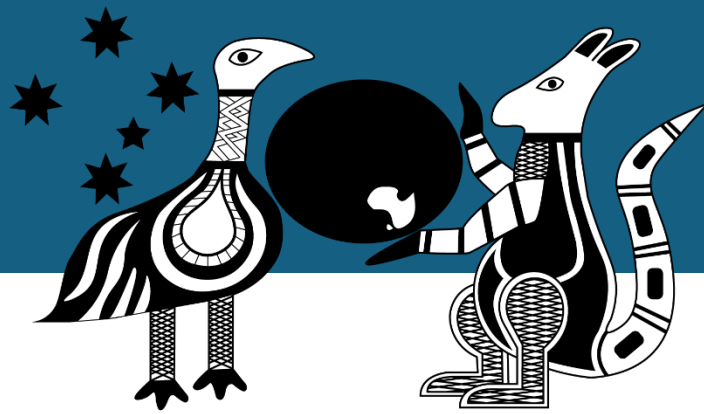




MACLEAY VOCATIONAL COLLEGE



**GINDA
BARRI**
MUMS & BUBS



ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT 2025

In preparing this report, the Committee has gathered information from both anecdotal and formal surveys conducted during the year, with students, community and staff. They have analysed this data and other information about the College's practices and student learning outcomes. The committee along with College staff and community have determined targets for the College's future development.

Narelle Moulton – Chair of the Board of Management

Megan Nicholls – Principal

Belinda Fowler – Business Manager

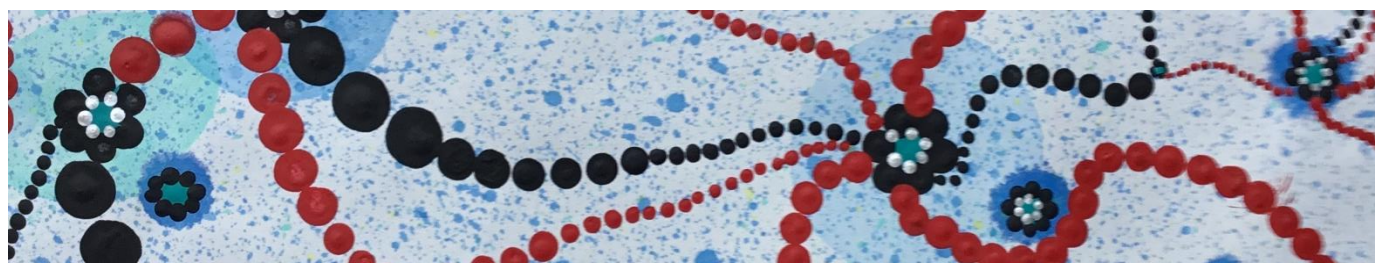
MACLEAY VOCATIONAL COLLEGE

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THEME 1: CONTEXT

From the Chairperson



I respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and learn, the Dunghutti people, and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging. I recognise their continuing connection to land, culture and community. Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

The 2025 school year commenced with the appointment of a new Principal, Mr Phillip Wilson. Due to family commitments, Mr Wilson concluded his tenure at the end of Term 1. Given a period of leadership transition in

preceding years, the Board carefully considered the importance of stability and continuity for the College community.

Following this, Ms Megan Nicholls, a highly experienced and long-standing member of staff, was appointed to the role of Principal in an acting capacity. Ms Nicholls has demonstrated strong leadership over many years and has provided valuable support to previous Principals. The Board is grateful that she accepted this position, bringing confidence and stability to the College during a critical period. Under Ms Nicholls' leadership, and with the continued commitment of staff, the College undertook a review of its administrative processes to strengthen the operational foundations of the organisation. This work has been important in supporting effective governance and positioning the College for future growth.

Throughout the year, the College continued to deliver a diverse and engaging educational program. Students were provided with meaningful learning experiences, including on-Country activities, outdoor education such as white-water rafting, cultural workshops including didgeridoo sessions, and a strong focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills. Student wellbeing remained a central priority across all programs.

A highlight of the year was the graduation of 25 students. This milestone reflects the perseverance, resilience and achievements of each student. I extend my congratulations to the graduates and thank the dedicated staff who have supported them throughout their educational journeys.

On behalf of the Board, I acknowledge and thank Ms Nicholls for her leadership during a period of transition. I also extend appreciation to all staff for their ongoing dedication and contribution to the College, including those in administration, student support and operational roles, whose collective efforts ensure the smooth running of the College. I would also like to recognise the contribution of the Board members: Mr Kevin Heshaw, Mr Ron Walker, Ms Suzanne Wells, Mr Ian Poe, Mr Mark Werner and Ms Kerry Grace. I thank Ms Grace for her valuable service, noting her decision to step down from the Board to focus on her community work. Her contribution has been greatly appreciated.

Looking ahead, I am confident the College is well positioned for continued consolidation and growth in 2026. The Board remains committed to ensuring the College maintains its strong presence within the community and continues to provide meaningful educational opportunities for all students.

Narelle Moulton | Chairwoman

From the Principal



The 2025 school year has been a period of focus around stability, strengthened structures, and purposeful growth for Macleay Vocational College. Following several years of leadership transition, the College has entered a phase of consolidation, alignment, and forward momentum

Our long serving staff and coordinators continue to be the backbone of the College.

Their deep commitment, adaptability, and unwavering focus on student wellbeing and engagement have guided the school through change and ensured continuity for our young people. Their work remains central to the strength and identity of our community.

A major focus in 2025 has been the strengthening of senior school structures. The introduction of Support Teachers for both Year 11 and Year 12 has targeted academic and wellbeing support for students in their final years of schooling. This model ensures that senior students have consistent guidance as they navigate the demands of Stage 6.

In Stage 5, the College continued to refine our learning model. Stage 5 classrooms, supported by both Key Teachers and subject specific teachers, have created stable, predictable, and supportive learning environments. These spaces are intentionally designed to be calm, structured, and student centred, enabling teachers to implement adjustments that meet diverse learning needs.

The Key Teacher role remains central to the success of Stage 5. These teachers support homerooms, manage daily routines, and foster strong relationships that underpin engagement and attendance.

Attendance across the College has shown significant improvement throughout 2025. The structural changes implemented in Stage 5, combined with strengthened senior support, have contributed to a continued upward trend in daily attendance.

The wellbeing team remains one of the College's greatest strengths. The team consists of a group of staff forming a responsive and highly effective support network for students.

In partnership with ISNSW, the College continued to implement the Whole School Wellbeing Initiative, ensuring a consistent, school wide approach to wellbeing. There will be continued work on the whole school approach moving forward with continued improvements. Two new initiatives introduced in 2025 have already demonstrated strong impact:

- Weekly Wellbeing Support Morning for all students
- Weekly Whole School Assembly, which has grown in effectiveness and connection

These initiatives have strengthened relationships, increased positive engagement, and contributed to a more cohesive school culture.

The Macleay Valley Workplace Learning Centre RTO has continued to strengthen its systems, compliance, and scope of delivery. Under Shannon Dowlings's leadership, the College has undertaken significant work to rebuild a robust RTO framework. This includes reviewing qualifications, streamlining processes, and preparing for delivery in 2026-2027.

This redevelopment will expand opportunities for students and ensure sustainable, high quality vocational pathways aligned with community needs.

2025 has been a year of meaningful celebration and community connection. NAIDOC Week was a highlight, bringing together students, families, and visiting schools in a celebration of culture, pride, and identity. The event showcased the strength of community partnerships and the positive influence of sport and cultural connection.

The Ginda Barri Centre was featured in a Guardian article titled "Graduation Day at the 'Last Chance School' for Students Facing Barriers to Education", highlighting the achievements of young mothers completing Year 12 and the significance of their graduation.

The College proudly celebrated 25 graduates, representing 25% of the student population, a milestone that reflects the resilience of students and the dedication of staff.

In 2025, the College continued to strengthen its learning environments. The introduction of the Learning Hub, a dedicated and staffed space for students requiring additional support, has enhanced wraparound services. Access is based on a referral process, ensuring that the Hub complements existing support strategies and maintains a strong focus on wellbeing and engagement.

The achievements of 2025 would not have been possible without the dedication of our exceptional staff. Their commitment to our students, their professionalism, and their willingness to adapt have shaped a strong and positive year for the College.

The College enters 2026 with confidence and momentum. Our structures are building, our programs are effective, and our community is united in purpose. We remain committed to fostering personal growth, resilience, cultural pride, and lifelong learning.

Together, we will continue to create opportunities, strengthen community, and ensure every student feels valued, supported, and empowered to succeed.

Megan Nicholls | Principal



Priority Areas for Improvement

In 2026, the College will continue to build on the foundations established in 2025, with a focus on sustained improvement across key areas of student learning, wellbeing, and organisational practice. Priority areas include:

- Strengthening literacy and numeracy outcomes through the implementation of a more structured and data-informed intervention approach
- Enhancing attendance through targeted engagement strategies and continued refinement of flexible learning pathways
- Further development of senior school structures to support successful completion of the HSC and transition pathways
- Continued alignment of Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs with local employment and industry needs

These priorities will guide planning and practice across the College as we continue to support positive outcomes for all students.

Contextual Information About the School

Macleay Vocational College in Kempsey was established in 2001 by the Kempsey community and the Macleay Valley Workplace Learning Centre Inc. The school, in its current location on Reginald Ward Street, was officially opened on 22 March 2006. Since then, it has grown steadily, maintaining an enrolment of around 100 students each year, with capacity to enroll up to 120. We employ approximately 26 local teachers and additional support staff. Just over 70% of the student population is Aboriginal, and around 28% of staff identify as Aboriginal.

Our vision at Macleay Vocational College is to support the development of every young person enrolled at the College and foster their personal growth, so they become resilient, tolerant, and self-confident members of the community.

We encourage a commitment to lifelong learning and a personal-best approach to growth and achievement. The school provides a supportive and flexible environment where students can develop a strong sense of belonging, pride, personal identity, and cultural awareness. The College fulfils its mission by encouraging students to achieve their personal best. It specialises in a blended education model that offers both academic and vocational pathways, with the Higher School Certificate (HSC), completion of Vocational Education and Training, and pathways to employment forming key goals for all students.

The College is classified as a Special Assistance School and enrolls students who may not thrive in a traditional mainstream setting, including those who have been suspended or expelled, or who are transitioning from Juvenile Detention. Despite these challenges, the College continues to be recognised as a leader in delivering alternative education to students at risk of disengaging from learning. The College also offers a wrap-around health and wellbeing support service, employing psychologists, counsellors, social workers, and mental health support workers.

The school plays an important role in the community, catering for students from Years 9 to 12. Student enrolment generally ranges from 85 to 120 each year, with a number of students transitioning from the College back into mainstream schooling or into local TAFE courses.

This information is also available at [Home | My School](#)

Characteristics of the Student Body

Total student enrolment years 10-12 as of August Census 2025 was 88, of which 56% identified as Indigenous.

THEME 2: OUTCOMES & RESULTS

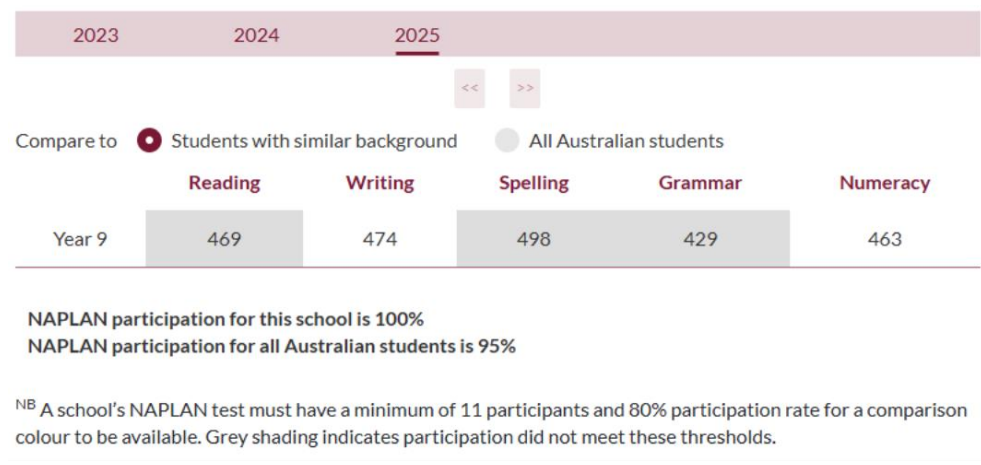
Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy & Numeracy Testing

This information is available online at <http://myschool.edu.au>

This table shows the average student results by year.

The cell colour shows how the school's results compare to those of students with a similar background.

Note, you can't compare NAPLAN achievement before and after 2023 because the NAPLAN scale was reset then.



Interpreting the table

Selected school's average when compared to students with a similar background

Well above

Above

Close to

Below

Well below

No comparison available



Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

Year 10 Cohort Overview

In 2025, 26 students were enrolled in Year 10.

RoSA Outcomes

Of these students, 8 (31%) satisfactorily completed the requirements for the award of the Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

Completion of Requirements

Students who do not initially meet all requirements may complete outstanding requirements while still enrolled at the school, including during Stage 6, and may subsequently qualify for the RoSA.

Results of Higher School Certificate

In 2025, twenty-five students completed Year 12 and of this cohort 40% fully completed their HSC.

Subject	Year	No. of students	Students Omitted	Band 4-6	State	Band 2-3	State	Band 1	State
English Standard									
	25	10	0	0	68%	9	32%	1	.5 %
	24	4		0	68%	3	32%	1	1%
	23	5		1	59%	4	38%	0	2%
English Studies Exam									
	25	14	0	0	7%	6	49%	8	4%
	24	13		0	11%	5	75%	8	14%
	23	6		0	4%	4	34%	2	7%
Aboriginal Studies									
	25	22	1	0	55%	7	30%	15	10%
	24	15		2	61%	7	34%	6	5%
	23	11		3	60%	6	29%	2	7%
Mathematics Standard 2									
	25	8	1	0	60%	1	36%	7	4%
	24	2		0	58%	2	37%	0	3%
	23	3		0	73%	1	18%	2	4%
Visual Arts									
	25	10	0	3	92%	7	8%	0	.5%
	24	11		3	94%	8	6%	0	0%
	23	3		2	90%	1	8%	0	0%
Community and Family Studies									
	25	6	0	0	70%	6	27%	0	1%
	24	6		0	72%	6	27%	0	1%
	23	3		1	70%	0	26%	2	2%
Hospitality Exam									
	25	9	0	0	61%	9	24%	0	1%
	24	5		0	80%	5	20%	0	1%
	23	4		0	52%	4	27%	0	1%
Biology									
	25	2	0	0	65%	1	31%	1	4%
	24	1		0	70%	1	28%	0	2%
	23	1		0	63%	1	35%	0	2%
Primary Industries									
	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	24	1		0	0	1	0	0	0

Agriculture									
	25	1	0	0	61%	0	33%	1	4%
Business Services									
	25	4	1	0	59%	1	29%	0	1%
	24	1		1	73%	0	26%	0	1%
Personal Development, Health & Physical Education									
	25	4	0	0	68%	4	31	0	1%

Interpretative comments for Higher School Certificate result trends over time

Analysis of Higher School Certificate results over time indicates that student performance has remained consistent across most courses, with the majority of results falling within Bands 2–3. This trend reflects the learning profile of the College’s student cohort, many of whom are better suited to practical and applied learning pathways.

In comparison to statewide performance data, results in most courses remain below state averages, which is consistent with the educational context of a Special Assistance School supporting students with complex learning needs. Despite this, students continue to demonstrate growth in engagement, course completion, and attainment of meaningful credentials.

Visual Arts continues to demonstrate strong performance relative to other subjects, with students achieving higher band results across multiple years. The increasing uptake of English Studies also reflects a shift towards courses that better meet the needs and pathways of students.

The College remains focused on improving academic outcomes while maintaining a strong emphasis on wellbeing, engagement, and individual success.

Senior Secondary Outcomes

In 2025, a total of 25 students completed Year 12. Of this cohort, 10 students successfully completed the Higher School Certificate (HSC), including one student who undertook three Life Skills courses. This represents 40% of the cohort fully achieving the HSC, an increase from 24% in 2024.

Seven students were already engaged in part-time employment and indicated their intention to transition to full-time work following graduation. A number of students also expressed interest in pursuing further education, with at least two confirmed pathways identified.

Notably, two students within the cohort were young mothers who were able to successfully complete Year 12 with the support of the Ginda Barri Centre, highlighting the importance of targeted support programs in enabling equitable educational outcomes.

Throughout their enrolment, students in the 2025 Year 12 cohort undertook a range of additional qualifications and skill-based training, including:

- 14 students completed a First Aid Certificate
- 12 students obtained a White Card
- 10 students completed an RSA and/or RCG qualification

- 3 students gained a Boating Licence
- 6 students completed a Barista course

The cohort also achieved strong outcomes in Vocational Education and Training (VET):

Business Services

- 1 student achieved a full Certificate
- 5 students achieved a Statement of Attainment

Hospitality

- 6 students achieved a full Certificate
- 4 students achieved a Statement of Attainment

Agriculture

- 2 students achieved a full Certificate
- 1 student achieved a Statement of Attainment

Qualification / Certificate	Percentage of Students 2025	Percentage of Students 2024
HSC	40%	24%
Achieved VET competencies	95%	100%
Full VET qualification for HSC	36%	24%

Senior secondary outcomes are documented on the My School website: <http://myschool.edu.au>



Vocational Education and Training Participation

In 2025, a significant proportion of the Year 12 cohort participated in Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses as part of their senior secondary pathway. Based on cohort data, approximately **95% of students undertook VET or competency-based training** during their senior years, reflecting the College’s continued emphasis on practical, skills-based learning pathways aligned with student interests and post-school goals.

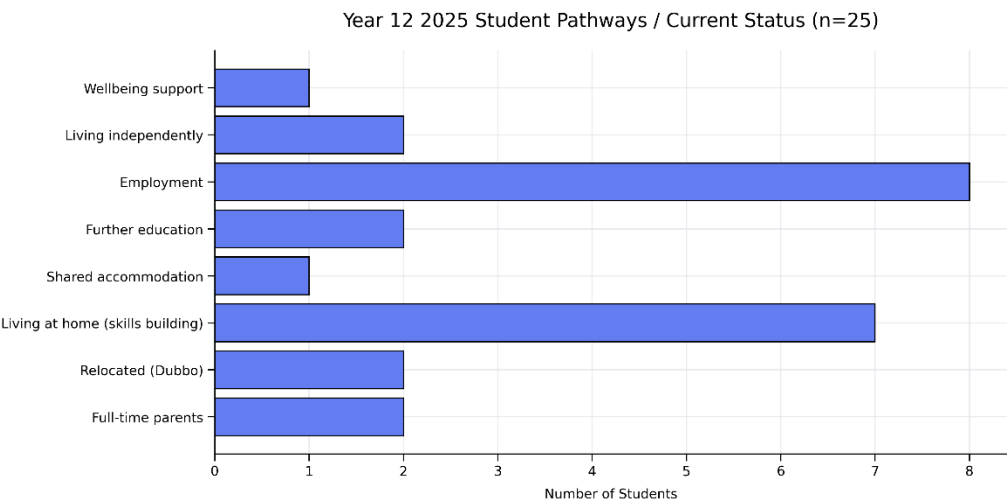
This high level of participation supports strong engagement and provides students with meaningful opportunities to transition into employment or further training.

Post School Destinations

Of the 25 students who completed Year 12 in 2025, post-school pathways reflect a diverse range of outcomes. Two students are currently full-time parents, with one continuing to engage in Year 13 support through Ginda Barri. Two students have relocated to Dubbo.

Seven students remain residing at home while continuing to build independent living and life skills, and one student is in shared accommodation. Two students have transitioned to further education pathways. Eight students have entered, and in some cases continue to participate in, employment within the local community.

Additionally, two students are living independently, and one student continues to access support services through the College Wellbeing team.



THEME 3: STAFFING

Teacher Accreditation Status

Level of accreditation	Number of Teachers
Conditional	1
Provisional	1
Proficient or Higher	24

Workforce Composition

Type	Headcount (All Staff)	FTE (All Staff)	Headcount (Indigenous)	FTE (Indigenous)
Principal	1	1.0	-	-
Teaching Staff	25	20.2	3	3.0
Specialist Support	22	15.2	9	7.0
Building Operations	9	6.3	4	3.0
Administrative and Clerical	4	3.7	1	0.8
TOTAL	61	46.4	17	13.8

At Macleay Vocational College, approximately 28% of staff identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, bringing a wealth of knowledge, tradition, and understanding of the community and the young people we serve.



THEME 4: ATTENDANCE

Average Year Level Attendance

Year level	Attendance Rate 2025	Attendance Rate 2024
Year 9	54%	33%
Year 10	52%	38%
Year 11	36%	33%
Year 12	59%	45%
Whole school	48%	37%

Management of non-attendance

The College implements a planned and consistent approach to the management of student non-attendance. Attendance is monitored daily, and follow-up occurs promptly for unexplained, frequent, or extended absences.

Where concerns are identified, the College works collaboratively with parents, carers, and external agencies to address barriers to attendance. Individual attendance plans may be developed to support re-engagement, including modified timetables, staged return-to-school arrangements, and flexible learning pathways.

Communication with families is regular and ongoing, including phone contact, SMS notifications, and written correspondence. In cases of continued absence, further follow-up may include escalation to the Principal and, where required, notification to relevant authorities in line with legislative requirements.

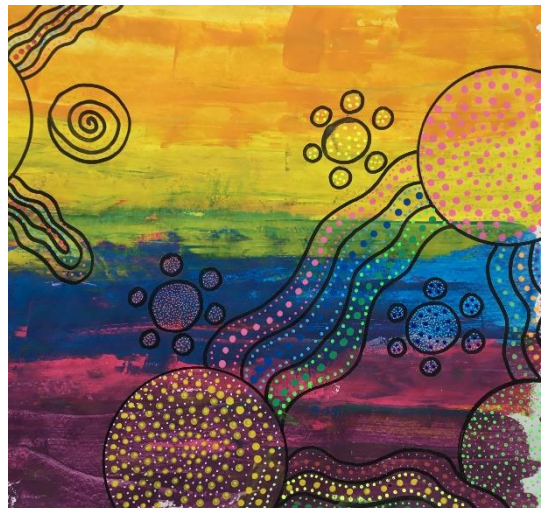
The College provides a range of supports to encourage regular attendance and engagement. These include wellbeing initiatives, flexible learning programs, and practical supports such as transport assistance and access to food programs. These strategies are designed to support students to engage positively in their education and improve attendance outcomes over time.

THEME 5: SCHOOL POLICIES

The following school policies are publicly available and can be found at this link:

[About MVC | Macleay Vocational College](#)

- Anti-bullying
- Child protection
- Student Behaviour & Discipline
- Enrolment
- Complaints Handling



THEME 6: STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION

Stakeholder Satisfaction

Macleay Vocational College values the perspectives of students, parents, and staff in shaping a responsive and supportive educational environment. Feedback is gathered through formal processes, including Annual Review Meetings, and through ongoing informal engagement with the school community.

Student Satisfaction

Student feedback throughout 2025 indicates a strong sense of connection to the College, particularly in relation to wellbeing support, flexible learning environments, and relationships with staff. Initiatives such as the Wellbeing Support Morning and Whole School Assemblies have contributed to increased engagement and a stronger sense of belonging for students.

Parent Satisfaction

Feedback from parents and carers highlights appreciation for the supportive and inclusive approach of the College. Community events, including BBQs and subject selection mornings, have strengthened communication and reinforced the importance of partnership in supporting student success. Parents value the personalised approach taken by staff to support student wellbeing and engagement.

Staff Satisfaction

All staff participated in Annual Review Meetings (ARM) with the Principal and provided feedback on school programs and priorities. Staff indicated strong levels of satisfaction with the collaborative culture of the College, the focus on student wellbeing, and opportunities for professional growth. Key areas identified for further development include additional structured mental health initiatives and continued refinement of curriculum programs.

Summary of Feedback Themes

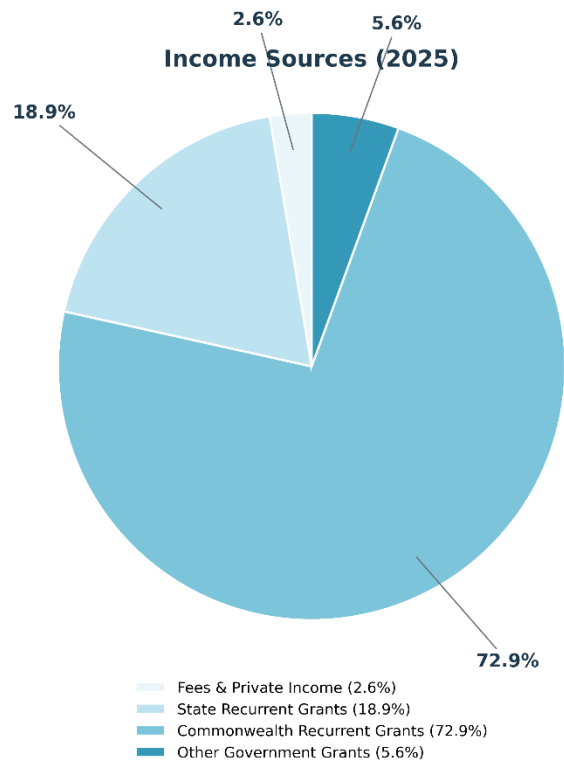
Common themes identified across stakeholder groups included:

- Continued focus on student wellbeing and mental health support
- Expansion of outdoor education and experiential learning opportunities
- Increased involvement of local Elders and community members
- Strengthening literacy and numeracy intervention strategies
- Alignment of VET programs with employment pathways

This feedback will inform ongoing planning and improvement across the College.

THEME 7: SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Income



Expenditure

