Annual Report

Thebarton
SENIOR COLLEGE

2008

Contents

1   Introduction

The College continued to grow during 2008 reaching a peak of 960 students in March. There was strong growth in vocational education courses and an increased retention from students in the New Arrivals Program. The Certificate in English Language Proficiency has provided a transition pathway with a nationally recognised credential and this seems to increase the engagement of a particularly vulnerable cohort of students.

Early in the year the College Registered Training Organisation successfully completed a reaccreditation audit with an expansion of scope to include the Certificates 1 and 2 in English Proficiency. We also successfully completed the 3-year reaccreditation for ISO 9001:2000. These successes along with outstanding job outcomes for students in Vocational Education and Training (VET) helped the College win the South Australian Training Award for VET Excellence in Schools and, ultimately, be the runner-up in the national awards. The College also again won its category in the Wakikirri National Story Festival.

The College has now completed a year as a lead school in the Inner South Adelaide Metro Trade School for the Future consortium. All targets for apprenticeships and traineeships, which were set by the Government, have been exceeded. The Trade School also gained a grant to develop e-Learning across a network of sites and this will be further developed during 2009.

Our academic results have shown steady improvement and an analysis of SACE results suggests that efforts to develop strategies to address the support and retention of Stage 2 students are beginning to bear fruit. Most students who completed the SACE were successful in securing tertiary courses. The outcomes for students completing the UniSA Preparation for Adult Learning (PAL) program were exemplary with all securing places in university programs.

Mr Jafar Al Rashid was a particularly notable success having enrolled in NAP in 2006, Stage 1 of South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) in 2007 and then in 2008 completing Stage 2 and gaining entry to a Telecommunications Engineering degree at the University of Adelaide. He was also awarded the $5000 Principal's Scholarship.

Other students had similar achievements and these are testimony to the effectiveness of the comprehensive range of educational pathways that are available at the College as well as the outstanding levels of learning support that are provided to all students.

2009 will be another exciting year of development for the College community. The Future SACE will be implemented and dominate the work of the Curriculum Leadership Team. It is hoped that we will be successful in securing funds from the Commonwealth to establish a Trade Training Centre and that this will ensure engineering programs are the best available in any school. Facilities upgrades will continue with the main teaching area of the Walsh Building having been completed in 2008 and a refurbishment of Administration scheduled for Term 1 of 2009. There is no doubt that the College is continuing to establish itself as the centre of excellence of adult re-entry education.

Kim Hebenstreit
Principal
11 March 2009

2　Site Learning Plan Strategic Directions

2.1　Staff skills and qualifications match curriculum demands.

This strategic direction was implemented as a response to an observation made during an ISO quality systems audit which recognised the need for teaching staff at the College to maintain and/or expand their qualifications to enable them to teach in areas of need or in higher level programs. To this end, a number of staff participated in the following initiatives:

- new teacher induction course for staff new to the New Arrivals Program in which approximately 20 staff participated in Semester 1

- Teaching English to Students in Mainstream Classes (TESMC) training was undertaken by approximately 14 staff

- Information Communication Technology (ICT) teams of teachers were learning about IWBs, Moodle, Intel training and an EDCAP capacities analysis was undertaken to inform future training needs

- BSSO/SSO staff received language skills development training, provided by experienced NAP teachers who helped support staff to develop their skills and confidence in developing students' reading and comprehension skills

- engineering staff were involved in upskilling through TafeSA to meet the requirements of the new Engineering Training Package. This included time in their holidays in order to gain the Units of Competence required to teach within the Engineering Pathways Program

- Building and Construction staff gained their Certificate 1 General Construction through a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process from the Master Builders Association.

- Four more staff gained the Certificate 4 in Training and Assessment bringing the total number of qualified trainers on the staff to 47.

2.2　Future SACE preparation

The Assistant Principal, Curriculum convened a working party which included all faculty leaders. They provided feedback to the SACE Board regarding the implementation of features of the new SACE including the Personal Learning Plan, expected ESL scales at Stage 1 and adult block status.

In 2008, one model of the Personal Learning Plan (PLP) was developed with another to be developed in 2009. All teaching staff also attended a number of professional development activities in 2008 (refer to section 4.4).

2.3　Restorative Practices are used for conflict resolution.

As detailed in the Professional Development section of this report, the College has invested time and resources in providing all staff with some understanding of the principles of Restorative Justice and its implications for the way conflicts are to be resolved at the College.

The year began with a full day presentation and workshop session for all teaching staff at the Adelaide Sailing Club. The presentation was given by Peta Blood and offered strategies for staff to employ in their classrooms with their students and in dealing with conflicts at any level.

Later in the term, a similar session was planned and presented for BSSO and SSO staff, using examples more relevant to their roles and responsibilities.

Student behaviour policy and procedures were then updated to reflect this restorative approach to conflict resolution.

2.4 Comprehensive VET pathways are in place

Numbers of students in the Certificate 1 and 2 English Proficiency continued to grow and all VET programs had high levels of participation, retention and achievement.

Work placements

81 students undertook Work Placements during 2008. These included Information Technology students (20 days), Business Services students (1 week), Building and Construction and Engineering (4 weeks), Resource and Infrastructure Operations students (1 week) and Community Services students whose time on work placement varies.

Reframing the Future

A Reframing the Future Grant grant enabled a staff member to provide connections and time to build effective partnerships between Thebarton Senior College, employer groups and small to medium enterprises. This will ensure that the outcomes for students participating in the engineering and building programs are responsive to, and meet the needs of, local industry.

The project developed a network for interaction with training staff which will allow Thebarton staff to make decisions about skills sets which industry requires in the engineering and building and construction training in the Western Metropolitan Area. This networking with local industry allowed:

- Development of a 'Work Ready' training program to tap into potential and available employment opportunities for Thebarton Senior College students, and students engaged by the Australian Refugee Association, in Engineering and Building and Construction programs in the Western Adelaide Area
- innovative responses to the needs of small businesses and the emerging skills needs and workforce development requirements of industry and communities by creating skills sets to meet these needs in areas of skills shortage. This provided pathways to employment for the large number of refugees who are in the Western Adelaide Area.

e-Learning

During 2008, the Principals of the three lead schools in the Inner South Adelaide Metro Trade School for the Future, applied for Commonwealth funding for a Trade Training Centre grant. The outcome of this application will be known early in 2009.

Apprenticeship brokers, working across the three lead schools and the other 12 district schools, were successful in placing over one hundred students in apprenticeships across the consortium.

Cross-site planning for the Trades School courses took place and roles and responsibilities were assigned, including the appointment of an Assistant Principal, based at Hamilton.

The development of online learning resources and a web-based interface for the Trade School was assisted by an e-Innovations grant from the Australian Flexible Learning Framework. This allowed the part-time release of a Thebarton staff member to liaise with the other sites and build a website through Moodle which provides potential students with information about the Trades School courses and allows sharing of information and resources through online delivery, either stand-alone, or blended with face-to-face instruction.

Through a DECS Learning Technologies grant, one staff member developed a semester course in Psychology at Stage 1 which is supported with online resources and activities. This course is now available on the DECS Scootle online repository and available for use by other schools. It represents best practice in e-Learning.

Student Outcomes

At the end of 2008 the Apprenticeship Brokers had placed 12 Thebarton students in areas such as construction, carpentry, automotive, plastering, warehouse and distribution, fitting and turning and bricklaying. Several other students were placed during the holidays before the start of the 2009 school year.

Of the 67 respondents from the 2008 destination survey (PAL and VET students), 26 transitioned to tertiary education institutions, 31 gained employment and 6 continued their training at private RTOs.

Through the Career Start SA Program, four Thebarton students (two in each of Information Technology and Business Administration) have been offered traineeships at the College in 2009.

2.5 Student achievement data informs strategic planning

During 2008, a number of senior management staff attended workshops pertaining to the use of data to inform strategic planning. However, due to industrial action in the second half of the year, the site self review, initially focusing on the DIAf area of "Focus on Learning", could not proceed beyond a very brief introductory phase.

However, analysis of the sort of data we already collect and the type of other data which may be beneficial in informing the College about how to improve student achievement was undertaken. It was decided that both qualitative and quantitative data needs to be used to inform decsions. An example of this is the use of ESL scales during the re-enrolment process to guide counsellors about the most appropriate level of study for the next enrolment period.

2.6 Student learning outcomes show improvement

Support and Retention Activities

A variety of activities were conducted through the year to support student achievement and encourage successful completion of the year. A new initiative for 2008 was the implementation of an Attendance Report, which told students their level of attendance in each subject. By focussing their attention on this very important aspect of learning, students could be alerted to attendance that fell short of the 75 per cent mark.

In Term 2, the DECS Secondary Mentoring Program was introduced, and it targeted 30 students for extra support in relation to careers, goal clarification and so on. These students met regularly with their mentor teachers and, in several instances, this program resulted in students gaining traineeships with business groups.

The Case Management program involved identifying students having difficulties with attendance, achievement or other achievement issues. Such students were involved in supportive consultation with Counsellors or other personnel such as the Stage 1 and Stage 2 Coordinators.

In May, Indra Reinpuu presented his entertaining and provocative "Achieve Your Goals" session to a group of about 60 SACE Stage 2 students. Indra has an engaging style and he challenged students to think about goals and urged them to commit to 'paying the price'.

During Term 3 Tertiary Information sessions were organised, where university and TAFE representatives provided a succinct and informative overview of tertiary opportunities and were able to provide informed answers to the many questions asked of them.

The Term 2 holidays saw about 24 of our students being awarded Academic Scholarships, which paid for their attendance at Stage 2 Exam Revision courses offered by the Adelaide Tuition Centre. In total, students attended over 300 sessions, and judging by the commendable end-of -year results, they were invaluable in keeping students focussed, motivated and ultimately successful.

Bridging Programs Review

During 2008, release time was given for a staff member to explore ways the Bridging/Foundation programs could better support adult learners to achieve their needs and utilise resources more effectively.

An action plan for 2009 was developed and further release time to make Foudation/Bridging programs more unified in methodology and expectations, will be given in the form of 0.4 staffing in 2009. In addition, Bridging courses have been explicitly identified which suit ESL learners and have been marketed to a suitable audience.

It is expected that the literacy needs of all learners in these programs will be better supported and that there will be a focus on "learning to learn" strategies as a result.

3   Student-Related Data Analysis

3.1   Enrolments

Enrolments 2006-2008 (August census)

	2006	2007	2008

Student Groups	Year 11	Year 12/13	New Arrivals	Total
2006	376.6	148.6	227.2	752.4
2007	445.8	153.6	298.8	898.2
2008	511.1	115.1	300	926.2
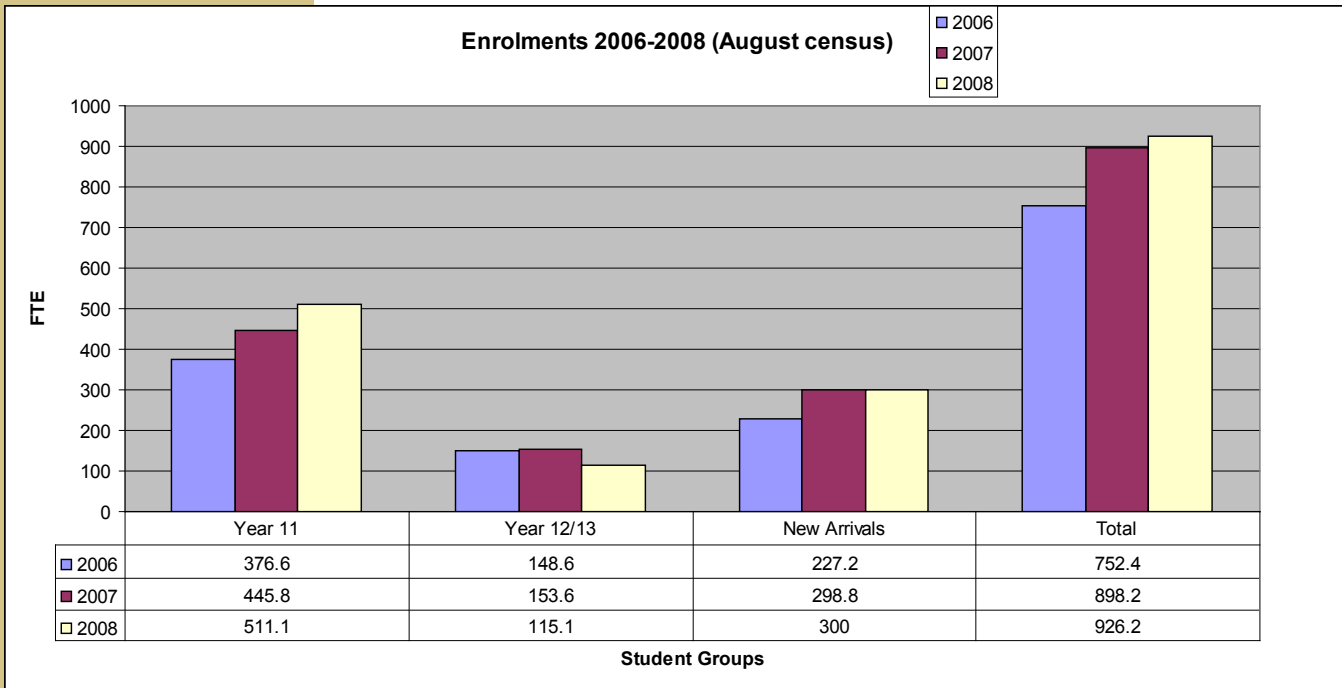
Enrolment numbers continued to grow and the College reached an all-time record of 950 FTE students in February and 926.2 in August.

New Arrivals Program numbers have increased by 32% since 2006, while enrolments in the SACE, VET, bridging and foundation courses have experienced a 20% growth over the same period. This coincides with an aggressive marketing campaign for the programs provided in the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and The Skills Centre and acknowledges the merit in offering innovative vocational education and training courses over that period.

NAP Enrolments Sem 1& 2 2008
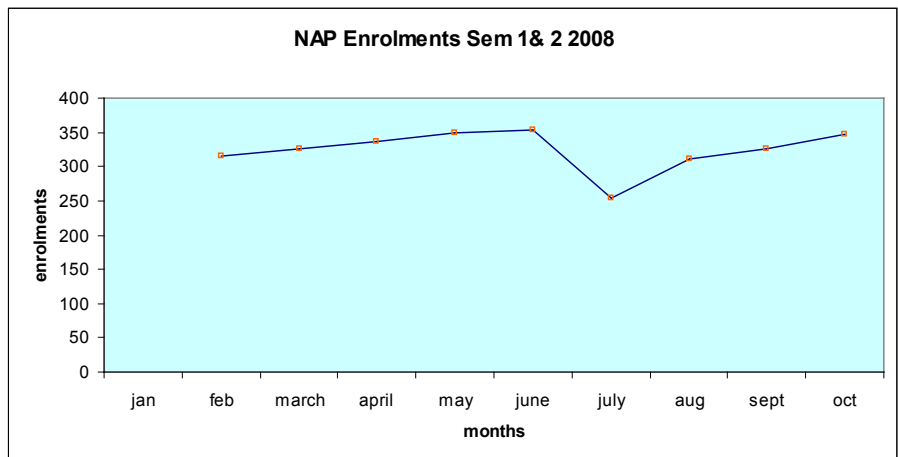
New NAP enrolments continued throughout the year and although a large number of students exited from the program at the end of Semester 1, enrolments at the end of the year were back to the levels at the start of the year, reflecting the ongoing enrolment of students in this course.

3.2 Destination Data

By employing a different strategy of contacting exiting PAL and VET students early in the year and by using the RTO administration support person to make the phone calls, we were able to contact 76 exiting students. Of these, 50% had moved into TAFE studies, 40% were studying at UniSA and the remaining 10% had travelled elsewhere.

While this data is by no means a complete view of all exiting students, it does indicate that the intended pathways for most of our students from the PAL and VET programs is further study.

3.3 Attendance

NAP Attendance

In 2008, procedures were implemented whereby frequent or unexplained absences were monitored by the Coordinators in NAP and efforts were made to contact students who did not attend. As a result of this, 35 students were issued with letters warning of a potential cancellation of enrolment and 31 students had their enrolments cancelled.

NAP Coordinators printed out all student attendance summaries fortnightly and annotated and discussed with class teams the prolonged or frequent absences of students. Counsellors were involved in some well-being issues. In some cases, recognising the difficulty some of our adult students face in finding time and money to study, deferment was an option. Some students left and re-enrolled in the following semester. During 2008, approximately 3.5% students 'left' the College, but a number of these are expected to re-enrol in the future.

3.4 Retention

Although the retention of students is difficult to track, the College has attempted to analyse data gained through various strategies to identify how successful it has been at retaining students in its programs.

An analysis of enrolment data, indicates very high levels of retention with the exception being in the Stage 2 (Years 12 and 13) where historically, there has been a lower apparent retention of around 60%.

Retention percentages greater than 100% reflect the two enrolment periods traditionally associated with adult re-entry schools.

Comparison of enrolment numbers - February to November 2008

(FTE)

		Feb-25	Aug-01	Nov-12	Apparent retention
Year level	11	471.1	511.1	437.9	93%
	12	150.7	104.5	89.9	60%
	13 (SP)	8.6	10.6	8.2	95%
	NAP (SL)	319.6	300	340	106%
Total		950	926.2	876	92%
Category	School card	574	668	692	121%
	Disabilities	16.6	20.2	14	84%
	Temp Resident	111	120	120	108%
	Perm ‹1yr	166	150	151	91%
	Perm 1-5	276	341	354	128%
	Perm ›5	119	149	149	125%
	Aust parents NESB	7	6	6	86%

Individual subject statistics showed there was an overall retention rate of 55% from the start of 2008 until the end of term 3. However, some individual subjects had retention rates as high as 100% (ESL Restricted), 90% (Physics) and 80% (Nutrition). This led to a discussion by the Curriculum Leadership Team of the factors that affected these retention rates and will be followed by further data collection and analysis in 2009 to try to isolate factors that contribute to retention of Stage 2 students in various classes.

Using the same retention criteria as in 2007, there was an increase in retention of Stage 1 students for semester 1 from 88% in 2007 to 92% in 2008. Similarly, the retention rate at Stage 2 rose from 86% to 87% for semester 1 and from 68% to 75% for the second semester.

NAP Retention

Generally, retention is not an issue in the New Arrivals Program (NAP), with less than 3% of students leaving the program.

Retaining graduates of NAP at the College has been improved with the development of Bridging, Foundation, Preparation for Senior Studies (PSS) and transition courses which are more appropriate for the students' current levels of language than some VET and SACE subjects. Through the TESMC and Language and Literacy Teacher professional development courses, staff have a greater understanding of appropriate methodology for these courses.

Two NAP staff were given release time to survey ex NAP students. The aim of this survey was to gauge students perceptions on their programs after leaving NAP. By also surveying teachers of those courses, they were able to compare perceptions. The feedback indcated that ex NAP students were generally over-estimating their levels of success. Therefore recommendations were made for

- pre-exit testing to stream students in literacy/maths and science for future pathways

- a more informative process in the transitionary phase involving the Counsellors' transition program and explicit ESL criteria for educational pathways

- establishing an Exit NAP Mentoring Project where the NAP teacher and the students are matched to follow up students and ease the transition.

3.5 Student Achievement - SACE Results

**School Average Achievement Score, by Year**
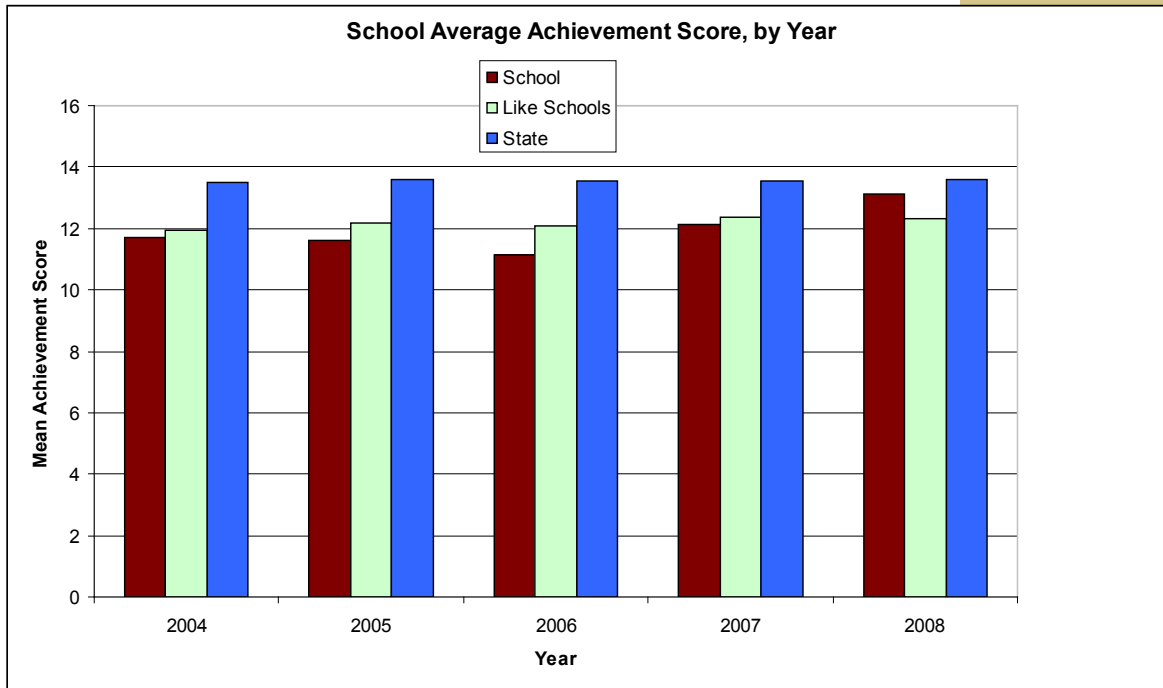
As shown in the graph above, SACE results showed an overall improvement with an 18 % increase in the mean achievement score since 2006.

The results show a 46% increase in A grades and a 63% increase in B grades over the two years as shown in the graph that follows.

"I am reasonably confident that I will have achieved my goal by the end of this year and will be studying Occupational Therapy at UniSA in 2009. Thoughout the year I have surprised myself with promising results which have given me confidence and faith in myself. .... The College teachers have helped me immensely and I agree that they have done everthing they can for their students this year. Thank you for your well wishes for the remainder of the year and congratulations on providing great opportunities for adult learners."

Josephine, 21 year old Stage 2 student, 1 November 2008

School Average Grade Distributions (2008)

Achievement Score Distribution (2008)
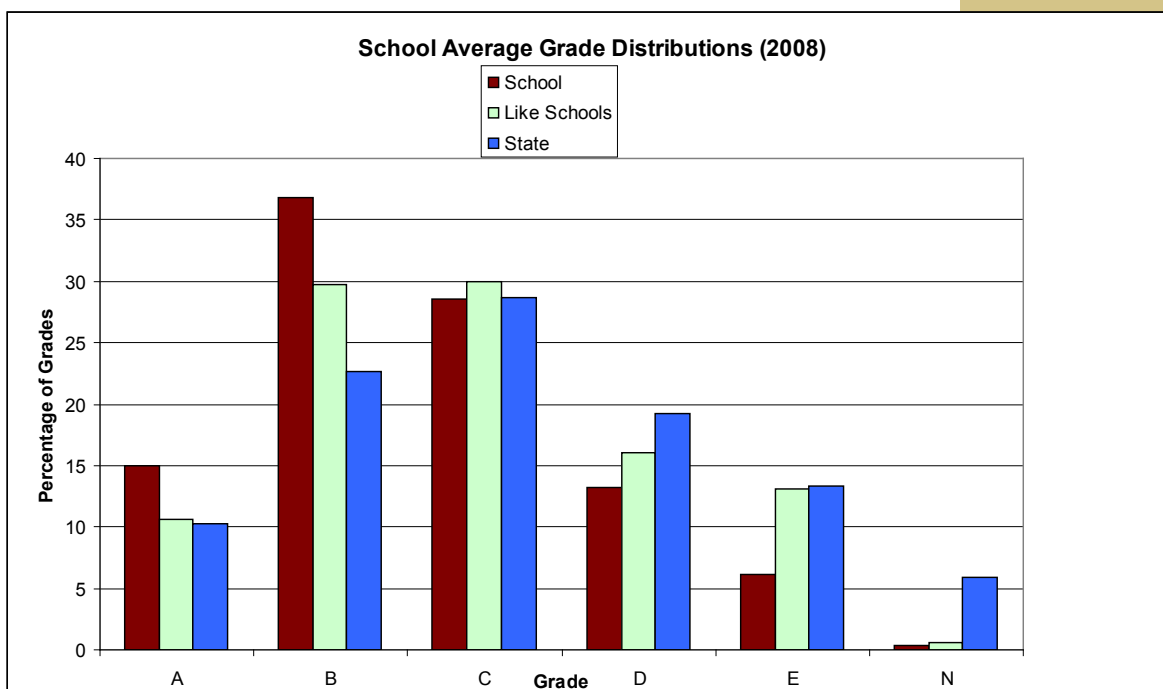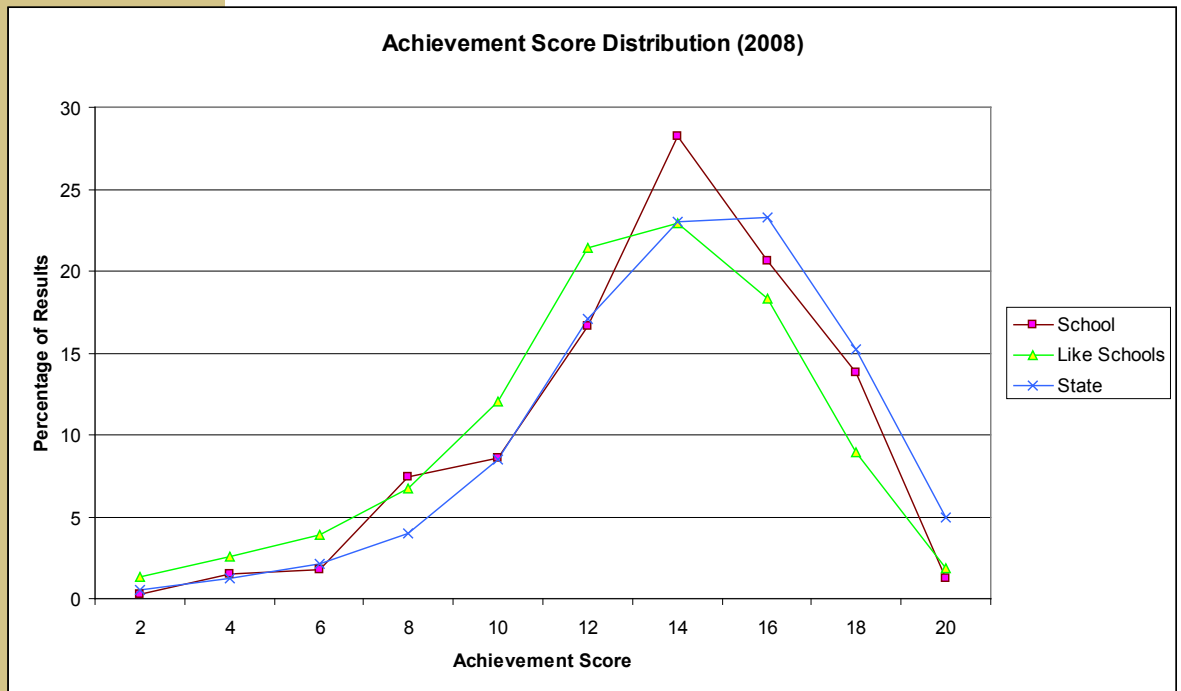
Looking at the charts above, it is evident that the distribution of scores is very similar to the state average and is generally better than the like schools. The improvement in the distribution has been noticable over the past few years and may be attributed to the following factors:

- targeted support programs eg mentoring of students identified as at risk through the Stage 2 Mentoring Project

- the appointment of a Coordinator to support the retention and engagement of SACE students and who has arranged motivational programs throughout the past two years, has organised the mentoring programs and identified and addressed other student issues early in the year

- provision of scholarships to enable students to access tuition and revision courses in the September term break

- additional preparation provided for exit NAP students in their further studies by mentor teachers

- subject teachers adopting a "case management" approach to supporting their students

- counselling into appropriate subjects for ESL students through the subject recommendation process incorporating ESL scales and subject teacher recommendations for further study.

Improvement is also noticed in the Average Achievement Score at Stage 2. The majority of students now fall within the range of 12-18 and the distribution is well ahead of like schools.

Similarly, the average Tertiary Entrance Rank has improved significantly, showing an upward trend for the past three years. It has improved by 15% in that time, compared to a state increase of only 1.7%. It is now well above the like schools TER.

82% of all students who applied for tertiary entry received an offer and 54% of students were offered their first choice course.

In the vocational courses, forty seven certificates were presented to graduates of Business Administration, Community Services, Multimedia and Information Technology at the end of year Awards Ceremony.

3.6 Student Satisfaction Survey Results

NAP Student Satisfaction Levels

Strongly Negative
1%

Negative
3%

Positive
25%

Strongly Positive
71%

Ratings are between 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) to a range of positive statements.
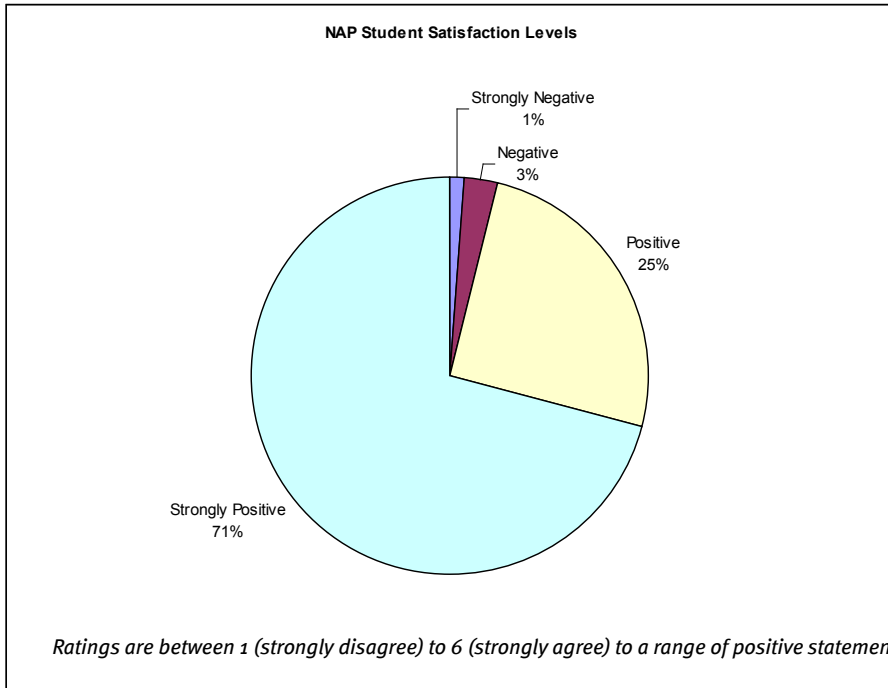
Students in the New Arrivals Program were randomly surveyed using a College-developed tool which was written in language more appropriate to the students' language levels. This tool will be used again in future years so that comparative data will be available.

As seen in the diagram above, respondents were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences in the New Arrivals Program.

NAP Student Satisfaction Results by Category

curriculum
motivation
relationships
standards
wellbeing

Student Satisfaction Survey Results 2008

	Quality of teaching	Learning Outcomes	Student reporting	General Environment	Customer Responsiveness	General Satisfaction
2008	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.5	4.8	4.6

Rating (1-6) — Category
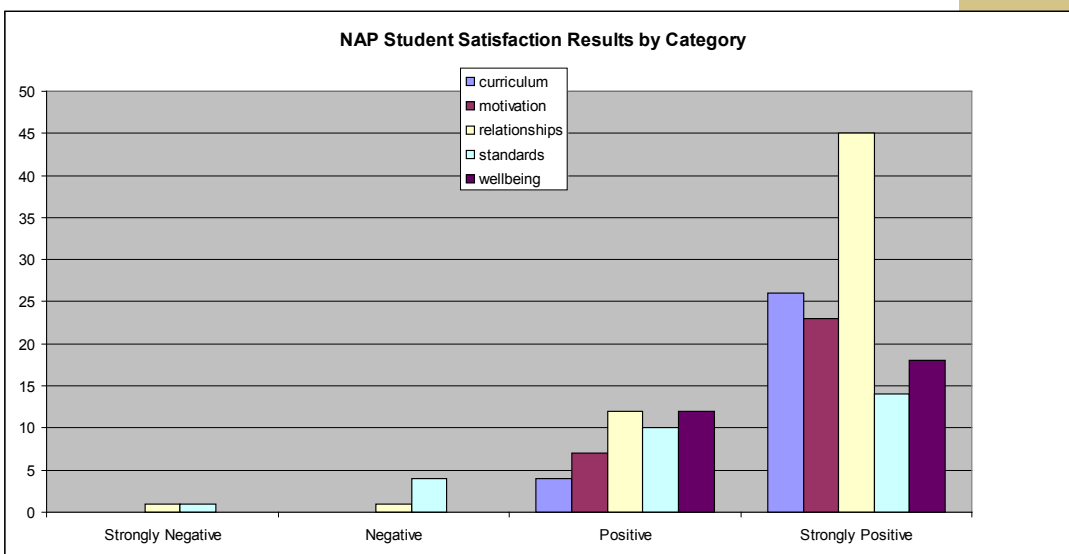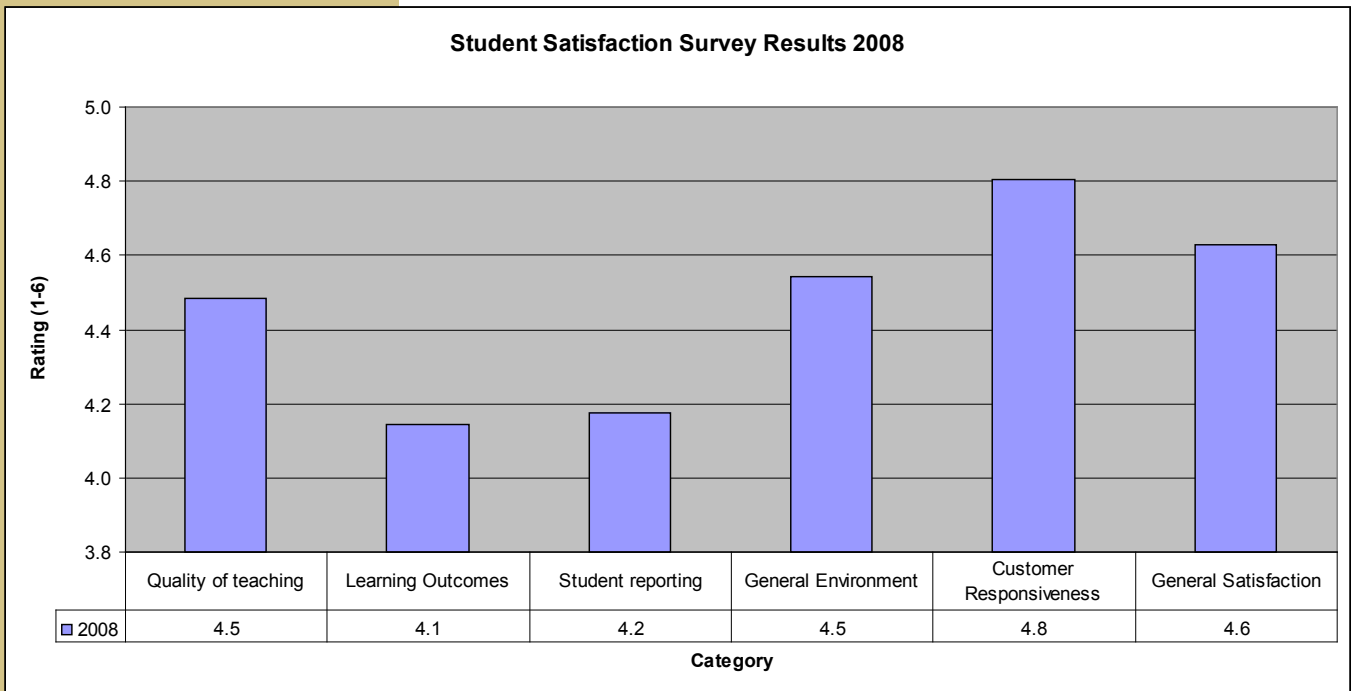
It is noted that all categories are in the 4-5 range which means that most students are satisfied with all aspects of the College. However, it does leave us with an opportunity to improve in some areas and, targeting how to improve student perceptions around learning outcomes, reporting and quality of teaching, will be a focus of the 2009 Site Learning Plan.
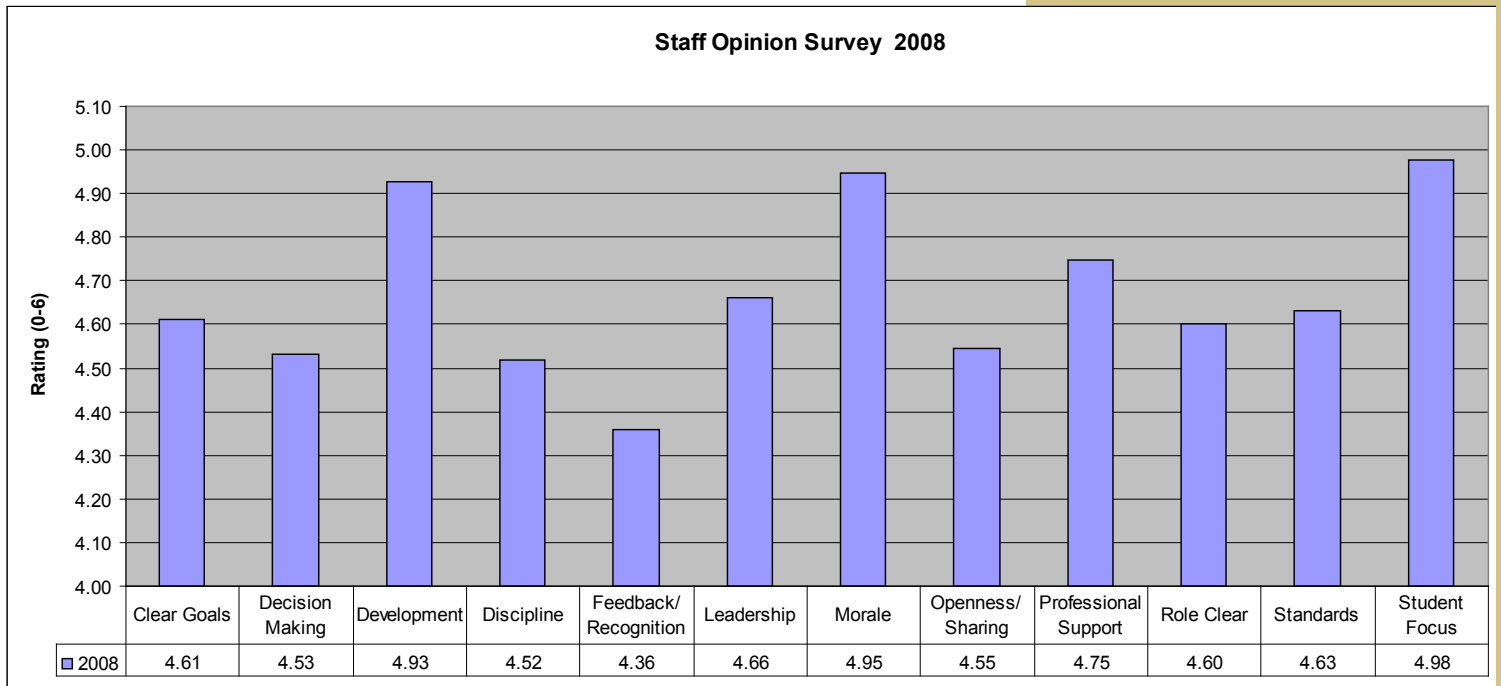
4 Staff Data Analysis

4.1 Staff Satisfaction Survey Results

Staff Opinion Survey 2008

	Clear Goals	Decision Making	Development	Discipline	Feedback/ Recognition	Leadership	Morale	Openness/ Sharing	Professional Support	Role Clear	Standards	Student Focus
2008	4.61	4.53	4.93	4.52	4.36	4.66	4.95	4.55	4.75	4.60	4.63	4.98

Ratings are between 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) to a range of positive statements.

In the last three years, the College has undertaken an enormous growth period, with enrolments increasing by 36%, the number of staff almost doubling (with many of these being contract), new programs being offered at multiple sites and the range of courses, especially in the areas of bridging and vocational education, expanding significantly.

Despite this, staff opinion remains in extremely positive in a range between 4.28 and 5.12 in all categories (on a 1-6 scale).

We will continue to try to improve the communication processes, that often contribute to problems in large organisations and in so doing hope to further improve the staff's perceptions on Feedback/Recognition in 2009.

4.2   Teacher Attendance

Teacher attendance continues to be high with only 2.21% of days lost to paid and unpaid sick leave. An increasing number of days leave for bereavements, carers, parenting and urgent pressing necessity has been noticed - this maybe attributable to the aging of the workforce at the site.

4.3   Teacher Retention

During 2008, there were 111 teachers employed at the College. Of these, 75 were permanent and 36 were contract. This was an increase of 21% over 2007. Three staff retired at the end of 2007. The retention of staff continues to remain high with a 96% retention rate. 55% of contract staff were also retained.

As a College with a large proportion of staff who are nearing retirement, the recognition of the need to plan for succession and to mentor new, younger teachers is being addressed by allocating teacher time for mentoring and in working with staff through the Performance Development process to identify possible areas for staff development.

4.4   Professional Development

Thebarton Senior College is committed to supporting quality improvement in classroom teaching. To this end, in 2008 a large range of professional learning and professional development activities were undertaken.

Staff took collective responsibility for promoting and supporting each other's learning. This was evident in the release of seven staff throughout the year to mentor and train colleagues during and after school hours in ICT across the curriculum - developments such as Interactive Whiteboards and Moodle. One staff member became an Intel Master Trainer and delivered Visual Ranking and Seeing Reason tools training to colleagues.

Approximately 60 teaching staff attended professional development activities during school hours. The majority of these attendances were partly or fully funded by the College. Some examples of the types of activities were: Construction and Industry Training Board Certificate III teacher training; Innovations and Business Skills Australia Business Services training package development program; national science conference; international TESOL conference; national Interactive Whiteboard conference; SACAL conference; Vocational Education Learning Group national conference; SA Literacy and Numeracy Expo; Consumer and Financial Literacy workshops; Moodle Moot and Innovative Technology Schools Conference.

In line with our delivery of VET programs, a further four staff members gained the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, an additional six staff attended assessment validation workshops and industry training such as Site Management and Certificate III Bricklaying.

Significant numbers of teachers participated in site-based professional development activities including Restorative Justice Practices with Peta Blood for a full day in January, (all teaching staff), Leadership of Self and Others for 21st Century Success and Wellness with Dr Peter Ellyard (all staff), Learning and Teaching with the Internet and Teaching ESL Students in Mainstream Classrooms (TESOL).

Further professional development on restorative practice, with Peta Blood, was held specifically for non-teaching staff.

There were also numerous professional development opportunities that teachers accessed out of school hours. For instance SSABSA workshops or other SSABSA activities such as membership of Subject Advisory Committees and moderation and marking activities. Similarly, teachers attended   workshops and meetings run by teacher professional organisations such as DECS Learning Technologies, ESL Educators,

Mathematics Association of SA, Computers in Education Group of SA (CEGSA), Vocational Education Learning Group and the district ESL Service Providers.

With the impending implementation of the Future SACE in 2010, staff were involved in professional learning in preparation for the New SACE with sessions and continuing activities regarding the Personal Learning Plan (10 staff), Literacy in Humanities/Social Sciences (20 staff), Literacy in Science (15 staff), Stage 1 Literacy Requirement (all teaching staff) and Critical Literacy in all subjects (all teaching staff).

The Curriculum Leadership Team attended a whole day DEEWR conference on the Digital Education Revolution and members of Senior Management attended a school improvement and site review seminar. There were also regular faculty-based professional development activities that occurred during faculty meetings.

Thebarton held a number of mandatory professional development courses for teaching and non-teaching staff in 2008. These courses included full-day BELS First Aid training in July and December in which more than 50 staff participated. All teaching staff in 2008 met their pro-rata commitment of 37.5 hours DECS Professional Development requirement.

A large number of staff also presented at conferences. A 2008 Site Learning Plan strategic target was to share staff expertise with this actioned as 10% of teaching staff to attend and present at conferences. This figure was easily achieved with 20% of staff presenting at conferences. Some presentations included: Experiencing Engineering Program for Indigenous Youth (National Technology Student Association, Orlando Florida); Moodle; CEGSA; Interactive Whiteboards (CEGSA); Flexible Learning (e-day conference).

5 Site Initiatives

5.1 SA and National Training Awards

During 2008, the College nominated its Skills Centre courses for the VET in SACE Excellence award in the SA Training Awards which it subsequently won. As a result, a nomination for the Australian Training Awards followed and after a lengthy process involving a written submission, a site visit and a presentation in Canberra to the judging panel, the College was national runner-up.

The processes involved in the applications affirmed the programs offered at the College as well as identifying some areas which are able to be improved in future.

This was a highly valuable experience and resulted in some excellent publicity in the form of television advertisements of our programs.

5.2 English as a Second Language

2008 was marked by an expansion of the numbers of ESL classes and staff working within the faculty. Initially, there were only five SACE Stage 1 classes due to higher enrolments in Transition and PSS but this number expanded to seven by second semester with a significant group of students graduating from NAP. We also offered two SACE Stage 2 classes, one each of Restricted and Studies, the former attracting larger numbers of students reflecting our current clientele who generally have lower proficiency. PSS ESL began the year with three classes and ended with five. Certificate English Proficiency had six classes of English, one at each level except for Certificate II Stage 2 where there were two. There were initially also two Work Education ESL classes at Certificate I level that expanded into three. For the first time Pronunciation and Keyboarding ESL electives were offered in both semesters. In addition, the popularity of the night class and the range of proficiencies of the students meant two classes at different levels were offered. As a result of all this, the number of staff involved in the ESL faculty for at least one semester grew to 25. Though most were experienced teachers, many were teaching particular courses for the first time and required support.

After trialling Certificate English Proficiency courses in 2007, full implementation began in 2008. Enrolments were strong and attendance good. Only the semester long courses of Keyboarding and Pronunciation were resulted in Semester 1. All other courses will result for the first time in December. Given the nature of the clientele in these courses (generally older students with family commitments and health issues) no students will complete full certificates in 2008. Nevertheless, many of these students have already achieved competence in a number of learning outcomes and are well on their way towards achieving certificates. Most staff agree that the certificate courses are meeting student needs but also acknowledge that the documentation and record keeping associated with RTO requirements is challenging. Further development of elective options is a priority for the future.

ESL faculty staff participated in a range of training and development activities this year. These included involvement in TESMC (offered on site and facilitated by a Thebarton staff member), Language and Literacy and various sessions run by our local District Provider and ESLE. English Proficiency staff completed TAA training and attended Moderation and Validation workshops as well as TAFE sessions organised by the convenor of the ESL Quality Assurance Group. In addition, to this ESL staff both participated in and offered training and development in ICT such as Interactive Whiteboards, Audacity, Inspiration, Clickview and Moodle.

In the past ESL scales for students doing ESL as a subject were assigned by the ESL teacher based on work produced within the context of the subject ESL. Whilst this was convenient, it was felt that this practice did not give a very accurate picture of the language and literacy skills of these students across the curriculum. So for the first time, in 2008, the written work of these students in other subjects was included in the whole school scaling exercise. This resulted in the collection and scaling of significantly more pieces of writing than was the case in the past. It also raised the issue of how to resolve discrepancies in scales assigned to writing produced in ESL and in other subject areas. After the whole school scaling exercise, a significant amount of checking and reassigning of scales was necessary. The whole school scaling exercise highlighted once more the need for ongoing training and development of staff in the development and selection of appropriate tasks to produce samples of writing that reflect student proficiencies and in the consistent use of the complicated language assessment tool that is the ESL Scope and Scales.

In addition, it highlighted the need for moderated samples that reflect the kind of writing students at Thebarton do across the curriculum, in a range of genres with samples at different scales. Work has begun on the latter. Two staff were employed with money from a grant from Futures Connect to annotate samples of student writing in two genres (argument and experimental report) across a range of scales. This material will be published for use by staff in further scaling exercises. Over time it is envisaged that these materials will be supplemented by writing in other genres.

5.3 ESL Support Through Curriculum Development

Prior to this year the learning support structures in the school have focussed on providing support through face to face contact with students either in the classroom or the Study Centre. In 2008 another approach was trialled that focused on the programming and preparation that goes on outside of the classroom. Two main premises underlie the approach taken:

1. While teachers frequently engage in training and development, they do not always have opportunities to consciously reflect on what they have learned or integrate new understandings and skills into their teaching practice.

2. Collaborative learning can be more powerful than learning done in isolation.

As a result, many of the teachers associated with the Teaching ESL Students in Mainstream Classes course (TESMC) were given release time of one lesson a week and were organised into groups so that they could work collaboratively on implementing strategies from the course. They could:

• review strategies presented in the course

• jointly plan units of work and/or develop teaching and learning materials

• draw on the expertise of others in the group

• use the group as a sounding board for ideas and/or get feedback on what they have produced or done.

The particular approach taken depended on what suited the needs of the individuals in the various groups.

Actual outcomes included the production of a range of resources for use in their various curriculum areas including:

• an A6 sized pocket-book relating to Exercise Physiology for Stage 2 students in which the language of the textbook has been simplified and the information presented in a way that is easier for students to understand and navigate. It is currently being trialled with students with favourable initial responses.

- a PowerPoint presentation of "Your attributes: useful words in creating a resume" that has been placed on K: drive. This PowerPoint makes accessible the vocabulary that students need to be familiar with when reading job descriptions or advertisements and also use when describing themselves and their suitability for various positions.

- a booklet for Art and Design students to increase their understanding of the Elements and Principles of Design aimed at students with no knowledge of the subject and low level literacy students. This will be of use for any students or teachers dealing with visual literacy.

- simplified recipes for a NAP cooking class and accompanying worksheets. Also extension worksheets for use by NAP teachers during the week to reinforce language and concepts taught during the cooking class.

- a 'guidebook' to assist Stage 1 (and potentially Stage 2) Psychology students with their research program reports. It provides an example research program report with each section described, tips on what to include in each section and a vocabulary of useful words for each section of the report.

- vocabulary support activities (e.g. glossary and crosswords) for Economics and Accounting as well as a booklet on a particular Accounting topic which employs a number of strategies to make the content and language more accessible to students.

- a range of activities for science and computing that were based on strategies identified in the TESMC course including information gap activities, a sequencing activity to highlight the structure of procedures, a video listening orientation and a dictogloss activity.

- development and documenting a unit of work in NAP science for Animals and Classification.

- development of a foundation course for Studies of Societies integrating TESMC strategies.

5.4 Integrated Learning

In 2008, students in SACE Stage 1 courses with identified combinations of subjects were enrolled in an additional semester-length course called Integrated Learning. There were four strains of this course - Applied Systems, Financial Skills, Investigative Methods and Scientific Methods.

Retention Rates

Applied Systems	47%
Financial Skills	54%
Investigative Methods	61%
Scientific Methods	60%
Average	55.5%

Success Rates

	% of class with SA/RA
Applied Systems	50%
Financial Skills	85%
Investigative Methods	94%
Scientific Methods	67%
Average	63%

The correlation between higher retention and better achievement is hardly surprising, but does reinforce the need to continue to address student attendance and retention.

5.5 Literacy Project

Teacher time was given for the continued update of beginner resources on the shared network drive which would be accessible to all teaching staff.

THRASS methodologies were employed by several staff who began embedding THRASS for phonological awareness. Flip charts on the Interactive Whiteboards were also prepared as shared resources for this group of leaners.

More work is still being done on using guided reading principles, benchmarks and running records to improve student literacy levels.

5.6 New Arrivals Program

5.6.1 Curriculum

The English curriculum document was completed and introduced. Full faculty collaboration ensured that the document reflects the work across literacy and language classes and incorporates activities to develop competence in all macroskills. The document encompasses ESL, Society and Environment and transition from the newly arrived student to the student exiting into Transition Studies, PSS, Stage 1 or to employment.

5.6.2 Life Skills

Further improvement to the program included developing a connection to the Legal Services Commission which ran several successful workshops for students in their second and third semesters.

The Money Matters Expo was organised this year for the first time by the Financial Skills Integrated Learning class. They coordinated presentations from a broad range of outside agencies and drew an audience of over 300.

5.6.3 Teacher Professional Development

Teachers engaged in the Teaching English to New Arrivals course at the College. In Semester 1, ten teachers completed the course and many of their presentations were delivered to the faculty, contributing to NAP staff professional development.

Each semester ten experienced NAP teachers mentored ten teachers new to the faculty, providing them with a 'critical colleague' who gave advice and support on curriculum, methodology, resources and student management. The effectiveness of the program was evident by four mentored teachers winning School Choice vacancies for 2009.

5.6.4 Student Wellbeing

NAP Coordinators engaged in a concerted program to improve wellbeing, encourage students to develop greater responsibility for their attendance and counselled students pertaining to issues impacting on learning. Outcomes are reflected in our retention data (see report under NAP Attendance).

NAP worked with Student Services to identify and guide a group of Afghan students at risk to forming relationships with psychological support services which provide on-going counselling.

In collaboration with ASSOE a program was trialled to provide mentors for a group of their Afghan students who were considering their transitions. The students worked with counsellors and a NAP Coordinator to form relationships and engage in discussions about pathways. The results were promising and the program will be repeated in the future.

Rotaract membership continued to expand and many students from the New Arrivals Program took active roles. Student confidence building and introduction of the students to the wider community has directly enhanced students' language learning as well as their sense of belonging.

5.6.5 Tracking Project

A common writing task (A Reflection of My Time in NAP), maths test and science test were introduced to provide valuable feedback to the program and to provide a piece of writing for the new subject teachers. These have proven valuable in aiding student placement and subject selection.

5.6.6 Partnerships

Students exhibited work at the ELS Art Exhibition in June. The works were produced in NAP Art lessons and covered a range of media from pencil to charcoal to linocuts.

5.7 Library

The major priorities of the Library faculty in 2008 were planning for the proposed upgrade of library facilities, finalising the implementation of ClickView digital media throughout the College and the professional development of teachers in the use of this digital technology and the use of online databases as a teaching and earning tool.

Planning commenced for the future upgrade to the Library and members of the Library faculty visited a number of school and public libraries. They consulted with the interior designer in order to make informed decisions in relation to the use of space and the latest developments in Information and Communications Technology that would best meet the needs of our clients.

Throughout the year members of the Library staff consulted with subject teachers and based on their input, set up the final file structure for the management of the digital resources in ClickView. Ongoing professional development was also offered to staff in the use of ClickView and its effective use in the classroom. Feedback was also sought from all faculties in relation to which existing programs they required to be converted into digital format and placed into ClickView. The conversion process was started and will continue into 2009. This digital technology is now an integral part of the teaching and learning programs of the College and is central in supporting students in the development of critical and information literacy that characterise lifelong learners.

Finally interested teachers participated in a number of professional development sessions conducted throughout the year by the teacher-librarians that focussed on using on-line databases as a teaching and learning tool. Through these sessions teachers gained valuable knowledge and skills in the use of online databases such as WebLinks, Newstext and World Book Online to engage students and develop vital information literacy skills in order to achieve successful learning outcomes. Further professional development with continue in 2009 and will include EdNA Online and Scootle.

5.8 Design and Technology

Enrolments in the courses offered continued to grow and among the achievements for 2008 were:

- significant numbers of apprenticeship placements including adult apprenticeships in Building and Construction and the Metal Trades
- faculty participation in International Technology Teachers Conference in Florida, USA
- development and recognition of teachers' skills in obtaining Recognition of Prior Learning and in Gap Training for the Metal Trade Skills at Regency TAFE
- achievement of Certificate 1 General Construction and Certificate 3 in Brick and Block Laying for some members of the faculty

- improved relationships with local employers and manufacturers led by a staff member through the Reframing the Future Project which has led to improved outcomes for work placements and employment
- winning the Western Futures award for Local Partnerships in VET for the Australian Refugee Association trade training program

5.9 Health and Personal Development

Revision of course content and assessment in the programs in cooking and textiles at the foundation level resulted in increased enrolments and increased standards and achievements which were evident across all classes. For example, in textiles, enrolments trebled and computer aided embrodiery became a significant part of the course. Student standards and personal achievement was significant.

In the SACE courses in Food and Hospitality and Nutrition, students continued to achieve high standards, evidenced by SSABSA results data.

One student gained a scholarship valued at $5000 to continue her studies at Site Academy in hospitality.

6 Conclusion

The successes of the year have enabled firm foundations to be laid for future improvement and development. We continue to strive to realize our vision of providing the most innovative and effective programs to our community of adult learners from diverse backgrounds.

During 2009 we will focus on curriculum development in bridging programs to best equip students for future success in both SACE and vocational courses. We will optimize the use of resources by further developing alliances with organizations that can add to the supports provided to students. The scope of the Registered Training Organisation will also be expanded to accommodate future demands from students and to enable further collaboration with schools that are part of our Trade School for the Future network.