Of the 2017 Year 11 cohort, 16 of the original 24 students (67%) remained enrolled and articulated into Year 12 (beginning of Term 4) at Skillset Senior College. Other students had left during Year 11 for various reasons.

Of the 2017 Year 10 cohort, 26 students (81%) articulated into Year 11, with 2 students (6%) re-enrolling in Year 10. The remaining 4 students had either moved away, or left with the intention of finding work.

Post School Destination Survey

Of the 2017 Year 12 cohort (12 students graduating with HSC), one student enrolled in tertiary education at university (8%), one enrolled at TAFE (8%), three students obtained an apprenticeship (25%), four known as commenced into paid work (33%), with the post-school activity status of the remaining three students unknown at the time of report.

School Policies (Summary)

The policy documents below are excerpts from the Skillset Senior College Policy Manual 2015. Policies that are due for review have been extended until the period following the NESA School Accreditation process that Skillset Senior College underwent in early 2018, following a significant governance change.

Enrolment Policy

Section of Manual:	7. Attendance		
Document	POLICY 7.2: Enrolment Policy	POL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROC <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of Endorsement:	30.11.08	Review Date:	30.06.18
Review Panel	The Manager - Skillset Education, Principal, and Manager HR must be a part of the review of this Policy		
Purpose:	To ensure Skillset Senior College staff and students have an understanding of the major enrolment criteria and underpinning philosophy of the school		
Scope:	This policy relates to all Skillset Senior College staff and potential students		
Policy	<p>Skillset Senior College is a school specifically designed to re-engage disenfranchised and 'at risk' young people.</p> <p>Our school aims to provide opportunities to young people, primarily aged 15-17 years, who are unable to complete their education within the traditional school environment.</p> <p>The selection criteria for Skillset Senior College focuses on eight key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning difficulties/disabilities • Behavioural difficulties/disabilities • Social Disadvantage • Age • Academic achievement • Financial Disadvantage • ESL / ATSI • Isolation <p>Skillset Senior College cannot cater to students who are functionally illiterate or who require intensive behaviour or health support; such students would be more fully catered for in a smaller environment, of which there are several in the local area. Skillset Senior College will offer suggestions for such other facilities should the need arise. Skillset Senior College provides case management to all students who are enrolled in the school but we are not in a position to manage students who cannot operate within the adult learning environment.</p> <p>All students who apply to attend Skillset Senior College within the designated intake times shall be offered an interview as part of the application process. Students' acceptance into the program is dependent on their presentation at interview and their demonstrated ability to work within the policies and philosophy of Skillset Senior College.</p> <p>All students who are enrolled at Skillset Senior College will need to undergo a Literacy and Numeracy assessment if the teaching staff deem it necessary. This may be conducted prior to enrolment if required.</p>		

Anti-Bullying Policy

Section of Manual:	5B. Safe & Supportive Environment - Student Welfare		
Document	POLICY 5B.11: Harassment, Discrimination & Anti bullying	POL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROC <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of Endorsement:	06.07.12	Review Date:	20.06.18
Review Panel	The Manager - Skillset Education, Principal, and Manager HR must be a part of the review of this Policy		
Purpose:	To ensure all Skillset Senior College staff and students of Skillset Senior College are made aware of their rights and responsibilities with regards to the issue of harassment, bullying and violence		
Scope:	This policy relates to all Skillset Senior College staff and students		
Policy	<p>It is the policy of Skillset Senior College to ensure that all students feel that this school is a safe place where they can learn. This means that all students and staff must respect and accept that people have different beliefs, values and backgrounds.</p> <p>All students of Skillset Senior College are made aware of their rights and responsibilities with regards to the issue of harassment, bullying and violence and they are asked to sign to say they understand that under the <i>1977 Anti-Discrimination Act</i> it is against the law to harass any other person in relation to their age, race, sexuality, culture, religion, marital status or gender, appearance or disabilities.</p> <p>Insults and harassment related to these things are a form of bullying and violence and will be handled in the same way as physical violence. This applies to both the classroom, the school grounds and where applicable off school grounds.</p> <p>Students are made aware that all staff at Skillset Senior College take any form of harassment and bullying behaviour very seriously and that they, the student, have every right to feel safe and supported in our school environment therefore coming forward with any concerns they may have around these issues, either for themselves or for another student, is considered by the staff as being a positive decision and one that will be listened to and actioned on if deemed appropriate.</p> <p>Staff must take any observations they make or disclosures they hear of bullying and harassment seriously and must document (diarise) any information they receive regarding harassment occurring within the cohort and bring this to the weekly Manager - Skillset Education meeting for discussion and actioning.</p> <p>In the case of one off, 'heat of the moment' instances of a student insulting and harassing another student about these issues, they will be given the choice to apologise immediately or leave the area until they have regained composure and are displaying acceptable behaviours. They cannot return to the classroom until they have discussed the matter with the Principal or</p>		

	<p>Manager - Skillset Education (whoever is deemed most appropriate at the time).</p> <p>Should this behaviour continue, the student will be placed on a mutual respect contract and may find themselves at risk of having their placement at Skillset Senior College suspended or withdrawn.</p> <p>In the case where a student is being severely harassed, be this in or outside of school property, and after investigation there is serious concern for safety, welfare and wellbeing of the student being harassed/bullied, the placement of those students involving themselves in such bullying & harassing activities may be withdrawn.</p> <p>Types and means of harassment/bullying that will be actioned:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any harassment strategies that include the use of telephone communication or text messages and/or any use of social media for the purposes of intimidating, ridiculing, insulting and/or treating others inside or outside of school hours. 2. Any intimidation tactics, this may include: staring or giving 'filthy' looks, being obstructive, wilfully invading personal space, laughing at or whispering about others to gain a reaction, or any other behaviour which may display surreptitious intimidation behaviour 3. Any harassment strategies such as students speaking about one another to any other student or teacher in any derogatory manner. This includes discussing private lives, social lives, medical status, any name calling, assumptions, rumours or anything else which may be classed as 'bitching'. 4. Any harassment strategies which may include students encouraging, permitting or instructing any of their friends or classmates to engage in any negative behaviour, language or attitude towards another party. If they do so they will also be held responsible. <p>Types of interventions available, but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Face to face apologies are always encouraged where appropriate (minor, 'heat of the moment' insults and frustrations) 2. Mediation sessions if both/all parties are in agreement (larger misunderstandings that require more discussion and negotiation but may not require a full contract) 3. Mutual respect contracts which assists all parties to understand their boundaries with regards to interacting in a small environment and working side by side in a professional manner without needing to 'like' each other (full contract that requires both/all parties to behave as though the others do not exist unless they must interact as part of a class and then only in a respectful and polite manner, but most importantly the contract outlines that each party may not encourage or instruct anyone else, friends of family, to participate in any ongoing negative behaviour, that they will be held responsibly should this eventuate)
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	Many students attending Skillset Senior College may be doing so because they left a mainstream school environment where bullying and harassment were significant issues for them. In light of this, the culture of the Skillset Senior College will aim to be one of acceptance and celebration of diversity, and as a minimum must promote a culture of acceptance and tolerance.
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Discipline Policy

Section of Manual:	6. Discipline		
Document	POLICY 6.1: Student Discipline	POL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROC <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of Endorsement:	30.11.08	Review Date:	30.06.18
Review Panel	The Manager - Skillset Education, Principal, and Manager HR must be a part of the review of this Policy		
Purpose:	To ensure Skillset Senior College staff and students understand the approach, key aspects and philosophy behind student discipline		
Scope:	This policy relates to all Skillset Senior College staff and students		
Policy	<p>It must first be noted that the Skillset Senior College student discipline process ends in 'exclusion' not 'expulsion' for 2 main reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'Expulsion' is not a term traditionally used within an adult learning context and as the Skillset Senior College is designed specifically to work within an adult learning context we have chosen to use the language of that culture. 2. Skillset Senior College believes that all students have the right to a second chance with this in mind it can be suggested that the term 'expulsion' carries with it a connotation of finality, that a learner is to be 'kicked out' without the opportunity to try again at a later date while the term 'exclusion' holds a connotation of having a second chance, a learner may be excluded for an immediate period however they may have the opportunity to be included when the student they chooses they are ready to take up the challenge of an adult learning environment once more. Inclusivity is a fundamental principle of adult learning. <p>Any student who is believed to be in breach of the discipline policy or is displaying continual offensive behaviour may be subject to actions under the discipline policy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In this Policy, breach of discipline means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conduct that impairs the reasonable freedom of any person (whether or not a student) to pursue his or her studies or work with Skillset Ltd. or Skillset Senior College or on the premises of the above mentioned organisations 2. A student commits a breach of discipline if the student does any of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assaults or threatens to assault another person, b. Engages in any offensive conduct or any unlawful activity, 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Removes, damages or uses any property of the Skillset Senior College or Skillset Ltd. without having permission from the organisation or a member of staff, d. Obstructs a member of staff in the performance of the member's duties especially where this may raise safety concerns, e. Repeatedly and willfully disobeys or disregards an order or direction of a member of staff, including a direction regarding appropriate behaviour or safety, f. Repeatedly commits or engages in any dishonest or unfair act in relation to an examination or other form of academic assessment, g. Repeatedly discriminates against a person on the grounds of the person's age, race, sex, sexual orientation, transgender, marital status, physical or intellectual disability, or religion, h. Incites hatred towards, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of, a person or group of persons on the grounds of the age, race, sex, sexuality, transgender, marital status, physical or intellectual disability, or religion of the person or members of the group <p>3. Conduct does not cease to be a breach of discipline merely because it takes place elsewhere than on the premises of the Skillset Senior College</p> <p>4. For the avoidance of doubt, a breach of discipline may be committed by an act that involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A communication in person or in writing or by telephone or other telephonic or electronic means which may include any and all forms of social media, or b. A transaction using telephonic or electronic means which may include any and all forms of social media. <p>5. For the purposes of this clause: offensive conduct includes any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Spitting, b. Littering, c. Using offensive language, d. Being under the influence of alcohol, e. Being under the influence of a drug (other than medication that has been prescribed by, and taken in accordance with the instructions of, a registered medical professional). <p>unlawful activity includes any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Using, possessing or supplying any prohibited drug, substance or weapon, b. Stealing the property of another person. <p>6. A member of staff who believes that a student has committed a breach of discipline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Must, as soon as practicable, report the alleged breach to The Manager - Skillset Education or Principal, and b. May exclude the student from attendance at the school for the remainder of the day on which the alleged breach
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	<p>occurred, or until a decision can be made regarding the consequences of the breach.</p> <p>Skillset Senior College believes in allowing students the opportunity to learn by their mistakes. Should a student persist in breaching the policy of the Skillset Senior College there are 8 levels of discipline that can be progressed through.</p> <p>1. Verbal Warning ↓ 2. Self-Choice Discipline ↓ 3. Written Warning ↓ 4. 3-Day Time Out ↓ 5. Written Warning ↓ 6. 7-Day Suspension ↓ 7. Written Warning ↓ 8. Exclusion</p> <p>The progression of these stages is for continual disciplinary issues.</p> <p>The standard response is that a student should not be suspended without firstly being notified of the possibility of this in writing.</p> <p>When a student receives notification of the possibility of suspension from Skillset Senior College the Manager - Skillset Education will contact the parents / carer to offer inclusion of involvement in the increased support the student requires at this time.</p> <p>Should students conduct themselves in a manner that constitutes a serious breach of discipline they can be suspended immediately with parental notification occurring as soon as practical after the fact.</p> <p>Without a considerable breach of acceptable behaviour, a student cannot be excluded from the school unless they have been firstly suspended.</p> <p>We also believe in finding innovative and flexible ways of assisting our students to make any appropriate changes in their behaviour or attitude. Some other possible strategies that could be beneficial include a 'Commitment Challenge' or community services on our grounds, change in timetable, exclusion from certain classes or activities, a mutual respect contract, mediation, etc.</p>
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Complaints Policy

Section of Manual:	8A. Management & Operation - General		
Document	POLICY 8A.6 Complaints or Grievances received by the school	POL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROC <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of Endorsement:	30.11.08	Review Date:	30.06.18
Review Panel	The Manager - Skillset Education, Principal, and Manager HR must be a part of the review of this Policy		
Purpose:	To ensure Skillset Senior College staff understand different categories and types of complaints and the key actions and reporting related to the policy		
Scope:	This policy relates to all Skillset Senior College staff, students and external stakeholders		
Policy	<p>Skillset Senior College views complaints, as well as compliments and other constructive feedback, as a way of creating opportunities for the school to improve its services and prevent future problems.</p> <p>There are various levels at which complaints can be received or made and these may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of Children and Young people • Anti-Discrimination • Other Alleged breach of Legislation, Policy, Procedure or Contract • Other Suggestions and Complaints <p>Skillset Senior College has implemented specific policies in regards to the first 2 categories listed above and these policies and procedures and listed delegates should be followed accordingly. For other matters of complaint or grievance other associated policies should be consulted (e.g. OH&S policy, Harassment Policy) and then this policy shall act as a generic cover for all complaints or grievances not already addressed.</p> <p>A suggestion or complaint can be lodged by any person who is a user or potential user of Skillset Senior College services including a student, a parent or caregiver, or other community member. The suggestion or complaint can be about any aspect of the service provided or not provided, the behaviour or decisions of current students and staff, or about workplace practices, policies or procedures.</p> <p>In the initial form, complaints should be forwarded to the Manager - Skillset Education. If the complaint is in regards to the Manager - Skillset Education, the Principal will receive the complaint. For complaints regarding the Principal, the complainant will be referred to the Chair of the SSC School Council.</p> <p>Except if the matter is serious and warrants investigation, attempts should be made to resolve the problem at the earliest possible opportunity.</p> <p>The receiver of the complaint should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allow the party to state the cause of their concern 		

- exchange facts and beliefs
- clarify events
- listen
- apologise for any behaviour that may have distressed the other party
- consider all points of view in the matter

A suggestion, complaint or allegation can be made orally or in writing. If oral, it may need to be put in writing and assistance will be provided if needed. It is preferable but not essential that it includes the complainant's name and signature.

After the complaint has been received, the Principal will then decide between options:

1. Dismiss the complaint as the matter refers to a decision in accordance with existing policy, procedure, legislation or monitored best practice
2. Conclude that the complaint has been substantially resolved through the discussions regarding the complaint
3. Undertake a systems improvement
4. Negotiation
5. Investigation

After the resolution of the complaint, the Principal should contact the complainant in writing to notify them of the outcome.

The outcome of the complaint should also be recorded. In the case of minor complaints (noise, mess, etc.) this recording can be as a diary note in the Manager - Skillset Education's diary. In regards to anything that requires Negotiation or Investigation, confidential files should be kept on the matter and stored with either the Manager or the Principal.

False and Malicious Complaints or Allegations

Where a complaint or allegation is found to be false and there is evidence of malicious intent on the part of the complainant, then remedies are possible.

Note that establishing that a complaint is false is not the same as establishing that the complaint cannot be substantiated. The former implies there is evidence to show the allegation is false. The latter implies a lack of evidence either way.

Where a Skillset Senior College employee makes a complaint or allegation that is both false and malicious, disciplinary action will be considered, especially where there is evidence that they knew the complaint or allegation to be false or where they continue to make the complaint or allegation after being instructed to cease.

	<p>However, the making of protected disclosures (<i>Protection of Children and Young People</i>) cannot be grounds for defamation. Where the complaint or allegation is made in good faith and through the proper channels, employees who complain and those investigating a complaint have a defense against defamation action.</p> <p>Where a student makes a complaint or allegation that is both false and malicious, action may be taken under the relevant student discipline policy. Use of discipline procedures should only occur where there is evidence that the student knew the complaint or allegation was false.</p> <p>Where a parent or other member of the public makes a complaint or allegation that is false and malicious, civil remedies such as defamation action may be suggested to the person who is the subject of the complaint or allegation.</p>
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Student Welfare (Summary of Main Welfare Policies)

Section of Manual:	5B. Safe & Supportive Environment - Student Welfare		
Document	POLICY 5B.1: Notification of Concern for Student Welfare	POL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROC <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of Endorsement:	30.11.08	Review Date:	20.05.16
Review Panel	The Manager - Skillset Education, Principal, and Manager HR must be a part of the review of this Policy		
Purpose:	To ensure understanding of how to raise concern for student welfare matters		
Scope:	This policy relates to all Skillset Senior College staff		
Policy	<p>Should a staff member have concerns regarding the welfare of a student they are required to raise this issue as soon as possible with the Manager - Skillset Education or the Principal. If the situation is deemed critical the Manager - Skillset Education or Principal will inform the other staff members.</p> <p>Unless deemed urgent the issue will be raised at the weekly staff meeting for input from other teaching staff.</p> <p>If considered urgent, the Manager - Skillset Education will remove the student in question and address the issue immediately.</p> <p>A decision regarding action may be discussed with staff and will be finalised by the Manager - Skillset Education.</p>		
Supporting Documentation	Can be found at http://sdm.community.nsw.gov.au/mrg/screen/DoCS/en-GB/summary?user=guest		

Section of Manual:	5B. Safe & Supportive Environment - Student Welfare		
Document	POLICY 5B.2: Referral to Support Services	POL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROC <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of Endorsement:	30.11.08	Review Date:	20.05.16

Review Panel	The Manager - Skillset Education, Principal, and Manager HR must be a part of the review of this Policy
Purpose:	To ensure all Skillset Senior College staff understand the approach to support service referral
Scope:	This policy relates to all Skillset Senior College staff
Policy	<p>Every student has the option for self-referral to Support Services.</p> <p>A teacher can refer a student to support if they feel the student has an issue that is impinging on the student's ability to learn.</p> <p>The teacher is to discuss with the Manager - Skillset Education the issue of concern at the weekly student debrief meetings. A teacher who refers a student to support has the option to notify the student of the referral or not.</p> <p>Once the referral to the Manager - Skillset Education has been made he/she will then approach the student with regard to an appointment time.</p>

Section of Manual:	5B. Safe & Supportive Environment - Student Welfare		
Document	POLICY 5B.3: Accepting Referral to Support Services	POL <input type="checkbox"/>	PROC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Date of Endorsement:	30.11.08	Review Date:	20.05.16
Review Panel	The Manager - Skillset Education, Principal, and Manager HR must be a part of the review of this Policy		
Purpose:	To ensure Skillset Senior College staff understand issues around student referral to support services		
Scope:	This policy relates to all Skillset Senior College staff and students		
Policy	<p>Initially, the Manager - Skillset Education will make an appointment with the student from information gathered either by the Manager - Skillset Education or provided to the Manager - Skillset Education by other Skillset Senior College staff. In this initial appointment the Manager - Skillset Education and the student will discuss the reason why Skillset Senior College is recommending a referral to support services. The Manager - Skillset Education will discuss options for the referral and if the issue requires further exploration before a referral is recommended.</p> <p>The student reserves the right to refuse the offer of further support.</p> <p>Should the student and/or Manager - Skillset Education consider the issue to be greater than educationally effective then a referral will be made to the student's local area Adolescent and Family Counsellor.</p>		

School-Determined Improvement Targets

2017 was our third year of operation as a NSW Independent Special Assistance School. In 2017 Skillset planned to engage with ACER in 2018 to develop a comprehensive School Improvement Plan. The plan follows the nine interrelated domains of the comprehensive framework:

1. An explicit improvement agenda
2. Analysis and discussion of data
3. A culture that promotes learning
4. Targeted use of school resources
5. An expert teaching team
6. Systematic curriculum delivery
7. Differentiated teaching and learning
8. Effective pedagogical practices
9. School-community partnerships

In addition to benchmarking against this national framework, Skillset Senior College set local target areas for improvement at the end of our third year.

The table below describes each domain, the targets that were identified during 2016, and the ways in which we undertook to meet these targets during the 2017 school year, in some cases continuing into 2018.

Improvement Domain	Targeted Improvement (identified in 2016)	Improvements in 2017
Improve support for low literacy / numeracy students	Identify literacy and numeracy needs, and support these with individual approaches	Learning Support Teacher in consultation with students, parents and teachers commenced development of Individual Education Plans for students with identified numeracy and literacy deficits. Additional Learning Support staff hired to support students.
Academic Assessment	As above to complete assessments on all students	Assessment of literacy/numeracy capability of identified students by Learning Support Teacher.
Development of Individual Plans	Deliver training to selected teachers to carry out development of IPs for all students to guide critical actions and high impact support interventions	Individual Education Plans now part of the intake process and being developed for all through into 2018
Professional Development for teachers	Enhance PD opportunities for all staff, with support to attend conference.	Individual staff attended PD of their choice throughout school year – all staff attended annual conference. Staff given opportunities to deliver PD to the team (successful pilot of skills and knowledge sharing PD day).
Increase community awareness and support	Development of website and social media presence. School council restructure to ensure representative and	Social media presence established and successfully monitored, engaging members of the community. Website improvements to make site more accessible and navigable.

	actively engaged members with a commitment to maximising the potential of the school.	School council underwent restructure in response to organisational changes; new representatives engaged into the school council.
Improve physical facilities	Allocation and use of funding from AIS BGA, applied for in 2016, to improve student and teacher facilities and prepare to accommodate Y12 class	Grant from AIS BGA for approximately \$172,000 awarded, (\$32,000 Skillset contribution); completion of improvements to the school premises to create additional learning areas including kitchen facility, additional classroom, computer lab equipped with desktop computers and improved office space for staff.
Develop a School Master Plan	Master plan under development since 2016.	School Master Plan finalised for 2017. Exterior/outdoor facilities the focus in 2017, with continued improvements to school governance and structure. Process completed to allow school to become a separate legal entity beginning 2018.
Improve digital engagement	Review teaching practice and its engagement with technology in the classroom – investigate use of Google Classroom and other online platforms of student engagement	Improved use of existing digital technologies with new laptops provided for 2017. iPads to be delivered and engaged in classroom use in early 2018. Google Classroom the selected platform for online learning support, also commencing implementation in early 2018.
School Student leadership	Year 12 cohort starting in 2017, review policy and determine approach.	Senior Leadership Team engaged in active leadership roles in 2017, with opportunities to display initiative, and develop leader qualities.
Curriculum	Evaluation and review of subject offerings, tertiary entry pathways.	Ancient History replaced with Agriculture to enhance vocational learning opportunities for our students. Operation of school farm in alignment with 'Animals in Schools' safety and welfare guidelines, providing significant opportunities for students to develop practical skills and demonstrate initiative and responsibility. Planning for 2018, including subject changes to new Science, Computing and English courses better suited to our cohort. ATAR pathway to be reviewed.
Governance effectiveness	Full review and wider consultation with all stakeholders including students, council members	Update and reconfiguration of governance processes underway through the year, new structure in place at the end of 2017.
Policy	Full review and wider consultation with all stakeholders including students	Policy reviews tabled for attention following separation of school as a separate entity for governance purposes. Ongoing consultation occurring on policies including discipline, enrolment and complaints processes.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Skillset Senior College raises these concepts in a number of ways and through a range of forums. In our inaugural year we developed A2 posters and display these throughout the school common areas, they state the following:

RESPECT

RESILIENCE

RESPONSIBILITY

- We are committed to a learning environment where all are treated with respect
- We believe everyone has potential for change and growth if they are willing to seek and accept guidance
- We work together to win together; we support ourselves and each other through positive communication and action
- We accept responsibility for our choices and actions
- We understand our part in the consequences our choices bring
- We choose to be here, to learn, to contribute and grow
- We are the change we want to see in our world

In 2017, we implemented small group pastoral care structures with teachers actively providing pastoral care, and utilising a system of escalation and referral for significant challenges to allow the most efficient use of our resources. This is especially pertinent given the social disadvantage profile and significant mental health complexities for our student population.

Each term the school staff worked with students to focus on a different area for improvement in the domains of environmental responsibility, social skills and workforce readiness, promoting the development of a responsible and socially cohesive attitude among the students. Targeted areas included looking after the school buildings and facilities, appropriate social behaviour and language for a corporate or public space, and mobile phone technology use and self-management. These initiatives generated positivity and enhanced interpersonal relationships among the student body and in staff-student interactions.



A culture of inclusiveness, celebrating individual achievements and respect for all has seen our students thrive and grow on their personal journeys.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The feedback we receive about the school is largely gathered from interviews with students and parents. Potential avenues for feedback that may include surveys, reflection tools, IEP consultations and professional development for staff, emphasising communication and personal safety.

Parent/carer feedback about the school has been overwhelmingly positive. Only one formal complaint was logged during the 2017 school year, and this complaint was thoroughly addressed by interview and communication to the satisfaction of all involved. Feedback from parents has tended to praise the wellbeing focus and individualised care that the school provides. Following is a quote from a parent of one student, received via email:

"I just wanted to let you know Skillset College is worth its weight in gold. The support you offer professionally and personally is absolutely outstanding."

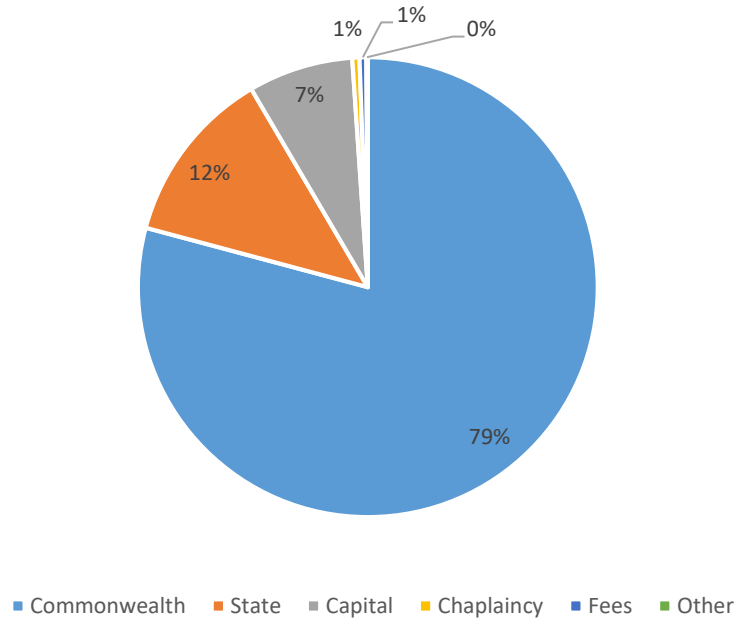
Student feedback has been obtained informally, through interviews, and also through structures embedded in the curriculum, designed to encourage students to evaluate and communicate their school experience. Written feedback and student experiences of the school obtained through learning activities are used (with full student permission) in promotional and information materials for the school, including the school information booklet (a download of this is available on the school website at <http://skillsetseniorcollege.nsw.edu.au/enrolments/>).

Staff were surveyed anonymously about their satisfaction with the school, their working environment and work conditions. The results of this survey indicate a high level of staff satisfaction with Skillset senior College:

- Over 90% of staff gave the school the highest rating for areas of communication, feeling valued, staff/parent relations, inspiration, staff morale, complaint management and opportunity for professional development
- 100% of staff surveyed indicated that they felt that the school cared about them as a person
- Over 90% of staff surveyed indicated that they found the principal highly approachable
- 88% of staff gave the school a score in the top two rating brackets for 'progressive teaching methods'.

Financial Information

Income Sources



Expenses

