

skillset. senior college

Annual Report 2019



School... but not as you know it

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Messages from Key School Bodies

Message from the Chair of the Board

Each year we have the opportunity to reflect on the achievements of our staff, students and communities through our Annual Report. It has been my privilege to be the Chairman of our College Board from the start and into our sixth year of operation, overseeing the exciting developments that are occurring on both campuses, and sharing in the role of leading our Board through the challenges of establishing an outstanding environment in which each student can be valued, respected and cared for whilst also realising their individual potential.

We have achieved recognition by others in the Independent Schools movement as a lighthouse College, and are enhancing this reputation through measured research into what we are achieving and what works well. I have no doubt that the results of this research will have far-reaching impacts on how education will be provided well into the future. In order to have the success we are having, we operate in an environment of partnerships with many other groups in our communities, and we thank them all for supporting our College with enriching experiences often taking place off site.

As our campuses offer a diverse curriculum we continue to develop facilities in which this can occur, as well as employing a team of teaching and support staff who believe strongly in our principles and contribute above and beyond the call in everything they do. The Board truly appreciates this commitment and seeks to continue to support appropriate infrastructure and improvements in Bathurst and Dubbo. The next 12 months will see us realise an expanded Board to more fully represent our communities, as well as increased facilities being put in place to accommodate our increased enrolments.

Skillset Senior College embodies the vision of our parent group, Skillset Ltd: 'to create life-changing opportunities for people and communities in regional New South Wales'. We will sustain ourselves with the belief that what we are providing is essential for the wellbeing, emotional and skills growth of individuals who will take their place and contribute to our communities into the future.

I commend this report to you to read and share with us the celebrations of success highlighted in the following pages, and thank you for allowing me to be a part of this achievement.



Ian Tooke
BEd.; Dip.Teach.; Grad.Dip. (Computing Science); Cert IV TAE
Chair, Skillset Senior College Board

Message from the Head of College

It is a pleasure to present my first Annual Report as Head of College for Skillset Senior College (SSC). In 2019, CEO of Skillset Ltd, Craig Randazzo, stepped down as Principal and concentrated solely on his role as CEO of Skillset Ltd. While Skillset Senior College operates as its own independent legal entity, it remains connected to the broader Skillset family.

2019 marked the exciting opening of our Dubbo campus and the establishment of our inaugural Dubbo Year 10 cohort of students. The need for an alternative school setting was identified in the Dubbo community; in January 2019 we were able to deliver on that dream. Libby Wilson headed up the Dubbo campus as Campus Coordinator, and together we recruited a high performing team of teaching and support staff in time to open our doors for Term 1. The campus is based on the old Dubbo TAFE site (corner of Fitzroy and Bultje Streets).

Skillset Senior College Dubbo opened its doors with a traditional Welcome to Country from Aunty Margaret Walker. Twenty four students were in attendance on the first day, with enrolments growing to 37 throughout the year. Some of the highlights of 2019 Dubbo Campus included excursions to the Parkes radio telescope, the Botanical Gardens, and Wellington Caves.

We thank our community partners in Dubbo for their support over the year; these include Apollo House, Headspace, CAMHS, Uniting, Mission Australia and NSW Police. The highlight of our year was the graduation of 24 students who attained their RoSA. This was celebrated with a formal evening where students were presented with a certificate by our local state member Dugald Saunders. By 2021, the Dubbo Campus will offer Years 10, 11 and 12.

In 2019 our Bathurst Campus graduated their third and largest cohort of HSC students. Our 2019 team of Year 12s were the most connected and cohesive group of students to graduate thus far. This encouraged us to develop what we fondly refer to as our 'Year 13', as the students did not wish to leave the SSC family. They remained connected to the school, returning to site each day after their HSC, and we have had numerous planned catch ups and mentoring opportunities since that time. They have represented the school at community events and remained thoughtful and inspirational role models to our junior students. It is exciting to note that 35 percent of the cohort went on to further study or training.

At both campuses we celebrated student and staff birthdays, National Tree Day, Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week, Harmony Day and Book Week. The SSC team are inspirational in their approach and their dedication to the student body. The team continually look for opportunities to expand horizons, to dream big and to implement strategies to fulfil those dreams. The Skillset Senior College vision of "Best Future Imaginable" lives and breathes in our school. Staff stand shoulder to shoulder and it is the alchemy of their skills, shared values and great wisdom that sets the school apart from any other.

This year saw the development and roll-out of our revised organisational structure with specific resourcing deployed across the high impact domains of wellbeing, learning support and teaching. The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award program and the recently established Skillset Senior College Research Institute have been at the forefront of our program delivery for 2019. We have also achieved our goal of developing individual education plans for every student, where parents and carers, external agencies, occupational therapists and key providers have collaborated to plan for the best possible holistic approach.

Our teaching, administration and learning and support staff grew to a total of 30 individuals, who all bring a diverse range of work and life experiences to the school. Our students benefit greatly from teachers who have a range of backgrounds including working with teachers and other staff who have life and vocational experiences additional to their teaching careers. All our teachers are university qualified with either proficient or provisional status, but also boast rich vocational and experiential backgrounds including:

- A practising registered clinical counsellor, specialising in adolescent therapies
- A Major in the Australian Army Reserves, and a former senior federal police officer
- A qualified practicing midwife
- A former legal-aid lawyer, outdoor activities specialist and Duke of Edinburgh program coordinator
- A PhD qualified university research scientist
- 2 primary school trained teachers
- A highly acclaimed, award winning performance artist
- A former geologist with Antarctic mission experience
- A qualified fine arts graduate and practicing visual artist
- A fluent Mandarin language speaker and Asian culture enthusiast

Our students benefit greatly from the collected wisdom and combined experiences of our team of professionals.

In terms of capital improvements this year, the school has made great use of the sports multi-court, where we offer handball, basketball, netball and tennis options. We have before- and after-school sporting activities at both campuses, the highlight being the SSC Touch Football team who contribute to the local Monday night competition.

The Agriculture offerings continue to grow with students further developing their skills by stewarding at local agricultural shows and events. Watching students' skills development through the care and maintenance of our animals and facilities provides us all with a great sense of confidence and motivation, and in turn establishes in the students great learning from developing routines, work habits and vocational preparation skills that will serve them well in their next work or study endeavours.

I would like to acknowledge the Skillset Senior College Board for their continuing support and the Chair of the School Board, Mr Ian Tooke for his ongoing contributions and support during 2019. 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, and particularly thank Mark Whitfeld, Deputy Head of College for his management and development of the Dubbo site, and the leadership he offers to the whole school community. We look forward to the coming year with hope, optimism and high expectations as we expand our model of life-changing education with a full well-being focus.



Abbey Barrett

BA (Psych), University of Sydney; Grad.Dip.Couns.; PACFA Reg. (Clinical) ACAP
Head of College, Skillset Senior College

Contextual information about Skillset and Skillset Senior College



Rachael Brawley – Randazzo Award Recipient 2019 with Founding Principal Craig Randazzo, now Chair of the College Board.

Skillset Senior College offers young people of the Central West NSW region a holistic and supportive approach to high school education, in an alternative learning environment with a full wellbeing focus.

The school is an independent, coeducational senior secondary school, registered and accredited with NESA, and a member of the Association of Independent Schools NSW.

We promote a flexible learning environment where we work with students to accommodate their individual psychological, physical, emotional and cultural needs. We highlight and celebrate students' individual differences, and are proud we support an environment where there is no "normal" and no "average".

We offer students understanding and the resourcing to genuinely provide an individual approach to each student, understanding that not all young people succeed with a conventional approach to learning, and that historical barriers to education may have entrenched a reluctance to attend or participate fully in school.

Skillset Senior College:

- is a regionally based Special Assistance School
- has an enrolment capacity of approximately 110 students (in 2019)
- enrolls students in Years 10 to 12
- aims to reengage disadvantaged young people with a love of learning
- features small class sizes, and at least two staff in each classroom
- has a large Indigenous cohort with around 30% identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- has a significant proportion of students who have one or more disabilities
- has close links with community partners including youth services, housing providers and public mental health agencies
- caters for young people for whom school-refusal and mental health challenges have been major problems

The story of Skillset Senior College

The first campus of Skillset Senior College opened in Bathurst NSW in 2015, and was originally formed as a sub-unit of Skillset Ltd, in response to the recognised need for an alternative secondary education option for students in the Central West of NSW. The campus is still located in the Flannery Centre, an architecturally designed, six-star environmentally rated building that also hosts the Bathurst Skillset offices and corporate head office for Skillset Ltd.

The school graduated its first HSC (Year 12) cohort in 2017. In January 2018, Skillset Senior College became a separate legal entity from parent organization Skillset Ltd., establishing its own ABN, accounts and governance arrangements to improve the effectiveness of the operation of the school. Around the same time, Skillset Senior College underwent the NESA re-registration process, and was awarded NESA accreditation and registration through to 2023.

Skillset Senior College opened a second campus in Dubbo NSW in 2019, with the first HSC cohort of this campus expected to complete in 2021. The two campuses operate under the same leadership and governance structure, sharing the same fundamental approach to education and student wellbeing, while tailoring the school experience to meet the unique needs of their student populations.

Skillset Senior College - Vision, Purpose and Values

Skillset Senior College strives to reengage young people into school participation leaving them with a positive and optimistic view of school life. We provide a small and friendly learning environment with the most passionate and effective teaching staff and practices that creates an environment where young people thrive. The school particularly succeeds with young people challenged by a history of poor school attendance and experiences, and also with those who have yet to find positive solutions for persistent mental health challenges.

Vision and Purpose

Our vision is for the “best future imaginable” for our students, staff and community. We understand that for many, gaining education is a significant element of forging a pathway to that future, and our hope is that we can support our students to develop, strive towards and attain their personal goals as they self-determine their own “best future”.

Our purpose is to promote “engagement through relationship.” We provide a safe, connected and supportive learning environment, with a focus on wellbeing and a ‘whole-person’ approach to working with young people and their families/carers. At Skillset Senior College, students re-engage in education, develop the desire to learn and the skills to succeed at school, at work and in life.

Values: Kindness, Courage, Consideration

- We support ourselves and each other through positive communication, encouragement and kindness
- We promote courage by celebrating positive risk-taking, healthy vulnerability, and taking responsibility for our own learning and growth
- We create a learning environment where all students and staff are treated with consideration and respect
- We are ‘student-centred’ – using an individualised approach to creating the conditions for students to thrive
- We are ‘strengths-based’ – building on students’ skills, abilities and talents in helping them to achieve personally and academically
- We are ‘solution-focused’ - choosing to find a way forward in overcoming challenges and putting our energy into innovative approaches

About Skillset Ltd.

Skillset Ltd. 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 service offerings. We have structured our organisation 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. 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.

Registration details of Skillset Senior College Ltd.

First Accredited by NESA:	September 2014
Opened in:	January 2015
Re-registered:	February 2018 (Stage 5&6) for 5 years
NESA School Number:	78096
Dubbo Campus Site Certification:	December 2018

Student Outcomes

Year 10 Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

In 2019, 30 students from the Bathurst Campus, and 24 students from the Dubbo Campus completed the requirements of Year 10 and received a RoSA. The majority of students benefited from significant adjustment in learning delivery, assessment modification and tailored learning support, with a smaller proportion of students requiring substantial adjustments to meet requirements.

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>	54	86213		20.37	38.89	29.63	11.11		12.13	27.96	37.30	16.14	5.59	0.89
<u>Mathematics 200 hours (323)</u>	54	86388			20.37	59.26	20.37		14.81	23.12	31.63	22.84	6.76	0.83
<u>Science 200 hours (350)</u>	54	86261		5.56	25.93	50.00	18.52		12.76	24.80	36.43	18.88	6.30	0.84
<u>Australian Geography 100 hours (4015)</u>	54	86165		7.41	46.30	40.74	5.56		14.35	27.29	35.56	15.95	6.15	0.70
<u>History 100 hours (4007)</u>	54	86185		5.56	48.15	44.44	1.85		14.10	27.27	35.22	16.35	6.35	0.71
<u>PDHPE 100 hours (2421)</u>	54	21471		9.26	42.59	48.15			15.68	35.82	35.16	9.92	2.95	0.47

Senior Secondary Outcomes

Preliminary Course (Year 11) Results

The 2019 Year 11 cohort (Bathurst Campus only) had access to the following on-campus subjects: English Standard, Mathematics Standard, Investigating Science, Agriculture, Computing Applications and Community and Family Studies. These subjects were offered to allow students to qualify for an ATAR in 2020, but also to appeal to a wide range of interests and abilities. A small number of students completed alternative, individual subjects through concurrent enrolment with Dubbo School of Distance Education, or through the T-VET programme at TAFE NSW.

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>	20	33134		30.00	50.00	20.00			3.58	23.83	48.15	18.70	5.04	0.70

<u>Mathematics Standard 2 unit (11236)</u>	19	39873			89.47		10.53		7.15	21.52	36.84	23.81	9.81	0.87
<u>Investigating Science 2 unit (11215)</u>	20	3418		15.00	55.00	30.00			8.46	23.26	38.44	21.80	7.14	0.91
<u>Agriculture 2 unit (11010)</u>	19	2139		36.84	26.32	26.32			17.58	25.99	31.32	16.36	7.81	0.94
<u>Computing Applications (35021)</u>	18	-			72.22	27.77			15.85	30.39	34.72	12.33	6.16	
<u>Community and Family Studies 2 unit (11060)</u>	20	11773			65.00	35.00			9.48	25.94	37.37	18.93	7.13	1.16

HSC Results

The 2019 Year 12 cohort (HSC Course) subject offerings were English (Standard), English Studies, Mathematics (General), Investigating Science, Agriculture, Community and Family Studies, and Information Processes and Technology.

The English Studies course was introduced as an alternative compulsory English course to better suit the literacy levels and abilities of some students in the cohort.

Name	Course	Students Included	Students Omitted	E.M. Mean	E.M. S.D.	State E.M. Mean	State E.M. S.D.	School/State Variation	Z-score
Agriculture 2 unit	15010	19		50.28	13.03	71.91	13.64	-21.63	-1.59
Community and Family Studies 2 unit	15060	19	1	53.97	12.34	74.03	11.26	-20.06	-1.78
English Standard 2 unit	15130	9		59.36	4.65	69.16	9.23	-9.80	-1.06
Investigating Science 2 unit	15215	20		53.17	13.48	68.71	14.01	-15.54	-1.11
Mathematics Standard 1 Examination 2 uni	15232	20		66.76	11.34	69.84	11.79	-3.08	-.26

Course	Name	Included Students	Omitted Students	Band 6	Band 5	Band 4	Band 3	Band 2	Band 1
15010	Agriculture	19	2				5	7	7
15060	Community and Family Studies	19	5			1	6	6	6
15130	English Standard	9					5	4	

Course	Name	Included Students	Omitted Students	Band 6	Band 5	Band 4	Band 3	Band 2	Band 1
15215	Investigating Science	20	2			1	6	7	6
15232	Mathematics Standard 1 Examination	20		1	1	5	10	2	1
	Band Total			1	1	7	32	26	20

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	12
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 (ISTAA 'Experienced') Accreditation	2
Proficient Teacher Accreditation	4
Provisional Accreditation	2
Pre-2004 Teacher accredited at Proficient level	2
Conditional Accreditation	1
Not accredited with TAA	1

Professional Development and Formal Training

In 2019, teaching staff attended the following training events:

Training Event	Number of Staff Attended
Alternative Schools Conference (YOTS) 2019	13
Step by Step Interventions – Managing Challenging Behaviours	2
AI NSW School Based Research Project PD Day	4
ACER Annual Research Symposium – 21 st Century Schools	2
Occupational Therapy in Schools: Paediatric Interest Group	2
Natural Surface Canyoning Qualification	1
Positive Difference Positive Psychology Course	3
AIS School Improvement Plan PD	2
Valuing Educator Experience	1
Internal Professional Development Days x 5	All staff

Workforce and Student Profile

Workforce Composition

By 01 Dec 2019, Skillset Senior College employed:

- 1 x Head of College (1.0FTE)
- 1 x Deputy Head of College (1.0FTE)
- 2 x Campus Co-ordinators (1.9FTE)
- 11 x Teachers (10.6FTE)
- 2 x General Assistant/Learning Support (2.0FTE)
- 6 x Learning Support Assistants (5.2FTE)
- 2 x College Liaison Officers (2.0FTE)
- 1 x Reception/Admin Assistant (0.8FTE)
- 1 x Business Manager (0.8FTE)

Total School Staff = 27 (25.3FTE)

Administration support is also provided to Skillset Senior College on a contractual basis by Skillset Ltd in areas of marketing, ICT support, finance, payroll and human resources. Casual teaching and learning support staff were also engaged on a needs-basis to cover sick leave and support operations.

Workforce Qualifications

Staff member	Qualifications
Head of College	BA (Psych), University of Sydney; Grad.Dip.Couns.; PACFA Reg. (Clinical) ACAP
Teaching Staff	Bachelor of Information Technology (2002) CSU; Grad Dip Education (secondary) CSU; Cert III/IV in Training and Assessment SWSI TAFE
	Bachelor of Teaching (Primary) 2006, CSU, Bachelor of Psychology 2006, CSU
	Bachelor Applied Science (Agriculture) 1987, Hawkesbury Ag College, Dip. Ed, 1987, Sydney Teachers College, Certificate of Policing CSU 1996, Cert IV Project Management UNE 2003, Masters of Educational Leadership University of Canberra 2003, Grad. Dip of Psychology (Charles Darwin University) 2010.
	Bachelor of Education 2016, CSU.
	Bachelor of Education (Primary, Inclusive Education) 2008, CSU.
	Bachelor of Science (Macquarie) 2003; Post Graduate Diploma of Education; (CSU) 2008; Bachelor of Midwifery (WSU) 2017
	Bachelor of Applied Science (Natural Resource Management) 2010 (SCU); Bachelor of Laws 2010 (SCU); Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice (CL) 2010; Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary) 2013 (SCU); Statement of Attainment in Trip Planning and Bushwalking 2016 (TAFE Western)
	Bachelor of Science (University of Glasgow) 2012; Doctor of Philosophy (University of Glasgow) 2017.
	Bachelor of Art Education (UNSW) 2003

	Bachelor of Exercise Science (Rehab), CSU , 2011, Masters of Teaching (Primary), University of New England, 2016, Certificate IV Training and Assessment, 2019. Certificate IV Agriculture and Horticulture, 2018.
	Bachelor of Teaching (English) Bachelor of Psychology (Social)
	Bachelor of Secondary Education, Bachelor Visual Arts (Southern Cross University) (2004)
	Bachelor of Early Childhood/Primary Teaching Certificate III Outdoor Education



SSC Staff from left: Linda Fenlon (Reception / Admin), Jono Hosking (Teaching), Ben Palmer (Teaching), Helen Conroy (Learning Support), Jackie Lindsay (Teaching) , Angela Masters (Learning Support), Sarah Bradbury (College Liaison), Jaye Shean (Student Support), Libby Wilson (Dubbo Campus Coordinator), Alison Cope (College Liaison), Chris Harris (Teaching), Reg Rudd (Learning Support), Damien Wilesmith (Teaching), Lisette Dale (Teaching), Abbey Barrett (Head of College), Martin Hughes (Teaching), Craig Randazzo (Founding Principal), Bill Tink (Teaching).

Student Profile, Attendance and Retention

Student Profile

In our fifth year of operation, Skillset Senior College commenced 2019 with 100 enrolments across two campuses, and Years 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. At the time of the 2019 census, 30% of Bathurst students and 42% of Dubbo students identify as Indigenous. Around 75% of students had an identified disability meeting the criteria for NCCD funding.

Many students face serious barriers to attendance at – and full participation in – school. These barriers include (but are not limited to):

- mental health issues
- homelessness
- trauma and conflict
- substance misuse
- disability
- socioeconomic disadvantage
- family instability

Attendance

Year	Non-Indigenous Attendance		Indigenous Attendance		Total Attendance	
	Bathurst	Dubbo	Bathurst	Dubbo	Bathurst	Dubbo
10	82%	73%	71%	43%	78%	63%
11	75%		72%		74%	
12	83%		87%		84%	

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 has also invested in school management software that sends daily text messages to parents and carers updating them in real-time on their young person's attendance status.

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
- Individual education 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

2019 Year 10	Commenced	Additional	Withdrew	Completed	Articulated	Other
Bathurst	30	6	6	30 (83%)	24 (80%)	6
Dubbo	24	10	10	24 (70%)	21 (88%)	3
Total	54	16	16	54 (77%)	45 (83%)	9

2019 Year 11	Commenced	Additional	Withdrew	Completed	Articulated	Other
Bathurst	23	-	6	17 (74%)	17 (100%)	-

2019 Year 12	Commenced	Additional	Withdrew	Completed
Bathurst	23	-	3	20 (87%)

All eligible students who did not choose to articulate into the next school year were offered enrolment with the Skillset 'Youth Connect' program, designed to assist young people aged 15-19 into work, training or further study. A number of students accepted intake to the program, while two students enrolled at a secondary school elsewhere.

In addition to these figures, a number of the students who withdrew from Year 10 and 12 re-enrolled with us in 2020 to make another attempt at completion.

Post School Destination Survey

Year 10: 45 students (83%) of our cohort articulated into Year 11. Of the remaining 9 students, 1 re-enrolled in Year 10 to repeat, 2 students went to TAFE.

Year 11: 17 of the original 23 students (74%) remained enrolled and articulated into Year 12 (beginning of Term 4) at Skillset Senior College. Other students withdrew enrolment during Year 11 for various reasons including entering the workforce, transitioning to TAFE or moving from the area.

Year 12: 20 students graduated with the HSC. Of the graduates, four students (20%) were accepted into university, three (15%) enrolled at TAFE or in further training, seven students (35%) engaged in paid employment (full- or part-time, or approved volunteer activities) with the remainder of students' employment status unknown.

School Policies (Summary)

The policy documents below are excerpts from the Skillset Senior College Policy Manual. The policies below were updated and adopted in February 2019.

Enrolment

See policy documents online at <http://skillsetseniorcollege.nsw.edu.au/enrolment-policies>

Anti-Bullying Policy

See policy documents online at <http://skillsetseniorcollege.nsw.edu.au/antibullying-policies>

Discipline Policy

See policy documents online at <http://skillsetseniorcollege.nsw.edu.au/discipline-policies>

Complaints Policy

See policy documents online at <http://skillsetseniorcollege.nsw.edu.au/complaints-policies-and-procedures>

Student Welfare (Summary of Main Welfare Policies)

See policy documents online at <http://skillsetseniorcollege.nsw.edu.au/student-welfare-policies>

School-Determined Improvement Targets

2019 was our fifth year of operation as a NSW Independent Special Assistance School. In 2019, representatives from the College attended the ACER Research Conference to gain insight into the latest research findings leading to quality educational outcomes. Skillset Senior College acknowledges the ACER approach to school improvement:

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, the Skillset Senior College Leadership developed a School Master Plan to identify the forward direction of the College. The Master Plan outlines the following objectives for the College:

- ▶ To attract and maintain a functional student body in order to secure a viable organisation, positioned to create the best future imaginable for its community.
- ▶ To attract, maintain, develop and invest in high quality staff, in order to support the learning, welfare and administration of the college community to the highest industry standard.
- ▶ To develop and maintain appropriate Infrastructure and systems, in order to maximise potential to create a positive learning and work environment for the SSC community.
- ▶ To develop, promote and maintain relevant best practice in the delivery of learning, wellbeing and administration, in order to maximise the human experience for the SSC community and ensure the sustainable viability of the organisation.
- ▶ To build and maintain a credible reputation as a first class learning and development organisation in order to maximise support and opportunities for SSC students and staff throughout their journey at the college and beyond.

As part of the plan, the following options for consideration have been incorporated for further discussion and consideration:

- Proactive roll-out of the SSC ethos and format beyond the Central West
- Responding to community need – opening further SSC campuses
- Leadership stream – providing professional development training to schools who may choose to refine how they operate
- Expansion of the SSC Research Institute
- Appetite for SSC becoming a Registered Training Organisation

Skillset Senior College set local target areas for improvement at the end of 2018. The table below describes each domain, and the ways in which we undertook to meet these targets during the 2019 school year, in some cases continuing into 2020.

The table below outlines these improvement domains:

Improvement Domain	Targeted Improvement	Improvements in 2019
Improve support for low literacy / numeracy students	Identify literacy and numeracy needs, and support these with individual approaches	Increased learning support staffing, intake testing for all new students to the College, with testing repeated part way through the year to track development and adjust supports. NCCD funding for students with identified literacy/numeracy difficulties targeted to improve intensive support for these students (both in-class and withdrawal settings).
Development of Individual Plans	Development of IEPs for all students to guide critical actions and high impact support interventions	Achieved target of the development of an IEP for every single student of SSC, including curriculum and wellbeing aspects. All teachers trained and supported in accessing and using the IEP to create appropriate curriculum modifications for each student, in consultation with Learning Support staff.
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 and all staff attended annual conference. In-house PD facilitated by staff, with programs to enhance our focus areas of wellbeing, curriculum and learning support. 'Lines of Effort' concept introduced to guide selection of appropriate PD activities.
Increase community awareness and support	Media, marketing and communications enhancements. School governance body consisting of representative and actively engaged members with a commitment to maximising the potential of the school.	Social media presence enhanced and increasing reach in the community. Website improvements continue to make site more accessible and navigable. Facebook marketing features utilised to enhance effectiveness of enrolment advertisements. Engagement with community partners in facilitating the Agriculture program, and representation at events including the Royal Bathurst Show and the Sydney Royal Easter Show. School council underwent restructure in response to organisational changes; with the council becoming the new Board of SSC.
Enrolment and intake procedures	Improve targeting and efficiency of enrolment process	Enrolment interview process streamlined and delegated to the College Liaison Officer(s), commenced earlier in Year to encourage

		<p>enquiries with the College. Partnerships with local schools to facilitate referral of suitable candidates.</p> <p>Both campuses achieved a full cohort of incoming students prior to the commencement of Term 1, with wait lists established as needed.</p>
Improve physical facilities	Provision of facilities to support curricular and extra-curricular activities as identified by school community as priorities.	<p>Dubbo Campus fitted out with classrooms, technology, food tech facility, art studio and staff area. Sports court facility completed and in use. Equipment purchase approved for school-run outdoor sports, supported by grant from external organisations (hiking/abseiling). Upgrade of laptop facilities for student use. Bathurst Reception area improved and upgraded.</p>
Improve student wellbeing	Development of a dedicated team of professionals to support student wellbeing, navigate complex student issues and integrate wellbeing into all aspects of curriculum.	<p>Staffing of 'Student Support Team' increased to incorporate full-time Student Support Coordinator (including Chaplain role) and College Liaison Officer. Further plans to expand with College Mentor position in 2020. Funded research project in planning for 2020 to examine effect of simple OT interventions on student wellbeing.</p>
Curriculum	Evaluation and review of subject offerings, tertiary entry pathways.	<p>Subject planning for senior students at Dubbo Campus (SLR, Food Technology). Elective option for HSC English (Bathurst) to support different literacy needs of cohort. 35% of students transitioned into tertiary study or further training. ATAR pathway to be reviewed in 2020.</p>
Governance effectiveness	Separation of legal entities	<p>Skillset Senior College now a separate legal entity to Skillset Ltd, with own Board now engaged and active. Skillset Ltd contracted to provide HR, admin, finance and logistical support to Skillset Senior College.</p>
Policy	Full review and wider consultation with all stakeholders including students	<p>All school policies reviewed and updated to better reflect the current operations of Skillset Senior College, and to enhance the effectiveness of processes.</p>

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Skillset Senior College endeavours to instil the values of respect and responsibility in a number of ways and through a range of forums. In 2019, we continued to refine and develop our wellbeing focus of 'engagement through relationship', with significant investment into initiatives that promote community connection, strong interpersonal relationships and participation in the 'family life' of the school.

One key initiative commenced in 2019 is the Duke of Edinburgh Award, which sees students participate in voluntary activities in the areas of Community Service, Skills, Physical Activity and Adventurous Journey. The program increases participants' self-efficacy, and encourages meaningful connection with the community and environment.

Additionally, students participated in a range of on- and off-campus activities designed to enhance their connections with each other and the staff. Awareness events and celebrations such as Reconciliation Week, Refugee Week and Harmony Day are complemented by regular sports afternoons, social BBQs, and xxx, as well as elements embedded into the formal curriculum (such as Workshops for art, cooking, woodwork, Agriculture field trips, PCYC visits, and learning about Indigenous and Australian history and culture).

In 2019, we continued to implement our wellbeing focus 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. The School Chaplain - supported by funding from the National School Chaplaincy Program - was active in assisting with the delivery of the pastoral care program.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

Skillset Ltd contracted local economic research firm the Western Research Institute to better understand the school's impact on students, parents and the broader community. The report was informed by both student and parent / carer surveys, and the data was formally released in 2019. The survey had a response rate of 80% of students, and 35% of parents/carers, with a total of 105 responses being received for analysis.



Skillset Senior College Indigenous students celebrate the oldest continuing culture in the world, at the 2019 CSU 'Sky Stories' Evening (one of our many school excursions included in the curriculum).

The results of this research indicate that Skillset Senior College is a resoundingly valuable entity, with a cost benefit ratio of \$6.60 (for every dollar spent by the College, approximately \$6.60 of benefit is generated).

In terms of satisfaction, 90% of respondents in Bathurst and 70% in Dubbo stated that Skillset had some positive impact on their family, with common responses including reduced stress and improved family life or happiness. Further evidence of the social impacts offered by the College environment are identified in these responses. 80% percent of respondents stated that Skillset Senior College had improved the attitude, mood, or wellbeing of their student.

The remainder of responses were overwhelmingly positive. This indicates that the Senior College environment is offering additional benefits on top of educational achievement as students progress through the College system. When respondents were asked what they liked about Skillset, the 3 most common responses from Bathurst were: it's supportive of the students (97%), small class sizes (92%) and students are treated more like adults (92%). The 3 most common responses from Dubbo were: it's supportive of the students (91%), small class sizes (82%) and the teachers (73%).

In addition to this formal assessment, Skillset Senior College conducts scheduled parent teacher conferencing, with all SSC staff present on a bi-annual basis. In a round table environment, with all teachers, parents and students as active participants in the individual feedback session, real understanding of issues affecting students and parents can be articulated, considered and responded to.

Staff appraisal interviews held in December 2019 gave staff the opportunity to reflect and communicate their satisfaction and wellbeing in the workplace. Responses shared during these interviews indicate a high level of staff satisfaction at Skillset Senior College, and a workplace that has a culture of kindness, innovation, support and collaboration.



Skillset Senior College Awards Ceremony 2019

Financial Information

