



Annual Report

2021

Legal Entity Name - Advance College of Education Inc.

Incorporation Number - A0095946S

School Number - 2901

ABN - 31 279 225 481

Advance College acknowledges and pays respect to the Bunurong / BoonWurrung people, the traditional custodians of these lands and waters

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College Overview

Advance College has three campuses across the Mornington Peninsula - Hastings, Mornington and Rosebud. It has specialist teachers, learning support assistants and well-being staff to deliver the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) at three levels - Foundation, Intermediate and Senior.

Our college community is made up of many groups including students, parents, guardians, friends, staff, college council/committee, local community organisations and the general public. Advance College has a strong focus on its community as it ensures that our students are provided with the best and most relevant education possible. It provides an alternative, education setting to mainstream school, with a strong emphasis on supporting students in pathways to employment or further education and training.

Our VCAL is presented in a positive, education framework which assists our teaching and education support staff to meet the specific needs of disengaged young people in their pursuit of positive achievements in education. It is specifically designed to improve our capacity to address engagement so that young people can achieve their personal and social potential through educational achievement. It is a whole-school approach that meets the developmental strengths and needs of students, teachers, and leaders.

Our Vision

To CREATE change through education

Our Mission

To meet the individual learning needs of our community through best practice learning experiences

Our Values

Courage We understand that doing the right thing is not always doing what is easy.

Respect We value diversity and treat everyone fairly, recognising individual contributions.

Empathy We are kind and extend ourselves to understand other perspectives and experiences.

Accountability We work hard and are individually accountable and collectively responsible.

Trust We say what we mean and act with integrity.

Empowerment We support our colleagues and community to be the best that they can be.

Aims

Advance College is focussed on supporting and actively promoting the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- The elected government
- The rule of law
- Equal rights for all before the law
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of speech and association
- The values of openness and tolerance

Advance College aims to provide a balanced education to all students who attend by:

- being a recognised, independent, specialist school that provides high quality, innovative learning and development opportunities that positively impact on local communities; and
- providing a challenging, engaging and non-judgmental learning environment, supported by shared community partnerships that enable each individual student to achieve successful educational and social outcomes and maximise their vocational potential.

Philosophy

Advance College believes that all students have the right to a quality, individualised education program that enables them to succeed and connect with the wider community.

Advance College is committed to the creation of a learning environment which centres on improving wellbeing, stamina and resilience to strengthen educational, social and vocational outcomes for each student.

Our programs are delivered with high expectations for academic achievement and personal and social development that broaden further education and/or employment options.

Governance

Advance College is an independent, specialist school registered with the Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (VRQA). It is an incorporated association and a registered charity. It has a Committee of Management (also known as the College Board or School Council) as its governing body and is primarily responsible for the strategic direction of the College and the appointment of the Principal. The day to day operation of the school is delegated to the Principal.

Committee members for 2021 were:

- Andrew Joseph (President)
- Arthur Walmsley (Treasurer)
- Lyn Treloar (Secretary)
- Bryan Ridgeway
- David Kidd
- Steve Wright (Principal)



President's Report

2021 has again been a year of uncertainty as we have navigated through the various lockdowns and adaptations to the restrictions which for many Victorians have caused significant challenges both socially and economically.

To suggest that Advance has been immune to some of this disruption would be dismissive as the unpredictable nature of COVID meant that the students (and staff) have had to adapt to these challenges and approach the year with a mix of face to face and online learning.

In true Advance spirit, the team rose to the challenge going above and beyond to ensure each student was provided with the critical support that they needed appreciating some of the barriers that our students regularly face.

This support is built on trust and delivered with the strongest of empathy which are two of Advance's values and demonstrates the team's professionalism and commitment to the organisation.

Whilst acknowledging the challenges of 2021 it is also important to acknowledge the successes therefore it would be remiss of me not to mention the significant capital development of the new Rosebud site.

This amazing project was several years in the making and involved significant input from the board, the senior leadership group, the broader staff body and importantly the students who now have a state-of-the-art facility that will adequately harness and elevate their learning aspirations in to the future. This facility is a milestone in the Advance timeline and will allow for continued growth of the organisation and importantly success for all the students that continue to walk through the door.

The perseverance that went in to the development of this facility is a great representation of the drive that embodies the Advance College of Education community. One that acknowledges that the challenges, barriers and uncertainties that are synonymous with achieving an outcome are often addressed through effort, encouragement and empathy.

I must congratulate Steve, the Board, the staff and students for another fantastic and successful year and I look forward to the next 12 months supporting and inspiring the Advance College of Education community.

Andrew Joseph (President 2021)



Principal's Report

This year was our fifth, full year as a school and has started at a very busy pace with virtually full enrolments at each campus, with a significant number of students on the waiting list. This is a strong indication of the need for our type of educational program and that the College is becoming a 'school of choice'.

Our VCAL is presented in a positive education framework specifically designed to address student engagement so that they can achieve their personal and social potential through educational achievement. It is a whole-school approach that meets the developmental strengths and needs of students, teachers, and leaders.

We up-graded our Student Management System from Sentral to Compass. Although a major effort it will enhance and increase our communications with parents and students. The parent portal is being rolled out to all parents and will become a major link for communications from the College.

As part of our Respectful Relationships program, we introduced sex education into our curriculum. This was well-accepted by students and, particularly because of the publicity around consent and inclusion, has generated some very positive and active discussions.

Uptake of Vocational Training as part of our VCAL delivery this year has seen an increase to a more diverse range of qualifications and training organisations. Two of our students were also successful in applying to the Caroline Chisholm Education Foundation for their VET funding. Our thanks to the CCEF for their support for 2021.

Over the last 12 months there has been a major review of the VCAL program culminating in the release of the Firth Review. It will see the introduction of two new certificates – one at the Year 10 level and one at the Year 11/12 level. The VCAL qualification will be phased out over the next year and we are hopeful that the new qualifications in 2023 are a significant improvement to student outcomes and their overall educational experiences.

Construction of our new campus begun in March and is due to be completed in February 2022. It will provide a bigger, 'fit for purpose', campus with off street parking and outdoor recreational areas.

We can look back on 2021 as being a very 'Covid influenced' period not dissimilar to 2020. All staff and students have continued to demonstrate amazing resilience, stamina and flexibility. Lock downs with little notice, 'pivoting' between face to face and remote learning, keeping engaged and supporting their mental health etc have presented many challenges.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our wonderful staff especially the teachers and Education Support Staff. They have taken on a range of challenges and have worked tirelessly to support our students both academically and with their wellbeing.

Our students should be very proud of themselves as they have done really well throughout the year. The way they conducted themselves, their participation and achievements in all curriculum and extra-curriculum areas have been a credit to them, particularly with the challenges of the pandemic.

Steve Wright
Principal



Curriculum

The five streams of VCAL (Literacy; Numeracy; Personal Development Skills; Work Related Skills; and Industry Related Skills) are integrated into student-centred Projects that are completed throughout the year. The Project planning process is continually refined with a template developed to ensure expectations, teaching strategies, practice activities and assessment tasks (including evidence requirements) are clearly articulated and mapped against learning outcomes.

Students undertake multiple projects in three week blocks to promote increased engagement and enthusiasm for each subject. This also ensures outcomes from all VCAL curriculum streams are covered on multiple occasions which enables students to demonstrate competence in a variety of ways.

Throughout the Projects there is a strong emphasis on preparation for work including participation, by all students, in work experience and vocational education and training (VET) programs. Individual

Education Plans are developed for all students. Each plan contains the student's profile, interests, strengths/achievements, areas for improvement, barriers to learning and long term/short term goals.

Teaching and Learning

We assumed that we had reached the summit of the Covid 'mountain' in 2020 and were looking forward to operating from 'Base Camp' in 2021. We had a clear vision of long days spent in classrooms filled with laughter, activity and innovation. This was a reality in Term One, but Covid had other ideas in Terms Two and Three, forcing us to pack up our kit and head back to offsite learning. It was a challenging journey but our irrepressible, remarkable students and staff were not to be deterred and forged ahead with real conviction and vigour. We can proudly proclaim that once again everyone at ACE came through the year with new skills, positive attitudes, increased stamina and resilience. This is highlighted by the fact that despite all of the challenges that 2 years of unprecedented upheaval produced, over 70% of students managed to successfully attain a VCAL qualification at the end of 2021. There is no denying that this was a significant accomplishment and testament to the time and effort that staff put into developing and delivering innovative learning programs which centred on keeping students learning and connected to the ACE community. The vision for 2021 was 'active participation' to prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. Despite spending Terms Two and Three 'doing distance' we were able to:

- Refine the ACE Curriculum to more clearly outline what it is that students should be given the opportunity to learn, and the associated progression or continuum of learning.
- Refine the ACE Learning Program to describe how ACE students should be taught and supported to learn.
- Provide students with more opportunities to apply skills 'real world' situations through participation in community activities and work environments (Terms One and Four).
- Develop student voice to ensure that students felt heard and valued.
- Expand collaborative team teaching and planning practices through dedicated non-teaching planning days. Staff also embraced the opportunity to work together to deliver innovative programs across the 3 campuses online.
- Adjust the Individual Education Plan (IEP) templates to ensure that students were provided with a more targeted individualised approach to better meet their learning, wellbeing and pathway needs.
- Enhance our Professional Learning Communities (PLC) which extended our capacity to meet the needs of individual students and strengthen their pathway options.
- Maintain the staffing model of:
 - One Home Teacher in each classroom and;
 - Three teachers rotating sites every 3 weeks and;
 - One Student Support Officer (Wellbeing) rotating sites weekly and;
 - One Student Support Officer (Work Readiness) rotating sites weekly and;
 - One part-time School Psychologist two days per week (at each site twice over a 3-week cycle) and;
 - One Education Support Coordinator rotating sites as required and;
 - One Learning Engagement Coordinator who also took on a Home Teacher Role

Elements that worked well in 2021 included:

- Dedicated non-teaching collaborative planning days
- The project planning frameworks, particularly the 'Pick Your Path' concept utilising Gardener's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and Bloom's Taxonomy to support individual learning programs and student's capacity to engage and achieve at their own pace.
- The School Psychologist facilitating small group work and working with teachers to incorporate curriculum focus areas.
- Explicit teaching of core skills and knowledge.

- Scheduling dedicated times for wellbeing and physical activity breaks (when we were on-site and when we were 'doing distance').
- The focus on 'live' Individual Education Plans and regular review of these to ensure that students needs are being met
- The 'doing distance' guidelines which provided a framework for effectively engaging and supporting our students during remote learning periods.
- The continuation and expansion of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) to ensures that a range of extra-curricular activities are introduced, driven and reviewed by staff 'captains'. Regular PLC meetings were scheduled to foster conversations about 'how' rather than 'what' students are learning in order to make it more impactful. PLC focus areas included: BSEM, Excursions/Camps, QA, Community Connections, RRRR, Student Voice, Independent Living Skills, Enterprise Skills, Student Alumni and Diversity and Diversity and Inclusion.

Teaching and Learning Direction 2022

The vision for 2022 is 'securing success' to ensure each student is given every opportunity to flourish. This will be enacted through:

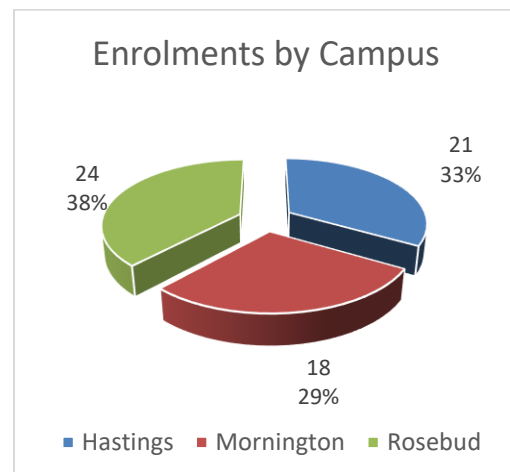
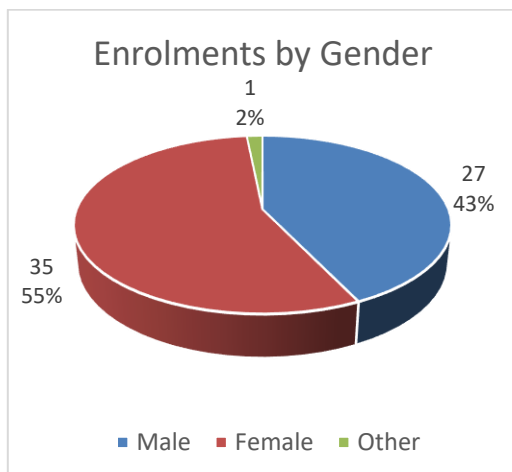
- The adoption of the *ACE Instructional Model (AIM)*. AIM is a statement of the essential elements of a successful lesson. It is not intended to be used as a procedure or checklist as the elements will be expressed in a wide variety of ways depending on the specific needs of each class/student. The model provides teachers with a consistent structure and language which supports them to plan intentionally, share, discuss and reflect on their practice. When applied consistently, the model, also allows students to recognise the key elements of a lesson and better understand and engage with their role in the learning process.
- The introduction of the Foundation Fridays curriculum to ensure that the Foundation students are provided with the opportunity to develop vital 21st Century Skills that will prepare them to undertake future VET and work experience programs.
- The extension of the Pick Your Path program where students are supported to take further control of their learning through identifying a 'passion' and completing project work centring around it.

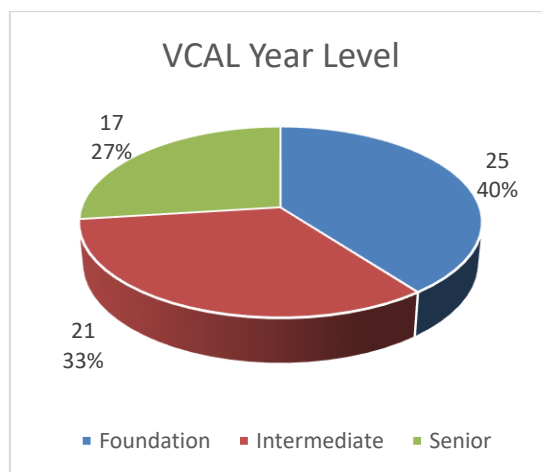
Kris Helisma
Teaching and Learning Manager



Student Report

Across the school year we had 63 students enrol with 11 withdrawing prior to the August census. The College received funding for 52 students enrolled as at August 6, 2021 (the Census date for Independent Schools). This was a decrease of two students from the comparative period in 2020.

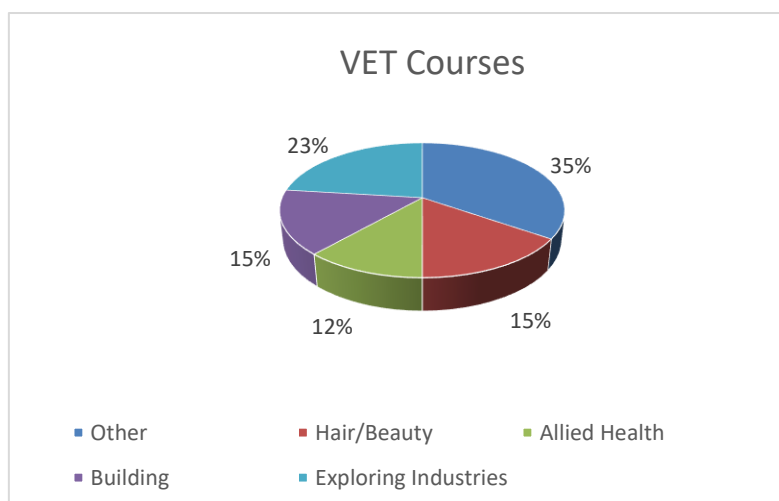




The attendance rate for the year was 73% which was very pleasing especially considering the issues around on-line and face to face learning. Student completion rates for 2021 have been pleasing with 33 achieving their full VCAL certificate and 20 achieving a part Certificate or Statement of Attainment. Our staff members are highly committed to supporting the individual learning needs of all of our students and achieving continuous improvement in student outcomes. Most of those who did not finish their VCAL certificate will have the opportunity to do so in 2022.

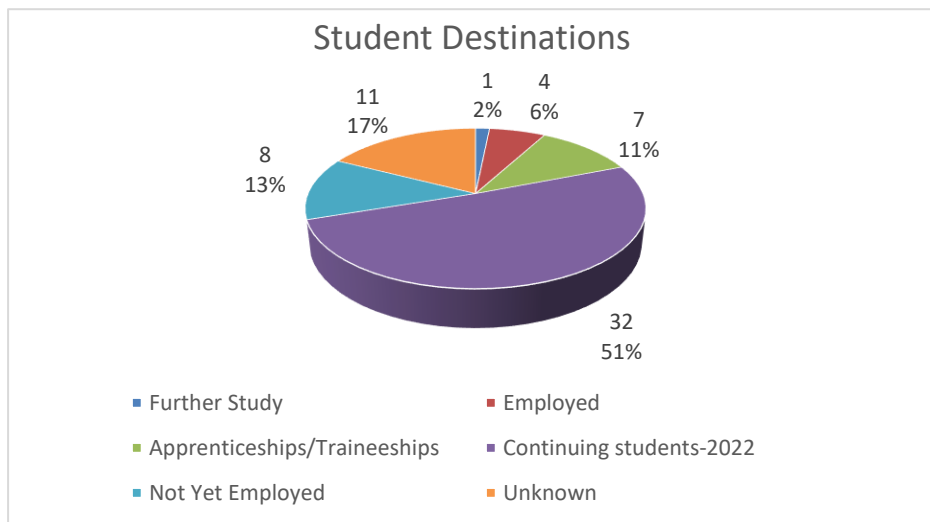
Vocational Education and Training (VET)

A total of 26 Intermediate and Senior students successfully participated in VET in 2021, some students were very focussed on their vocational aspirations (eg Beauty, Childcare, Hospitality), whereas as others completed a more generic range of VET taster programs (Exploring Industries). The units offered a practical placement for each student giving them an introduction into the 'world of work' and what the expectations and responsibilities in actual workplaces. In 2022 it is anticipated there will be other variety offered to students, again, aligning to their career aspirations.



Outcomes and Destinations

One of the key aims of Advance College is to prepare our students for employment and life after school. Students are supported to gain a successful, post-school outcome while in school and after they leave. Students are provided with on-going assistance to find employment, gain a tertiary placement or an apprenticeship or traineeship for as long as required.



Staff Report

Staffing

Staffing for 2021 comprised:

- VCAL Teachers (6)
- VCAL Education Support Officers (3)
- Psychologist
- VCAL Learning and Engagement Co-ordinator
- VCAL Learning Support Co-ordinator
- VCAL Learning and Engagement Manager
- Finance Manager
- Assistant Principal
- Principal

This year was another very taxing year for all of our staff. All showed a very high level of stamina and care for each other and our students. It was a year where they should be proud of everything that they have achieved.

All teaching staff have current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).

Staff Professional Development

A significant emphasis is placed on all staff undergoing Professional Development (PD). Two important resources for this have been Independent Schools of Victoria (ISV) and Berry Street Education Model (BSEM) training. Supporting our College is our membership of ISV, BSEM Alumni, AITSL, VIT, the Victorian Teacher Learning Network. Peninsula VCAL Association, Peninsula Pathways Association and the Frankston Mornington Peninsula Local Learning and Employment Network.

All staff undertook a wide range of professional development activities including:

- Lookout Centre: Industry Connections
- Lookout Centre: Empowerment for Young People
- VCAA Special Consideration for VCAL & VET
- Respectful Relationships - Responding to disclosures
- Respectful Relationships - Upstanding
- Diabetes training
- Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and other Obligations
- VCAA Quality Assurance Webinar
- Infection prevention and control
- HLTAID009 – Provide CPR (Healthguard)
- Risk Factors for Alcohol and Other Drug Use: Implications for Prevention (Generation Next)
- Bachelor of Youth Work - Victoria University National Youth Work degree program - upgrade course for industry professionals (finish early 2022)
- Respectful Relationships Community of Practice, Bystander Action workshop
- Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and other Obligations
- Diabetes in Schools training – Level 1
- Youth Mental Health First Aid (Part 1 of 2 - Online modules)
- DET - eModule - Child Protection



Finance

It should be noted that Advance College is a Special Assistance School with low fees. Fees are kept at a minimal level with students being provided with all the resources they need at no further charge. These resources include: all excursions, materials, equipment (including laptop computers), breakfasts and Vocational Education and Training (VET) fees. Audited Financial Statements are available on request.

