

Tasmania Tomorrow

Hobart College Response Group

RESPONSE DOCUMENT 28th Oct 2007

Endorsement for *Tasmania Tomorrow*

Hobart College supports the aims of *Tasmania Tomorrow* to:

- increase post-Year 10 retention rates
- increase the rate of student completion of a qualification by Year 12
- enhance opportunities for students aiming for higher education and a professional career
- increase skill levels and Tasmania's productivity

Specific recommendations

- an academy and polytechnic on this site
- the polytechnic to deliver AQTF courses from certificate I to IV with articulation options to universities and other tertiary institutions
- closer links with the university based on our close proximity
- increased access to courses and facilities
 - age range extended
 - flexible timetable: expanded hours and length of the training/academic year
 - more flexible public/college transport
 - provision of improved housing for 'remote' students
- enhanced options for flexible learning delivery including on-line/ remote access
- increased industry/community partnerships including courses tailored to specific employers/businesses
- strong support services/networks for students: personal counselling, course and careers counselling, health, housing, transport
- increased funding to properly maintain existing resources and improved facilities to enhance community access e.g. commercial use of the college theatre, workshops, physical and outdoor facilities

Principles

Hobart College recognises:

- the need for all students to achieve a 'qualification' post year 10 whether that qualification be academic and/or vocational
- that students should be able to select from a broad curriculum including both academic vocational options and to make changes as their needs and aspirations change (particularly in years 11 & 12)
- that it is critical for the public education system to provide opportunities for students to achieve the highest academic standards possible
- the need for a broad humanist education as well as developing employment and career skills for viable economic futures
- the need for holistic development of individual students based on their personal, intellectual, social, spiritual and economic needs supported by a comprehensive pastoral care network
- the need to educate students so that they become informed and involved citizens and are able to make wise decisions at a local and global level
- the need for all students to develop pathways and personalised learning plans
- that students need to experience opportunities to develop a wide range of skills and attitudes including thinking, problem solving, creativity, inquiry, analysis, design, innovation and discovery
- the importance of a secure and supportive environment for all students
- the importance of tolerance, empathy and diversity
- the value of education and training post year 10 and its impact on future outcomes for students
- the importance of dedicated, well prepared and well resourced teachers and support staff
- the need to support and assist students to develop confidence, resilience and self-reliance
- the importance of utilising community resources in areas such as vocational placement, enterprise, citizenship and mentoring
- the need for transparent and easily accessed re-entry points for education and training

Background/ current offerings

- Hobart College has a proud tradition of achievement and the pursuit of excellence for its students and staff in both academic, vocational and extension activities. Recent examples include:
 - over 80% of students study at least one level 5C subject
 - 10 of the state's top 100 academic results in 2006
 - the best retention rates of all colleges (VEL figures)
- the college offers an extensive curriculum catering for students from very diverse backgrounds and needs
- the college has an extensive pastoral care program as part of its supportive college environment policy including course counselling, emotional and social support and career counselling through a variety of structures e.g. class advisors, student services, counsellors, guidance officer and youth worker
- the college offers outstanding courses in:
 - English, Media, Behavioural Studies and Languages
 - Performing Arts and Visual Arts
 - Business and Studies of Society and the Environment
 - Mathematics and Science
 - Physical and Outdoor Education
 - Food & Textiles Technology, Materials Design & Technology and Information Technology
 - Vocational Education, Training and School Based New Apprenticeships and Work Education
- augmenting these courses the college is developing curriculum in response to PY10 e.g. new information technology courses
- the college has excellent physical resources in areas such as physical and outdoor education, visual and performing arts, catering, MDT, computing, science and media
- the college has developed an extensive International Student Program (e.g. China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, South Korea, Japan) and student exchange program (e.g. France, Germany, Finland, Denmark ,United States)
- the college has an ongoing student/teacher exchange program with the Kagawa Bank in Japan and is developing a similar program with Fuzhou school in China
- the college has developed an extensive and flexible delivery program at the Huon LINC focussed on students needing significant support or unable to access standard college programs because of problems with personal circumstances
- the college has well developed programs for students with high needs (including the Life Skills unit), indigenous students and rural students
- the college caters specifically for flexible delivery through its Open Learning program
- the college offers a dynamic and comprehensive extended study/ enterprise program including: the college production, annual ski trip, Australian Business Week, outdoor expeditions, the EMAPP program for very able students, ARTZ week, Little Space Gallery, student union, NAIDOC week.....
- the college is delivering information technology courses to some 30 Information Technology students at Risdon Prison and is currently preparing a state government submission to extend that program.
- the college encourages and supports the on-going professional learning and upgrading of qualifications for teachers

Some specific possibilities for Hobart College

- capacity to deliver VET at AQTF levels I to IV
- given the close proximity of the college to the university there is significant potential to develop more interchange and enhanced taster programs and short courses relating to first year university courses e.g. science and languages
- development of centres of excellence integrating academic and applied learning (VET accreditation) using enhanced facilities already on site e.g. creative arts, restaurant/café, theatre, commercial partnerships
- expansion of programs at the Huon LINC catering for students with diverse needs e.g. mature age, need for flexible delivery and support
- improved and more flexible transport/housing arrangements for students from the Huon, Channel and Esperance areas
- development of new courses and partnerships in conjunction with specific businesses or community groups e.g. Austal ship building - new MDT course tailored to industry needs
- expanded curriculum/training options at the Risdon Prison
- expansion of flexible delivery options including recognition of student achievement through part-time employment

Concerns

- a perception that low retention rates are largely a college or post-year 10 issue - specific and well funded programs are needed from early school years to develop positive attitudes about the need for life long learning and the relationship between qualifications and career options
- the potential need for students to move between campuses or sites for specialised education/training - this is potentially very damaging to retention
- failure to improve levels of funding to genuinely facilitate changes
- that initiatives and values developed in the PY10 process may be lost
- that wide age ranges may be threatening to some students/parents
- the uncertainty created by 'yet another change' and the potential 'brain drain' of students to private schools: erosion of the public school brand
- that the ability of students to select from a range of academic and vocational options and to make changes as needed may diminish with specialised institutions
- the need to successfully 'market' both institutions to prevent divisiveness or the stigma of elitism
- that a new 'delivery structure' caters appropriately and supports education and training for 16-18 year olds e.g. teaching styles, starting/finishing times and holidays
- the need to consult extensively with college teachers to learn from their experience as educators of 16-18 year olds
- the need to acknowledge that the integration of students from rural/remote areas in colleges has had a benefit in raising aspirations and awareness of opportunities
- timetabling: the implications of new structures for timetabling where students enrol on multiple campuses