

UC Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra

Network: Belconnen

Impact Report 2023

The purpose of this document

This document flows directly from our Action Plan for 2023 which translated our school priorities into actions for the current year of our five-year improvement cycle. These actions were responsive to:

- the impact on learning and perception (bigger data)
- effectiveness of strategies and actions, as well as quality of implementation
- efficacy of measure, suitability of targets.

Alignment with the *Future of Education* and *Set up for Success* Strategies

Set up for Success and *Future of Education* Strategies

Foundation: A fair start for every child, Students at the centre

In 2023 our school supported this foundation through – Priority 1

- Increase students' problem-solving skills by enhancing students' critical and creative thinking skills to solve problems
- extending students' ability to transfer problem solving skills to non-routine and unfamiliar problems

Foundation: *Every child has a story, Strong communities for learning*

In 2023 our school supported this foundation through – Priority 2

- Increase student confidence to engage with a life and career beyond college.
- Enhancing students' experience, connection and wellbeing

Reporting against our priorities

Priority 1: Increase students' problem-solving skills by:

- Enhancing students' critical and creative thinking skills to solve problems
- Extending students' ability to transfer problem solving skills to non-routine and unfamiliar problems

Targets or measures

By the end of 2024 we will achieve:

- Increase proportion of students achieving A, B or C level in problem solving capacity from Semester 1 Year 11 to Semester 2 Year 12
- Increase the proportion of students achieving C grades or better by 5%.
- Increase in the proportion of students who indicate they are "developing transferable problem-solving skills" to 85%.
- Increase the proportion of programs that provide opportunities to use problem solving skills by at least 10%.

In 2023 we implemented this priority through the following strategies.

ACT BSSS Course Programs of learning (POL) incorporated initiatives to increase students critical and creative thinking skills, to solve problems and ability to transfer problem solving skills to non-routine and unfamiliar problems
Use of High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS) to increase students critical and creative thinking skills, to solve problems and ability to transfer problem solving skills to non-routine and unfamiliar problems
Focus on lesson observations, walk throughs, peer collaboration, student engagement to test impact of HITS
Analysis of student work and data to assess effectiveness
Provision of professional learning - ongoing

Below is our progress towards our five-year targets with an emphasis on the accumulation and analysis of evidence over the term of our plan.

Student learning data

Targets or Measures	Base 2019	Year 1 2020	Year 2 2021	Year 3 2022	Year 4 2023	Year 5 2024
Increase proportion of students achieving A, B or C level in problem solving capacity from Semester 1 Year 11 to Semester 2 Year 12	NA	NA	NA	30%	27%	
Increase proportion of students achieving C grades or better by 5%	67.9%	69.7%	68%	72%	71.6%	

Perception data

Targets or Measures	Base 2019	Year 1 2020	Year 2 2021	Year 3 2022	Year 4 2023	Year 5 2024
Increase in the proportion of students who indicate they are "developing transferable problem-solving skills" to 85%.	76.9%	59.1%	NA	60.70%	56.3%	
College unit survey items (20 - 23) about learning strategies - average of 4 items	59.0%	57.5%	57.3%	57.90%	50.3%	

School program and process data

Targets or Measures	Base 2019	Year 1 2020	Year 2 2021	Year 3 2022	Year 4 2023	Year 5 2024
Increase the number of programs of learning that provide opportunities to use problem solving skills by at least 10%.	NA	NA	NA	40%	NA	

What this evidence tells us

Student Learning Data

The school responded to this measure by developing a school specific problem-solving rubric for teachers to report on student learning data. The first full data shows an increase on average in student problem solving ability of 30% from semester one 2021 to semester two 2022. In the second year of full measurement the problem-solving data remains consistent (in comparison to year 1) at 27% increase on average in student problem solving ability from semester one 2022 to semester two 2023.

There has been little change in the second learning data measure, 'proportion of students at C grade or better', which over the duration of this improvement cycle has trended upward. This measure complimented the already existing emphasis by teachers on including the 21st C skills in classroom content, assessment and feedback.

Perception Data

The transferable problem-solving skills measure was taken from the ACT Satisfaction Survey ACT data: "The school equips me with capabilities to learn and live successfully." Outside of a high result in the 2019 base year of 76.9%, our tracking has remained between 56 to 60%. The overall results of our perception data suggests that our base year measure upon which the target developed was abhorrent. It is evident that this measure has decreased across all colleges.

The 'learning strategies' data measure was a combination of several unit survey items

- Q20 If you were stuck while learning something new in this class, how likely were you to try a different strategy?
- Q21 Before you started on an assigned project in this subject, how much did you think about the best way to approach the project?
- Q22 Overall, how well did the learning strategies you have used in this class help you learn effectively?
- Q23 In this subject, how often did you ask your teacher about strategies to learn more effectively?

This data has decreased markedly in 2023.

NB: Student participation in the unit evaluations is low - semester 2 in 2023 was 28%, and in 2022 was 21%. Incorporating surveys into English and Maths classes to increase the participation rate is a method to utilise in the future if unit evaluation surveys are to inform improvement strategies. Strategies to ensure students value and participate in the data collection would also be valuable.

School program and process data

A baseline survey was conducted in 2022 to assess the number of programs of learning (POLs) developed in 2021/22 that provide problem solving opportunities for students. The audit revealed that 40% of the College's programs of learning (POL) were developed and include problem solving opportunities for students.

Faculties continue to make improvements to the POLs, however, due to a turnover of Executive teachers (HODs) assessing this metric was not possible in 2023. It is yet to be decided if problem solving and critical and creative thinking remains a key focus in the next iteration of school improvement and in turn POLs.

The college continues provide opportunities for parents and careers to help to have a positive impact on student outcomes. The College's 'Partners in Learning' initiative and Welcome to College evening provide tailored workshops and strategies for parents to support their young people with their learning.

Our achievements for this priority

In 2023 the College's Professional Learning Community pivoted its approach to meeting the school priority to increase students' problem-solving ability.

In 2022 a teacher survey of high impact teaching strategies (HITS) was undertaken by the PLC organising committee. The aim was to assess the frequency and familiarity by teachers with evidence-based teaching strategies and to use HITS as the focus for the 2023 PLC.

Lesson observations commenced in 2022 via the Professional Learning Community (PLC) provided teachers with feedback on their classroom strategies to improve students critical and creative thinking. Building on this observation culture was also the priority for 2023.

Adopting HITS and observing their impact in the classroom became the PLC focus for 2023. The aim was to use this inquiry focus, and prior years PLC inquiries, to explore the development of a pedagogical framework for the college.

HITS and teaching observations were also prioritised in 2023 for professional learning teams to re-focus on their instruction and creating a positive classroom environment for a particular cohort of students that had experienced on-line learning during COVID 19.

The prioritising on using and observing HITS, coupled with easing the focus on specific problem-solving teaching strategies and subsequent inquiry may in part contribute to the softening of the growth in the above indicators. Yet, a longer-term view agreed on by staff to improve teachers understanding of high impact teaching and foster an observation culture.

Challenges we will address in our next Action Plan

School Review under the Student-Centred Improvement Framework (SCIF) will be undertaken in semester 1 2024. The review will be focus on only one dimension of the Framework – Learning, incorporating Pedagogy, Assessment and Curriculum.

Even though the College may change direction as a result of the Review the expectation is that problem solving, and critical and creative thinking will be embedded in practice rather than a priority focus. It is a customary practice in the college that strategies from an improvement cycle continue.

A project focused on explicitly instructing students about problem solving metrics and allowing students to self-assess their problem-solving ability was piloted during the improvement cycle and provided further insights into student ability to think critically and creatively. Co-designing a student self/peer reflection tool for the collaborative assessment of improvement strategies will be a priority into the next iteration of school improvement. With student centred improvement the focus increasing student agency is a priority, as is generating more student-centred data.

The focus on the next student-centred improvement cycle will require the development of new and more considered strategies, measures of improvement and targets.

Strategies

- Increase consistency of use of pedagogical initiatives – High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS) or other evidence-based pedagogy.
- Widen teacher experience of engaging in classroom observations and use observation feedback to improve teaching practice around HITS via PLC direction
- Communication strategy to inform students of learning strategies and unit survey specific questions.

Data

- Expand opportunities for students to self-assess on any chosen improvement strategies
- Increase clarity for teachers and students around the importance of collecting, analysing, and using of data.
- Upskill teachers in using and analysing data to differentiate teaching practice to put faces on the data, meet students at need, and support growth.

Priority 2: Increase student confidence to engage with a life and career beyond college.

- Enhancing students' experience, connection and wellbeing

Targets or measures

By the end of 2024 we will achieve:

- Reduction in V grades by at least 2%
- Increase in students who achieve Individual Learning Plan (ILP) wellbeing related/pathways goals
- Increase the student positive responses to survey questions regarding importance of involvement in the following by 5%:
 - > extracurricular activities (2019 baseline 71%)
 - > emotional connection to others at the school (2019 baseline 69%)
 - > level of happiness and life satisfaction (2019 baseline Happiness 70%)
 - > Life Satisfaction 59%)
- Increase in proportion of students engaging in the following by at least 10%:
 - > Co-curricular wellbeing and social activities (2019 baseline 30%)
 - > Completing 'competencies' in Support Group tutorials (2020 Baseline)
 - > Accessing Australian School Based Apprenticeships/Work Experience/Vocational Education and Training (ASBA/WEX/VET) opportunities (2019 baseline 15%)

In 2023 we implemented this priority through the following strategies.

1. Implement a range of health and wellbeing initiatives to enhance connectedness
2. Engage students in a range of cross curricular and pathway programs and initiatives
3. Monitor attendance – communication with parents/carers, case manage approach
4. Provide information, guidance, and advice to help students explore their education and career options

Below is our progress towards our five-year targets with an emphasis on the accumulation and analysis of evidence over the term of our plan.

Student learning data

Targets or Measures	Base 2019	Year 1 2020	Year 2 2021	Year 3 2022	Year 4 2023	Year 5 2024
Reduce V grades by at least 2%	6.4%	7.4%	8.0%	9.85%	13.9%	
Increase in students who achieve Individual Learning Plan (ILP) wellbeing related/pathways goals	NA	72.4%	NA	84%	NA	

Perception data

Targets or Measures	Base 2019	Year 1 2020	Year 2 2021	Year 3 2022	Year 4 2023	Year 5 2024
Increase the student positive responses to survey questions regarding importance of involvement in the following by 5%:	67%	59%	63.5%	53.9%		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extracurricular activities (2019 baseline 71%) 	71%	62%	NA	47%	41%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotional connection to others at the school 	69%	56%	60%	60.2%	NA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of happiness (2019 baseline Happiness 70%) 	70%	66%	67%	55%	63%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of life satisfaction (2021 baseline Life Satisfaction 49.3%) 			49.3%	48.6%	50.6%	

School program and process data

Targets or Measures	Base 2019	Year 1 2020	Year 2 2021	Year 3 2022	Year 4 2023	Year 5 2024
Increase in proportion of students engaging in the following by at least 10%:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-curricular wellbeing and social activities 	48%	39%	34%	38%	31.5%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing 'competencies' in Support Group tutorials 	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessing Australian School Based Apprenticeships/Work Experience/Vocational Education and Training (ASBA/WEX/VET) opportunities 	23%	22%	28%	29%	22.6%	

What this evidence tells us

Student learning data

Student learning data re V-grades have increased. From 2021 to 2022 this increase was a result of a change in measurement method of V-grades in 2022. The method adopted has improved measurement reliability and is in line with recommended practice by the Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS). There has been a further increase in V-grades between 2022/23.

Students in the inclusion support program have shown increased achievement of wellbeing and pathways goals throughout the life of this plan. This indicator of growth, however, was only measured intermittently and was not taken in 2023.

Perception data

The extra-curricular activities measure was omitted from the 2021 and 2022 Student Climate Survey perception data. The result for 2022, generated from student unit evaluation data, provided a new baseline for future measures due to the change in measurement. 2023 shows a decrease in student perception that they are engaging in extra-curricular activities.

Other wellbeing perception data has shown variability across the plan duration to date. For example, the level of 'happiness' dropped in 2022. This change is mirrored in data from other colleges in 2022 across the Act and nationally and is arguably an effect and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic but has increased again in 2023. The indicator, however, still sits below the 2019 baseline measure.

The measure of emotional connection was removed from school reporting data and is no longer available.

The measure of 'Life Satisfaction' changed in 2021 from a single question to a domain with 6 items. The new measure does not correlate to the prior data. As such a new baseline has been adopted (2021 = 49.3%). Student perception based on the new data has remained constant over three years.

School program and process data

The data suggests a fall in the proportion of students engaging in Co-curricular wellbeing and social activities. Whilst the number of students participating remains similar to 2022, the increase in the student population between (80 students between 2022 / 2023) has decreased the overall proportion.

There has been a significant decrease in the number of students and proportion of the student population that are taking up of ASBA/WEX opportunities. The school was on track to meet its 2024 target however, a significant increase will be required this year. A second TACO has been appointed to assist growth in this area.

Support Groups (SG) are weekly 40 min support sessions for students. SG tutorials are to be developed that provide students with competencies. Leadership of this project has changed several times. This year an external 'expert' has been engaged to co-develop with the school competencies for students in self-regulated learning or SRL.

Our achievements for this priority

To address the decrease in the number of students and proportion of the student population that are taking up of ASBA/WEX opportunities a second Transitions and Careers Officer (TACO) was appointed in 2023 to assist post-pandemic growth in this area. One TACO will focus on ASBA opportunities for students whilst the second TACO will support students engaging with work experience.

The college continued to see high numbers of students engage in the Careers Expo. Over 400 students attended in 2023. Feedback by both staff and students indicated that it was highly valuable as the college returns to supporting this event. Students from inclusion support, international and centre of excellence all attended.

A new initiative – Lakefest, was also launched in late 2023. The three-day festival offers multiple opportunities for students to connect and engage in extra or co-curricular activities.

Student access to wellbeing support from the Disability Education Contact Officer (DECO) and Year Coordinators has been doubled allowing increased focus on attendance difficulties. A new student services model was also initiated in 2023 with the appointment of two SLCs (previously one) to lead program and process enhancements.

Challenges we will address in our next Action Plan

The ACT Education Directorate will use an ACT developed Student-Centred Improvement Framework moving away from the National School Improvement Tool from 2024 onwards. Therefore, the College, in its review year 2024, will be trialling the new framework and in the next plan 2025-20XX will develop a new set of priorities and success measures. This is particularly the case when adopting system measures as indicators. These measures during the current improvement cycle have been subject to significant change and hampered efforts for the collection and analysis of consistent data to gauge growth.

The Action Plan sees a consolidation and reflection on the past few year's priorities and inquiry processes.