



Charters Towers School of Distance Education

ANNUAL REPORT

2018

Queensland State School Reporting

Every student succeeding

State Schools Strategy

Department of Education



Queensland
Government

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School overview

The Charters Towers School of Distance Education is a Preparatory to Year 12 co-educational school that provides a comprehensive and quality education through the integration and personalisation of available distance education and flexible delivery services. In addition to core academic offerings the school provides a wide range of senior pathway options (i.e. vocational education and training options) which cater for a wide range of students and adult learners.

The school achieves a comprehensive education through a range of distance learning methodologies that include web-based virtual classrooms, audio (telephone) lessons, web-based e-learning, field service visits, a comprehensive tutor training and development program and regular student visits to the school (Inreach activities). In addition the school offers a range of extension learning and learning support programs as well as social and cultural activities.

The use of digital learning materials underpins school programs and enables access to a wide range of content which is supported by physical resources which are provided to students upon enrolment. The school has a strong focus on the development of the whole person and as such pastoral care is an integral element of the school's culture.

School progress towards its goals in 2018

During 2018, our school continued its work in building the capacity of students across all academic and vocational areas.

The school's explicit improvement agenda is embedded within its daily operations and has a range of focused initiatives to further enhance our quality learning and teaching endeavours.

During 2018, our school focussed on:

- Continuing to embed our pedagogical framework within all aspects of the distance education methodology (i.e. underpinning the development of our Independent Learning Materials (ILMs).
- Refining the process of identifying individual student need and responding with appropriate developmental opportunities for students
- Improving teacher capacity through focused development and support to improve student achievement and performance, i.e. enhancement of collegial coaching capacity, additional training in literacy delivery and data use. (Note, due to enrolment growth the school needs to initiate and sustain developmental programs for teachers new to distance education.)

Future outlook

Our school has three explicit improvement priorities for the next year. Each improvement priority has clearly articulated targets that address the SMART criteria and are supported by clear and focused strategies.

Our priorities for 2019 are:

- Embed appropriate flexible and distance learning pedagogical approaches into teacher practice and student learning pathways.
- Establish and sustain a staff professional development culture that reflects the needs of the school.
- Promote the importance of engagement of students with formal teaching/learning strategies and embed practices that work towards maximising this in school's teaching and learning programs.

Our school at a glance

School profile

Coeducational or single sex	Coeducational
Independent public school	Yes
Year levels offered in 2018	Prep Year - Year 12

Student enrolments

Table 1: Student enrolments at this school

Enrolment category	2016	2017	2018
Total	474	420	542
Girls	251	225	278
Boys	223	195	264
Indigenous	51	44	64
Enrolment continuity (Feb. – Nov.)	67%	76%	72%

Notes:

1. Student counts are based on the Census (August) enrolment collection.
2. Indigenous refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.
3. [pre-Prep](#) is a kindergarten program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, living in 35 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, in the year before school.

Note, the above data does not include the students enrolled in other schools but working through our school for specific subjects or unique development opportunities.

In 2018, there were no students enrolled in a pre-Prep program.

Characteristics of the student body

Overview

Students attending the school comprise a diverse range of backgrounds. In the primary sector, the majority of the student cohort comprises geographically isolated student enrolments though an increasing number of students seeking alternate learning pathways due to unique circumstances (i.e. medical, behavioural and social) are also engaging with the school. The geographically isolated enrolments have generally studied all, or at least the majority of their education with the school and form a relatively homogenous group. These students are supported by home tutors who supervise the daily programme of study under the direction of the class teacher.

Other enrolment groups tend to have high needs and are initially unfamiliar with this school's predominate mode of learning though generally engagement is rapid. It is noted that there is an emerging group of students with mental health or developmental issues seeking learning programs through our school.

Unlike the primary enrolment, the vast majority of secondary enrolments have not progressed through this school. Many have been with the school for a period of less than two years and few are from the Geographically Isolated category. Enrolment categories include By Choice, Medical, Itinerant Lifestyle, Alternate learning, School-Based and Adult Re-entry. Secondary learners are from a broad range of backgrounds and have a diverse range of learning and support needs. A significant number of these learners are undertaking a single subject or tailored learning program.

The school's growth continues with enrolments being drawn from across Queensland. The enrolment growth appears to be through 'word of mouth' promotion rather than any formalised promotional agenda by the school.

Regardless of the background of the student, our individualised approach is proving successful in engagement and achievement of learning goals.

Average class sizes

Table 2: Average class size information for each phase of schooling

Phase of schooling	2016	2017	2018
Prep – Year 3		11	12
Year 4 – Year 6		13	13
Year 7 – Year 10		37	38
Year 11 – Year 12		45	39

Note:
The [class size](#) targets for composite classes are informed by the relevant year level target. Where composite classes exist across cohorts (e.g. year 3/4) the class size targets would be the lower cohort target.

Curriculum delivery

Our approach to curriculum delivery

Our school's curriculum framework has as its foundation a strong literacy base (i.e. reading, writing, speaking and listening) and a focus on flexible learning/delivery. A significant strength of our school is that a student, after negotiation, may move independently at an appropriate pace through the core learning.

We support our students' learning by:

- providing, enriching, supplementing and monitoring of learning materials;
- providing support learning materials including audio and video programs, manipulative materials, books and computer software;
- teaching through the mediums of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), e.g. web conferencing;
- meeting with students during a variety of visits, mini-schools and other field service activities;
- creating opportunities that introduce concepts and experiences to students from outside their immediate environment; and,
- providing support and assistance to tutors and parents.

In terms of senior school specialisation, our school focuses on developing and applying strong Vocational Education and Training programs leading to formal accreditation through to Certificate III as well as the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE). This coupled to our inclusive approach that endeavours to re-engage young people with formal learning and accreditation provides a unique senior school (Year 10 – 12) pathway.

The school has taken the lead position in the development of senior secondary courses (in distance learning form/media) for the Queensland' Senior and Tertiary Entrance initiative. The school is responsible for the construction of eight two year courses and a number of smaller courses/programs addressing the new Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority' new curriculum.

Co-curricular activities

The school provides a range of field services that enable students to access opportunities to engage in academic activity, vocational learning and social interactions. These field services are limited in geographical terms though the school also offers access to two 5 day mini-schools and conferences as well as 'live-in' programs for vocational skilling and VET courses.

A Student Council with elected student representatives provides opportunities for democratic input at appropriate times and levels, as well as engaging in processes that reflect the Australian society in which they will live.

A range of topical activities form part of the school's calendar, i.e. cultural immersion activities, Sports day, Themed inreach activities, Swimming carnival, etc.

How information and communication technologies are used to assist learning

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) form an integral element in the way this school works. ICTs provide the delivery methodology used by our students, i.e. the learning programs are in digital media formats often with high levels of interactivity. Examples of the ICTs used by our school include:

- Virtual lessons and classrooms via the web based applications
- Digital media learning objects
- Learning Management Systems such as Blackboard
- Email and digital communications such as forums, blogs, wikis, etc.
- On-line environments supporting learning programs, e.g. learning management systems and other third party supplied applications and e-learning courses.

Social climate

Overview

Our school is a vital element of our students', their tutors and parents' lives.

The school has a strong focus on the development of the whole person and pastoral care is an integral element of our school's culture and way of working. It is vital that our teachers establish strong and positive relationships with our students to influence their learning and engagement with formal education and sense of worth.

There is a strong commitment to the school and the values it holds with all groups indicating strong support and positive perceptions of its role within their lives.

The continued rapid enrolment growth requires further care and effort to ensure the social and cultural values that underpin our school are conveyed to new staff, students and parents/tutors. The enrolment data throughout 2018 supports the need for greater engagement and active delivery in adolescent mental health areas. This year saw the appointments of a Student Services Office and a Guidance Officer for initial intervention and support programs within the school

Parents, students and staff of our school demonstrate high levels of satisfaction with the school. The results of the national survey are reflected in broader non-qualitative ways such as support for school events, commitment to activities outside of normal school routines and in the public statements made by members of our school communities.

Parent, student and staff satisfaction

Tables 3–5 show selected items from the Parent/Caregiver, Student and Staff School Opinion Surveys.

Table 3: Parent opinion survey

Percentage of parents/caregivers who agree# that:	2016	2017	2018
• their child is getting a good education at school (S2016)	97%	99%	92%
• this is a good school (S2035)	100%	97%	93%
• their child likes being at this school* (S2001)	100%	100%	95%
• their child feels safe at this school* (S2002)	100%	100%	99%
• their child's learning needs are being met at this school* (S2003)	91%	94%	91%
• their child is making good progress at this school* (S2004)	100%	99%	91%
• teachers at this school expect their child to do his or her best* (S2005)	100%	96%	95%
• teachers at this school provide their child with useful feedback about his or her school work* (S2006)	94%	94%	91%
• teachers at this school motivate their child to learn* (S2007)	94%	93%	90%

Percentage of parents/caregivers who agree# that:	2016	2017	2018
• teachers at this school treat students fairly* (S2008)	100%	92%	93%
• they can talk to their child's teachers about their concerns* (S2009)	100%	96%	98%
• this school works with them to support their child's learning* (S2010)	97%	96%	91%
• this school takes parents' opinions seriously* (S2011)	88%	91%	85%
• student behaviour is well managed at this school* (S2012)	97%	97%	94%
• this school looks for ways to improve* (S2013)	97%	94%	89%
• this school is well maintained* (S2014)	100%	100%	99%

* Nationally agreed student and parent/caregiver items.

'Agree' represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with the statement.

DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

Table 4: Student opinion survey

Percentage of students who agree# that:	2016	2017	2018
• they are getting a good education at school (S2048)	100%	100%	89%
• they like being at their school* (S2036)	98%	96%	89%
• they feel safe at their school* (S2037)	100%	96%	94%
• their teachers motivate them to learn* (S2038)	95%	92%	93%
• their teachers expect them to do their best* (S2039)	100%	96%	95%
• their teachers provide them with useful feedback about their school work* (S2040)	98%	96%	91%
• teachers treat students fairly at their school* (S2041)	100%	96%	92%
• they can talk to their teachers about their concerns* (S2042)	88%	92%	89%
• their school takes students' opinions seriously* (S2043)	92%	96%	88%
• student behaviour is well managed at their school* (S2044)	97%	96%	84%
• their school looks for ways to improve* (S2045)	98%	96%	90%
• their school is well maintained* (S2046)	97%	95%	89%
• their school gives them opportunities to do interesting things* (S2047)	87%	96%	84%

* Nationally agreed student and parent/caregiver items.

'Agree' represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with the statement.

DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

Table 5: Staff opinion survey

Percentage of school staff who agree# that:	2016	2017	2018
• they enjoy working at their school (S2069)	97%	100%	100%
• they feel that their school is a safe place in which to work (S2070)	99%	100%	100%
• they receive useful feedback about their work at their school (S2071)	93%	97%	94%
• they feel confident embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across the learning areas (S2114)	94%	94%	88%
• students are encouraged to do their best at their school (S2072)	100%	98%	99%
• students are treated fairly at their school (S2073)	100%	100%	99%
• student behaviour is well managed at their school (S2074)	100%	97%	100%

Percentage of school staff who agree# that:	2016	2017	2018
• staff are well supported at their school (S2075)	99%	95%	94%
• their school takes staff opinions seriously (S2076)	93%	97%	92%
• their school looks for ways to improve (S2077)	99%	98%	97%
• their school is well maintained (S2078)	97%	100%	99%
• their school gives them opportunities to do interesting things (S2079)	95%	98%	95%

* Nationally agreed student and parent/caregiver items.

'Agree' represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with the statement.

DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

Parent and community engagement

In terms of engagement with school processes, the school held a range of parent meetings/forums in a number of geographical locations within the traditional catchment area. These forums provide a way of reporting directly to parents as well as providing opportunities for broader discussion on school operations and directions. The school continued to trial other avenues of community input providing opportunities for consultation/input by parents/caregivers where physical access to meetings is not possible, e.g. targeted surveys, online forums, Facebook, direct phone and email access to school management team, etc.

The predominant approach to managing student learning remains a case management approach. Parents and tutors must be actively engaged in the planning and delivery of student learning episodes; where this does not occur the school must clearly delineate its responsibilities and the responsibilities of the other parties. The school takes seriously the moral imperative that all young people are entitled to an education and the skills necessary to lead productive lives within our communities. Where our school believes that concerns exist we address these in partnership with other sections of the education system and external agencies.

Respectful relationships education programs

The school has developed and implemented a number of programs that focus on appropriate, respectful and healthy relationships. These programs form part of each school sector's pastoral care program. It did become obvious during the year that a more formalised and sequenced program should be implemented and this will continue to be investigated in the coming year.

School disciplinary absences

Table 6: Count of incidents for students recommended for school disciplinary absences at this school

Type of school disciplinary absence	2016	2017	2018
Short suspensions – 1 to 10 days	0	0	0
Long suspensions – 11 to 20 days	0	0	0
Exclusions	0	0	0
Cancellations of enrolment	0	0	0

Note:

School disciplinary absences (SDAs) are absences enforced by a school for student conduct that is prejudicial to the good order and management of the school.

Environmental footprint

Reducing this school's environmental footprint

The school's utilities' consumption data is sourced from the validated utilities expenditure return, which the school submits at the end of each financial year. The data provides an indication of the consumption trend in each of the utility categories which impact on the schools environmental footprint.

Data is sourced from school's annual utilities return and is reliant on the accuracy of these returns.

The school operates a bank of solar cells that provides an electrical feed into the state grid. This assists in reducing the school's consumption of electricity. Similarly, our school has appropriate water saving technologies across all areas of consumption (i.e. appropriate strategies include timer and evening based irrigation and low water use cisterns).

It is noted that the increases in electricity and water consumption align with the growth of the school and the construction of additional facilities.

Table 7: Environmental footprint indicators for this school

Utility category	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018
Electricity (kWh)	170,436	289,640	209,904
Water (kL)		27,436	

Note:

Consumption data is compiled from sources including ERM, Ergon reports and utilities data entered into OneSchool* by schools. The data provides an indication of the consumption trend in each of the utility categories which impact on this school's environmental footprint.

*OneSchool is the department's comprehensive software suite that schools use to run safe, secure, sustainable and consistent reporting and administrative processes.

School funding

School income broken down by funding source

School income, reported by financial year accounting cycle using standardized national methodologies and broken down by funding source is available via the [My School](#) website at.

How to access our income details

1. Click on the *My School* link <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.
2. Enter the school name or suburb of the school you wish to search.

3. Click on 'View School Profile' of the appropriate school to access the school's profile.

4. Click on 'Finances' and select the appropriate year to view the school financial information.

Note:

If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a hard copy of the school's financial information.

Our staff profile

Workforce composition

Staff composition, including Indigenous staff

Table 8: Workforce composition for this school

Description	Teaching staff*	Non-teaching staff	Indigenous** staff
Headcounts	67	19	<5
Full-time equivalents	66	17	<5

*Teaching staff includes School Leaders.

** *Indigenous* refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.

Qualification of all teachers

Table 9: Teacher qualifications for classroom teachers and school leaders at this school

Highest level of qualification	Number of qualifications	*Graduate Diploma etc. includes Graduate Diploma, Bachelor Honours Degree, and Graduate Certificate.
Doctorate	1	
Masters	7	
Graduate Diploma etc.*	20	
Bachelor degree	31	
Diploma	2	
Certificate	7	

Professional development

Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2018 were \$139,790

The major professional development initiatives are as follows:

- QCAA Essential English Senior Syllabus
- QCAA Senior English Syllabus
- QCAA Ancient History Senior Syllabus
- QCAA Senior Japanese
- QCAA Physics Senior syllabus
- QCAA Psychology Senior Syllabus
- QCAA Moderation Social and Community Studies
- QCAA Planning for teaching learning & assessments :SWD P-10
- QCAA QCIA Quality Assurances processes
- ETAQ English/ new SATE
- Getting kids writing: one sentence at a time
- VET Symposium
- QCAA Senior Science Syllabus
- Cert IV TAE
- MS Excel, Outlook, One Note
- CPR

- QeLI National School Improvement Tool
- QCE workshop
- AEDC Data Collection
- One Note in the Classroom
- Future Leaders Program
- ASDAN/MultiLit
- 7 Steps to Writing
- Collegial coaching and monitoring

The proportion of the teaching staff involved in professional development activities during 2018 was 100%.

Staff attendance and retention

Staff attendance

Table 10: Average staff attendance for this school as percentages

Description	2016	2017	2018
Staff attendance for permanent and temporary staff and school leaders.	94%	96%	95%

Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year

From the end of the previous school year, 88% of staff were retained by the school for the entire 2018.

Performance of our students

Key student outcomes

Student attendance

Note that under Queensland legislation, attendance at a School of Distance Education is based on the student's return of nominated work. This school manages this in a careful way to ensure that truancy within this legal interpretation is adhered to.

Description of how this school manages non-attendance

Non-attendance is managed in state schools in line with the DET procedures, Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools, the Education (General Provisions) Act, which outline processes for managing and recording student attendance and absenteeism with regard to distance education.

Our school has a strong commitment to each student achieving and so has strong pastoral care arrangement that supports a proactive non-truancy program. Where truancy (i.e. the failure to submit work and complete courses) occurs, the school follows a formal process of engaging parents using both positive and consequence aspects.

The school has the following elements in place to enhance student engagement in learning:

- Engagement Officer managing interventions before formal truancy commences
- Case management of learning pathways
- Strong pastoral care and welfare focus on students

- A strong truancy and re-engagement process focused on building a student’s capacity to address their educational needs
- Engaging parents and care givers into active roles within their learners’ pathway

NAPLAN

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN tests are available via the [My School](#) website.

How to access our NAPLAN results

1. Click on the *My School* link <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.
2. Enter the school name or suburb of the school you wish to search.

3. Click on ‘View School Profile’ of the appropriate school to access the school’s profile.

4. Click on ‘NAPLAN’ to access the school NAPLAN information.

Notes:

1. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a hard copy of the school’s NAPLAN results.
2. The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy ([NAPLAN](#)) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

Year 12 Outcomes

Tables 13–15 show for this school:

- a summary of Year 12 outcomes
- the number of Year 12 students in each OP band
- the number of Year 12 students awarded a VET qualification.

Details about the types of outcomes for students who finish Year 12 are available in the annual [Year 12 outcomes report](#).

Additional information about the AQF and the IBD program are available at www.aqf.edu.au and www.ibo.org.

Table 13: Outcomes for our Year 12 cohorts

Description	2016	2017	2018
Number of students who received a Senior Statement	20	31	31
Number of students awarded a QCIA	1	1	1
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) at the end of Year 12	14	22	27

Description	2016	2017	2018
Percentage of Indigenous students awarded a QCE at the end of Year 12	100%	100%	100%
Number of students who received an OP	4	6	5
Percentage of Indigenous students who received an OP	0%	0%	0%
Number of students awarded one or more VET qualifications (including SAT)	16	20	25
Number of students awarded a VET Certificate II or above	15	15	22
Number of students who were completing/continuing a SAT	0	3	1
Number of students awarded an IBD	0	0	0
Percentage of OP/IBD eligible students with OP 1-15 or an IBD	100%	50%	100%
Percentage of Year 12 students who were completing or completed a SAT or were awarded one or more of the following: QCE, IBD, VET qualification	80%	81%	87%
Percentage of QTAC applicants who received a tertiary offer.	100%	100%	100%

Notes:

- The values above:
 - are as at 11 February 2019
 - exclude VISA students (students who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents of Australia).
- Indigenous* refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.

Table 14: Overall Position (OP)

OP band	2016	2017	2018
1-5	1	0	1
6-10	3	0	1
11-15	0	3	3
16-20	0	3	0
21-25	0	0	0

Note:

The values in table 14:

- are as at 11 February 2019
- exclude VISA students (students who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents of Australia).

Table 15: Vocational Education and Training (VET)

VET qualification	2016	2017	2018
Certificate I	9	10	11
Certificate II	13	13	17
Certificate III or above	3	5	10

Note:

The values in table 15:

- are as at 11 February 2019
- exclude VISA students (students who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents of Australia).

Students at our school may engage in one or more of the following VET programs:

- Certificate I in Business
- Certificate II in Business
- Certificate III in Business
- Certificate I in Information, Digital Media and Technology
- Certificate II in Information, Digital Media and Technology
- Certificate II in Agriculture (Beef Cattle)
- Certificate III in Agriculture (Beef Cattle)
- Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways
- Certificate III in Education Support
- Certificate I in Engineering
- Certificate II in Visual Arts

Apparent retention rate – Year 10 to Year 12

Table 16: Apparent retention rates for Year 10 to Year 12 for this school

Description	2016	2017	2018
Year 12 student enrolment as a percentage of the Year 10 student cohort	51%	52%	69%
Year 12 Indigenous student enrolment as a percentage of the Year 10 Indigenous student cohort	67%	100%	36%

Notes:

1. The apparent retention rate for Year 10 to Year 12 = the number of full time students in Year 12 expressed as the percentage of those students who were in Year 10 two years previously (this may be greater than 100%).
2. *Indigenous* refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.

Student destinations

The Queensland Department of Education conducts [annual surveys](#) that capture information about the journey of early school leavers and Year 12 leavers from school to further study and employment.

Early school leavers

The destinations of young people who left this school in Year 10, 11 or before completing Year 12 are described below.

The vast majority of students who leave after the compulsory phase of schooling and before the completion of Year 12 enter the world of work in various positions that may interest them.

This school works closely with a range of external agencies to support students who left school early. Our Principal, Deputy Principal, and Senior School Co-ordinator liaises with early school leavers and their parents, providing a service 'beyond the school gate' to assist early leavers make a successful transition to employment or other educational pursuits.

A small number of students in Years 11 and 12 had their enrolment cancelled due to continued non-participation in their program of study.

Next Step – Post-school destinations

The results of the 2019 Next Step post-school destinations survey, *Next Step – Post-School Destinations* report (information about students who completed Year 12 in 2018), will be uploaded to this school's website in September 2019.

To maintain privacy and confidentiality of individuals, schools with fewer than five responses will not have a report available.

This school's report will be available at

<http://www.charterstowers.sde.eq.edu.au/Supportandresources/Formsanddocuments/Pages/Documents.aspx>