



Annual Report

Holmes Grammar School

2021



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

The Holmes Grammar School Council is pleased to present this report on the operation of the school in 2021, in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation. The school continued to sustain its senior secondary programmes through VCE and VCAL courses providing significant pathways for all of its students.

Of particular significance, the School Council voted to change the trading name of the school to Holmes Grammar School for the year 2021. This was formalised through formal registration with both the VRQA and ASIC, with this change made available to the public via the school website. It was also disseminated to all stakeholders and was well received by all as the school looked to raise its academic profile within the sector.

As was the case in 2020, the year of 2021 was dominated by the sustained presence of COVID-19 and its ramifications on the operation of the school across all aspects. The impact could be measured in two ways. Firstly, the direct effect on school numbers which continued to decrease over the school year, to that of the continued delivery of education through a remote and online method developed in the previous year. This came as a result of the continued imposition of travel restrictions preventing entry into the country for our international cohort, a large proportion of the school.

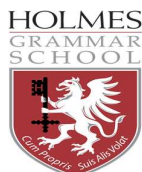
Through the academic year, the school continued to report, that a sizeable number of its cohort would, like before, receive their course via remote delivery. The school timetable would be adjusted to some extent where classes would be delivered as live through the school's Learning Management System – Blackboard. In what ultimately can be described as a blended model, teachers became quickly adept at teaching to those students within the immediate classroom to those receiving classes abroad. This included China, Cambodia and Korea, across Year 11 & 12 VCE and Senior VCAL.

As the year unfolded, through the various lockdowns pertaining directly to Melbourne, the year replicated the previous one, Again, in an academic year that spanned a time frame of 38 weeks, 15 weeks of this saw Melbourne in a type of lockdown, with students observing COVID protocols to take classes both remotely and within the campus, whilst for those offshore, a completely online education.

And so, because of travel restrictions and with fewer international students in Melbourne looking to transfer, there was a decrease in numbers of up to 35% on the previous year. Like the year before there were cancellations of some enrolments for students who opted not to undertake online delivery from their home base. Also, through this time, families took the decision to take their children home, with some enrolment cancellations occurring at various points in the year. Furthermore, families from offshore would not consider making application for study abroad within the COVID environment and also knowing of the travel restrictions imposed for entry into the country.

For those committed to their study either residing here in Melbourne, or from overseas, all students faced significant challenges. The adjustment and disruptive nature of living with COVID in a city with a hard lockdown had its impact, whilst those in overseas locations felt a sense of isolation and separation from the school community through the remote learning model.

And yet, Holmes Grammar School and its community remained committed to its mission statement, whereby each student will be valued equally and given every opportunity and assistance possible in order to obtain entry to his/her desired pathway in achieving their goals. Whilst the delivery model fluctuated with the circumstances, the school continued to offer educational variety with a number of entry points for VCE study and a Year 12 VCAL course that afforded even more flexibility, welcoming students who were looking for an alternative after Year 11.



And so, it was. In a year of disruption, the school was challenged like never before. Due for VRQA Review in 2020, we were asked to postpone this to the second half of the year, and then ultimately until 2021. Despite lockdowns, the VRQA Review for re-registration was carried out in a process that began with an initial documentation submission in May, measured against the Minimum Standards, to an onsite inspection, eventually held in August between lockdowns. In September 2021 in a final phase of the review, the school submitted further evidence to conclude a process of rectification and where necessary, revision to some key policy, where the Council played an active role. Such a process became an opportunity to cast a critical eye over the operation of the school and by all accounts it was an affirmation of what was already in place as well how to build and strengthen Holmes Grammar as an educational institution.

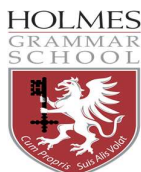
The successful blend of the two Year 12 courses remained a strong feature, with the school continuing to maintain a high level of teaching in order to deliver these academic programmes. The teaching staff response to developing and delivering an online model is to be commended and their tireless, inventive and strategic approach minimised the impact of a COVID related delivery. The cohesive and collegial way and the single purpose that all staff shared, enabled the school to maintain the quality of its teaching and learning programme through difficult and altered settings. With such emphasis on the quality of its teaching, this aspect, more than ever, remained the cornerstone of our success as an educational institution. The process of Performance Reviews and ongoing exposure to Professional Development ensured that this quality remained intact.

It is here that mention must be made of the partnership programme that the school has had in place with the No.16 School Qingdao from China, an initiative first undertaken in 2014. This partnership enables students who have completed Year 11 in China to join Holmes Grammar School part way through Year 11 VCE and then on to Year 12 completion. Amazingly, given the restrictions of entry in Australia, the school has effectively delivered the whole of VCE online to a small group of students, who have taken live classes, formal assessment and ultimately external exams, thousands of kilometres away from the school base in Melbourne. Through the support of both the VCAA and VRQA, they have started and completed a programme through remote learning, obtained the VCE Certificate and secured a university place. The school is justly proud of what it has been able to do for these students and of course, proud of the students themselves who have remained both loyal and committed to their senior secondary course through their unwavering trust in Holmes Grammar School.

Concurrently with their study of Unit Four we also began another group from the same partnership programme into Year 11 VCE Unit Two and it is our hope that they will be in a position to enter Australia in 2022, with the lifting of travel restrictions and the general easing of COVID in order to enjoy a level of normality in the completion of their VCE.

Again, against the backdrop of a year impacted significantly by COVID-19, it is most pleasing to report on an exceptional year of results. The academic achievement of the class of 2021 was incredibly satisfying with collective ATAR's consolidating what had been achieved the year before. Furthermore, there was a significant increase in the subject study scores resulting in an improved ranking for the school through its median VCE study score as measured and made public by the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority. This then translated into an impressive range of University offers, with all students receiving first round offers to a range of major public universities.

There has also continued to be sustained improvement in attendance percentages, particularly for Year 12 VCAL. The school has worked very hard to find improvement in this area and the implementation of further strategies has had a significant impact on this aspect of the school. Both our



Year 11 & Year 12 VCE percentages remain consistently high, and are now at a point where the school can be very pleased, but not complacent. Please refer to the relevant section under Attendance.

Whilst other schools, including those that many of our students come from, seek advantage in their sheer size, Holmes specialises in an educational experience for students where teacher to student ratios allow for a personalised approach, where time can be spent on each individual in meeting their needs and goals. In an environment where teachers are trained specifically in education for English as a Second Language, our small school approach is one that is supportive, caring and focused, giving every student the opportunity to achieve their best. Though small in size, the school remained resourceful in its staffing, curriculum and student opportunities, making it a meaningful and preferred option for students. As an organisation, it has remained robust and reliable in ensuring that all students receive the programme they enrol for, further enhancing our reputation within a school sector that makes its focus senior international students.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The school exists to provide international and local students with a quality preparation for the tertiary studies of their choice. In providing its educational programs, Holmes Grammar School is conscious of the importance of its role in shaping the minds and hearts of students who, for the most part, will be involved in international organisations and global businesses for many years in the future. It is a magnificent opportunity to contribute in a small way to the development of the world and to peaceful cooperation between people of different nationalities.

Put simply, the philosophy underlying our educational programs is that a senior secondary school has an important role to play in the harmonious development of the world. Therefore, in attempting to meet the principles of our philosophy we place high value on:

- establishing a learning partnership between staff and students;
- respecting individuals and their cultural differences;
- encouraging a strong desire to succeed;
- ensuring equality of opportunity for all;
- promoting academic leadership; and
- the pursuit of continuous improvement in all we do.

For each student, this means that the school will value each person equally. Students will be given every opportunity and assistance possible in order to obtain entry to his/her desired further study and their progress is monitored closely as staff work with students to ensure that they achieve their goals. All staff are involved in the planning of strategies to ensure the continuous improvement of all activities undertaken at the school.

Further to this, the school's philosophy and program delivery is underpinned by important democratic principles that support and promote the principles and practices of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- 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



The senior years of our secondary school programme represents the critical end of compulsory school. We aim to lay the foundation and create meaningful pathways to further study beyond Year 12 as students seek entry into Diploma and Degree courses or alternatively into the wider world of employment.

At Holmes Grammar School we understand the needs of our students. In an environment that is energetic, vibrant and supported by a caring and friendly staff, we look to engage all students in promoting a love of learning. With a curriculum underpinned by the study of English Language, students join a school that values community, placing the needs of all its students at the very heart of its mission.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

In a school made up largely of international students, Holmes Grammar School's core values are directly connected to its multicultural population, where respect for others is a key value in ensuring that students work together accepting their responsibility in creating a harmonious learning environment.

Founded in 2005, Holmes Grammar School is a senior secondary school providing quality education for students at both the Year 11 & 12 level. In 2021, Holmes Grammar School boasted a diverse range of nationalities with nearly all enrolled students on International Student Visas. All were from Non- English-Speaking Backgrounds (NESB) and central to their study was English as an Additional Language (EAL). A group of the students joined our senior secondary programme from an intensive English language course, which for many was provided to them by the school prior to them joining either VCE or VCAL. Others come as transfer students from other providers.

The school has added responsibility for students who were under the age of eighteen in providing Homestay families and care assist in support of their welfare whilst studying at Holmes. The majority of our students, however are over 18 years of age, and chose to live independently or with other students. Whatever their living circumstances these students faced many challenges that included adjusting to a new living environment, culture, education system and separation from family. All these factors can impinge directly on a student's focus and the school worked very hard to assist them in meeting these challenges. Relationships were formed between the school and care assist, Homestay families, Education Agents, and this together with ongoing communication to parents, was critical to this assistance.

The school seeks to prepare its students for the changing world of employment through further educational opportunities in Australia. It achieves this mission by imparting knowledge across a dynamic curriculum, underpinned by the foundations of English language. Holmes provides a highly specialised program with a focus on business related subjects in its VCAL programme, with the core content of Mathematics, LOTE, Business, History, Physics, Foundation English and Mathematics through VCE. This curriculum strength provides both vocational and academic pathways to Diploma and Degree programs within the Holmes Education group or with other tertiary providers.

Further consideration is given to its curriculum offering by tailoring a programme in direct connection to the partnership programme from Qingdao, where a predominance of Maths, Science and Languages maximise each student's potential to achieve above average study scores and ATAR's. A review of the school's curriculum annually is driven by our experience in providing a programme that suits its international cohort and ESL learners best. An understanding of their prior learning in schools from their own country is imperative in the development of the school's curriculum and the



subject choices made available to them. This diversification has ultimately translated into students choosing tertiary education across a greater scope and range of studies, through either Diploma or Higher Education courses and an analysis of the school's alumni reflects this spread.

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND COMPOSITION

Staff employed at Holmes Grammar School represents a multicultural mix. Academic staff is selected on the basis of qualification and experience; however, consideration is given to prior experience in working with ESL students. Consequently, some of our staff come from ESL backgrounds themselves and countries that reflect our student body, particularly those of Asian descent.

2021 saw the stabilising of a group of staff, under the direction of a Head of School, who were new to the school the year before. The collegiality of these staff and the professional and collaborative nature of the staffroom is highly valued within the school, where there is an opportunity to share, discuss and reflect on the individual needs of our international students, particularly within the context of COVID and the duality this delivery mode brought. One of our Provisional Registered Teachers was mentored through the process of Full Registration which was finalised by the end of 2021.

The school's administrative staff also reflects this cultural mix and Holmes Grammar School has appointed a number of these staff to provide translation for all of its students. In this way the school can openly communicate with students, and more particularly with families in assisting them through their study as well as sharing an understanding of their cultural background.

TEACHING STAFF & PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

All teachers in 2021 were, as required, registered with the Victorian Institute of Teachers and actively engaged in professional development activities through internal sessions, their own private reading and research, and/or through attendance at subject specific or more general seminars and conferences. Firstly, this satisfies the requirement of their registration with the VIT as well as being an important aspect of their development as a teacher. All teachers were required to complete a Professional Development Report as a means of evaluating their learning through these activities as well as communicating the nature of the activity to other staff, where relevant.

Specifically, this included some of the following:

- VRQA Review incorporating:
 - Governance
 - Care, Safety and Welfare of Students
 - Child Safe Standards
 - Curriculum & Student Learning
 - Facilities & Workplace, Health & Safety
- VCE Study Design Audits – Physics
- VCAL Quality Assurance Audit – Literacy
- Professional Course Subject Development including: VATE Meet the Assessors/Vic TESOL - towards a model for hybrid learning/VATE EAL
- Vic Physics 2021 Conference
- VIT Effective Mentoring Programme



- VCE Chinese FL – Oral Assessor – October Oral Examinations
- *Strategies for Remote Learning Delivery including the development and implementation of software technology*
- *Understanding Blackboard – Online Learning Platform*
- *VCAA Webinar – the introduction of VCE Vocational Major*
- *No.16 School Qingdao partnership programme*
- *No.16 School Qingdao Teacher Training – EAL, Mathematics, Chinese & Physics*
- *Weekly Staff Meetings: incorporating school administrative matters, student issues (academic & welfare)*
- *Fortnightly VCAL Staff Meetings – curriculum, assessment and student discussion*
- *Fortnightly Year 12 VCE Staff Meetings – curriculum, assessment and student discussion*
- *Performance Reviews with Principal – staff meet formally with Principal at least three times a year*
- *Professional Development file: all staff completes an appraisal of their PD activity and comment on how it may have informed their practice.*

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Principal was directly responsible for the administration of the school. Further responsibility was given to the Head of School who oversaw the delivery of both the VCE and VCAL programs through Year 11 & 12. This responsibility was created to ensure compliance with the principles and regulations as expressed by the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority.

The administration for VASS (Victorian Assessment Student System) entries was coordinated by both the Principal and Head of School who were jointly responsible for the entering of enrolment, examination and assessment data as required.

The Management Structure and Staffing in 2021 can be best described by the following:

- *The Principal was responsible for the overall operation of the school.*
- *The Head of School was responsible for*
 - *the day to day operation of the program ensuring efficiency and effectiveness*
 - *monitoring and attending to the welfare (including academic progress and attendance) of students in that program*
 - *leading and coordinating teachers in the carrying out of their prescribed duties*
 - *reporting directly to Principal*
- *Administrative support was provided by the School Administration Officer whose role included the following:*
 - *Registration of student enrolment, transition and exit*
 - *Coordinating student enrolment & academic fees*
 - *Maintenance and storage of student records (databases and hard files)*



- *Monitoring student attendance and issuing attendance reports*
- *Production of Academic Reports*
- *Responding to enrolment enquiries*
- *Reporting directly to Principal/Head of School*

Curriculum development was led by the Principal.

CURRICULUM

Victorian Certificate of Education – Year 11 & 12

- *A Victorian Certificate of Education is obtained through satisfactory completion of a minimum of 16 units from VCE Year 11 and Year 12 study. The aim of the qualification is a direct pathway to tertiary study through the process of university application on the basis of ATAR results.*
- *The curriculum for Year 11 & 12 VCE Units is prescribed by the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority. Outline of courses offered by this school can be obtained from the VCE Course Overview Booklet 2021 and the various Scope & Sequences specific to each study design.*
- *The academic programme in 2021 saw the school maintain subject choices through diversification of Mathematics and LOTE at Year 12 and foundation subjects in English and Mathematics at Year 11. The school continues to offer a mix of other subjects outside of these curriculum areas including the science of Physics. As previously expressed, an understanding of their prior learning in schools from their own country is imperative in the development of the school's curriculum and the subject choices made available to them. This consideration was also extended to those students who the school received from its partnership programme.*
- *The Year 11 VCE Course in 2021 was offered to students in order to provide a foundation and pathway to Year 12 VCE. For other students it provided a vocational option towards the study of Senior VCAL.*

Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning – Senior Level (Year 12)

- *A VCAL Senior Certificate is obtained through satisfactory completion of a combination of 10 units from VCE Year 11, Year 12 VCAL and VET study. The aim of the qualification is to provide the skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable students to make informed choices regarding pathways to further vocational education. It has at its centre a vocational business study that contribute to the Certificate II in Business.*
- *At Holmes Grammar School we have designed a VCAL Senior curriculum that prepares students for further study into certificate and diploma courses, yet strongly underpinned by English Language.*
- *Entry into VCAL Year 12 requires students to have satisfactorily completed at least four (4) Year 11 VCE semester units (or equivalent), including one Mathematics and English unit.*
- *Our VCAL Year 12 Units are (details are contained in the Holmes VCAL Curriculum Booklet):*
 - *Five VET Units of Competency (Certificate II Business) that have been packaged into two units called Business Communications & Technology which cover the VCAL strands of Work- Related Skills and Industry Specific Skills.*
 - *Integrated Studies including:*
Two Literacy Units – Reading & Writing and Oral Communication



- One Personal Development Skills Unit
- One Skills for Further Study Unit
- One Unit for Numeracy

The VET component of VCAL was provided under the auspices of the Holmes Institute as a Registered Training Organisation.

- A strong emphasis was placed on ICT applications as part of the delivery of all units.

This academic year saw further development and refinement of the VCAL course for students of Holmes Grammar School. Full integration of VCAL is now well established where units of Literacy, Personal Development and Skills for Study focused on the workplace as a link between school-assessed tasks. These tasks were designed with greater complexity in mind encouraging higher levels of independent thinking and autonomous learning.

Delivery and Reporting

The delivery of the VCAL programme required units of 100 hours of teaching and independent study. This was delivered via five 50-minute classes per week in which the teacher presented key pieces of information with a strong focus on facilitating the learning for students. Students were encouraged to make a weekly appointment with a teacher to assess their progress through the assessment schedule of a number of tasks, both within and outside of class time.

The delivery of the VCE program required semester units of 100 hours of teaching. Each unit is delivered via five 50-minute classes per week. Each study has a series of School Assessed Tasks/School Assessed Coursework. There was an internal examination programme at the end of each semester for students studying at the Year 11 VCE level. Students at the Year 12 VCE level followed the 2021 Written Examination and GAT programme.

Reporting at both Year 11 & 12, saw students receive a school report for each term through either a Progress or Semester Report identifying satisfactory or non-satisfactory completion as well indicators relating to attitude and work ethic. Each Semester Report was an opportunity to assess a student's pastoral development, a report that provides a more holistic view of their connectedness and engagement with all aspects of their school life. The generation of reports for assessment is produced electronically through the school's student data base (eBECAS).

SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES

Year 12 Victorian Certificate of Education

14 students were enrolled for Year 12 VCE in 2021.

11 students were awarded their Victorian Certificate of Education in 2021, with three student withdrawals through the course of the year and not undertaking examinations.

Consequently, 79% of the total enrolment gained satisfactory completion of the Victorian Certificate of Education.



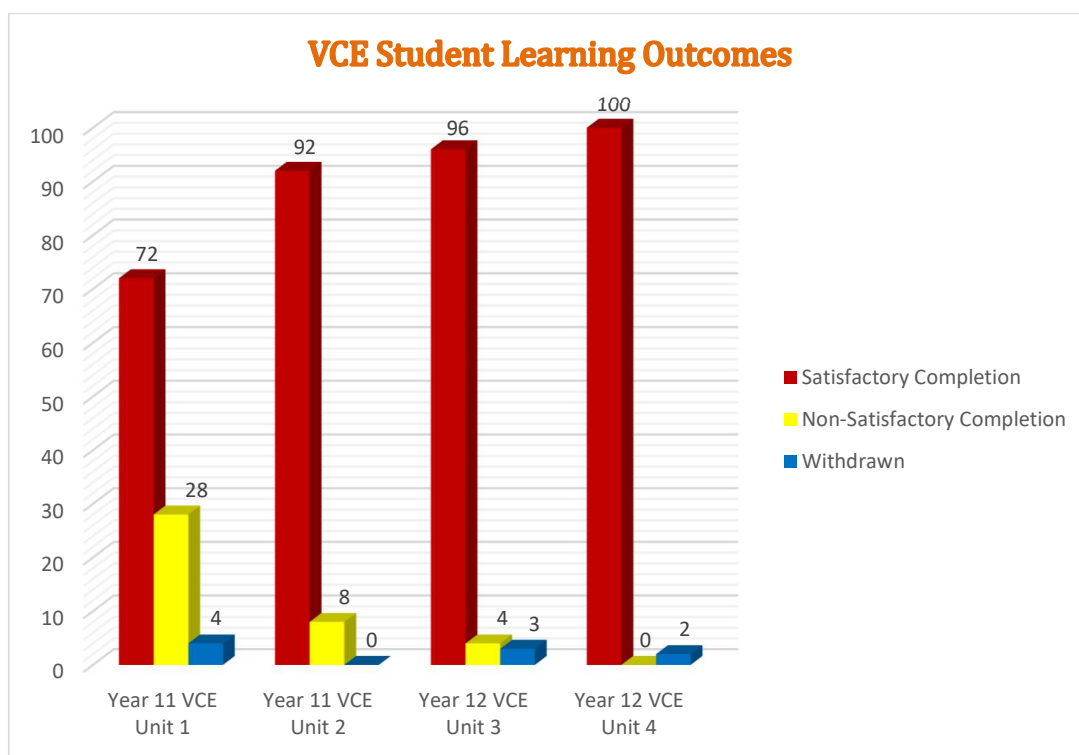
Year 12 Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

A total of 32 students were enrolled for the Year 12 VCAL in 2021. 100% of students who enrolled and completed their course were successful in receiving their Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning.

The flexible nature of VCAL allows students to enrol at any point during the course of the academic year, with study and enrolments carried over into the next academic year. VCAL is designed to be a 40-week course, but the starting and finishing date will vary depending on their original intake. This is somewhat unique to international students who can join the programme outside the beginning of the academic year. The total figure reflects those students who were enrolled at some point in 2021.

ANALYSIS OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

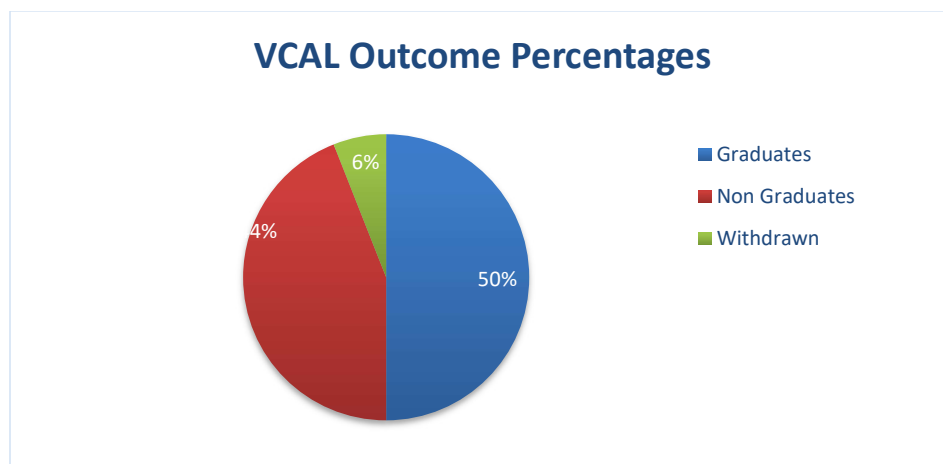
The table below indicates both Year 11 & 12 VCE Unit enrolments with percentages given for satisfactory completion. The most pleasing aspect, is that it indicates a consolidation and improvement in percentage increases in unit completion at the Year 12 level, with a 100% success rate recorded at Unit 4. In a disappointing first half of the year, Unit One percentages were down compared to that of 2020 largely due to the number of students undertaking their study remotely. The challenge of the introduction of Unit One, combined with online learning impacted most significantly on this small cohort of students. Pleasingly, Unit 2 completion maintained the levels enjoyed in 2020. The school will continue to work hard in a targeted progression in laying strong foundations of learning for students at Units 1 & 2, which ultimately correlates with the high completion rates at Year 12.





Year 12 VCAL Outcome Analysis

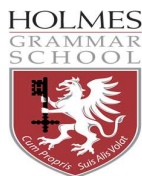
The table below indicates the number students that successfully completed VCAL through the course of the study year as well as those who will continue into the following year (non-graduates). Whilst VCAL is a twelve-month course, a significant number of our international students have the flexibility to join this group at any point in the year. The table identifies those who completed this certificate, those who have carried over into the next academic year, and those who have left the school without completion. A compelling aspect of this, is that most of our VCAL cohort have joined the course at a point beyond the start of the academic year, particularly at the mid-year point, either as students coming from Year 11 VCE or transfer students from other schools. They are represented in the non-graduate column.



Comparative Statistics of VCE Scored Results

With each passing year, and given the school's relatively short history at Year 12 VCE, we are in an improved position to make meaningful comparisons on the basis of VCE Scored Results. The cohort of 2021 were the twelfth group to undertake a full Year 12 VCE programme and were made up of students who had completed the Year 11 VCE course with Holmes Grammar School or who had come from other schools.

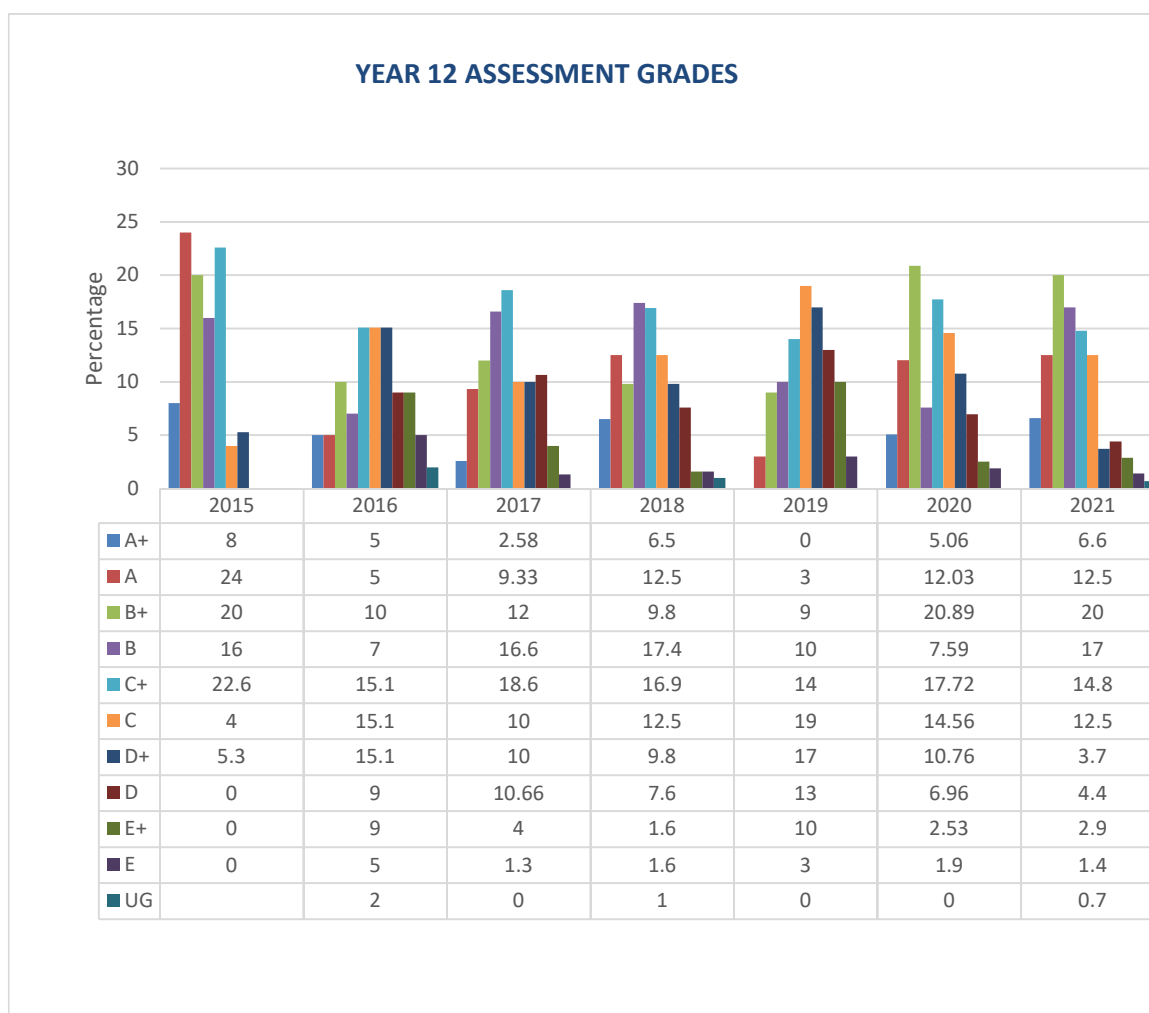
Holmes Grammar School had 14 students initially enrolled into Units 3 & 4 with 11 students successfully completing and receiving their VCE Certificate, (there were three withdrawals). Student VCE results are a combination of internally & externally assessed work, with every subject generating its own Study Score. Students receive their ATAR on the basis of the combined Study Scores.



ASSESSMENT GRADES

The table below is a comparative analysis of Assessment Grades generated across all scored assessments, in all subjects over the last seven years.

As the school looks to build an academic culture through its senior programme, the class of 2021 became the twelfth successive group to undertake Year 12 VCE at Holmes Grammar School. This being said, the table below provides an extensive comparative analysis of scored results of assessment grades for the last seven years. It is pleasing then to report that for 2021 we have enjoyed some of our best results over this span of years. This is even more impressive in the context of COVID and the disruptive and fractured complexion that this had on the academic year.



The median ATAR (67) has been maintained whilst the median VCE Subject Study scores increased significantly by two ranking points (30). These increases have been generated by a large proportion of grades ranging from A+ - B+. The table clearly demonstrates an upward shift in grades at the top end with a parallel decrease to those at the bottom. This is similar to that of 2020, but impressively, even



with further improvement. Ultimately, the most relevant aspect for each student is that of obtaining a university offer in a realisation of a goal set at the commencement of their VCE study. All completing VCE students obtained a university offer of choice, within major public universities, including both Monash University and the University of Melbourne. What is apparent is the progressive improvement in results for the school's VCE students and this continues to remain a key target each year.

Reference has been made already in understanding the need to tailor a curriculum and subject choices that gives the students the best chance in competing with domestic students. Holmes Grammar School sits within a small educational sector with its total enrolment made up of international students and its results and general student performance, is measured against students who have English as their first language.

Many of our students have only been in the Victorian Education system for a period of two years or less, and take a steep learning curve. Firstly, in continuing to develop their English Language skills, as well as coming to terms with the key concepts and language pertaining to each of the individual studies and more broadly, Victorian Certificate of Education. Subjects heavily dominated by language, present a greater degree of challenge where high study scores are harder to achieve. The development of the curriculum through Mathematics, Science and Language is a deliberate attempt in which to give each student every opportunity to score higher study scores and ATAR ranking, where language is not the most critical factor in applying or demonstrating knowledge through a subject's range of assessments.

The progression of results should not be looked at in isolation and the foundation that is laid in Year 11 VCE is fundamental to the success students have been able to enjoy in their final year. A strong focus at Year 11 was given to improving learning outcomes, student attitudes, together with the general discipline required to achieve academic excellence. This only served to reinforce the view that the Victorian Certificate of Education should always been seen as a two -year course. As already highlighted in this report, the school needs to remain focused on the number of students recording satisfactory results across Year 11 units and as reported, there is compelling evidence that our efforts here have been successful, although the impact of remote learning was telling in the early part of the academic year. A pleasing aspect for any school is the ability to track the academic development of each of its student from the beginnings of Unit 1 to the completion of Unit 4. Holmes Grammar School will continue to approach the certificate in such a way.

NAPLAN

As a senior secondary school, student outcomes in relation to NAPLAN are not applicable.

ENROLMENT POLICIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY

Enrolment into our Year 11 VCE course was open to students with Year 10 or equivalent and with a suitable level of English proficiency. Progress to Year 12 was based on achieving a satisfactory standard in a student's Year 11 level study. For students coming into Year 12 VCAL, they needed to produce a relevant Year 11 certificate which was then credited by the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority. The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning continues to be a meaningful option for new students to the school but there remains a good balance between the two certificates of choice. For students coming into Year 12 VCE they need to have completed a satisfactory number of Year 11 Units as confirmed by their VCAA Statement of Results or through accessing VASS that documents any previous results.

Enrolment Prerequisites for the Year 12 level of VCE

- Students who have graduated from Holmes Grammar School Year 11 VCE either beginning in January or July from the previous year



- Students who have graduated from Year 11 VCE in other schools either beginning in January or July from the previous year
- Students who have completed a Year 11 equivalent course from interstate/overseas with the required English level

Enrolment Prerequisites for the Year 12 level of VCAL

- Continuing VCAL students from 2020
- Students who have graduated from Year 11 VCE either beginning in January or July
- New students from offshore/onshore who have successfully completed Year 11 equivalent and demonstrate a proficiency in English Language

Enrolment Prerequisites for the Year 11 level of VCE

- New students from offshore/onshore who have successfully completed Year 10 equivalent and demonstrate a proficiency in English Language
- Continuing students from the High School Preparation programme or other English Language programme

Peak enrolments were 58 students and represents a further decrease in numbers as compared to 2020. The two-year impact through COVID-19 with its imposition of travel restrictions and reticence of families to send their children abroad in such a climate are important factors in this decline.

- Year 12 VCE – 14
- Year 12 VCAL – 32
- Year 11 VCE – 12

As the school is an international school, the composition of the student enrolment was drawn from many cultures with approximate gender equality. A dominant nationality has been the Chinese, but there was a serious shift in dynamic with a significant influx of both Cambodian and Indian students, either coming into the school as transfer students, or directly from overseas. Their longer-term study intentions are vocational choosing to pathway into our Senior VCAL programme. The school continued also to receive enrolments from students representing Vietnam, Korea, Japan, Cambodia and even parts of Europe. As previously identified, all students are from a Non- English -Speaking Background (NESB).

SPECIAL NEEDS

For students who may be identified as having 'special needs', the school endeavours to cater for those students to the best of its ability. Through the process of a student's application, the school evaluates its ability to cater for a student who can be considered one of 'special needs'. On accepting a student with 'special needs', the school takes responsibility to ensure that their needs are met. In the event where the needs of these students cannot be met by the school, it will help the student to find an alternative placement in an appropriate institution.

There were not any students who were identified as having 'special needs' in 2021.

RETENTION OF YEAR 11 TO YEAR 12

As our primary focus is on senior secondary education, a larger percentage of students remain with the school for the duration of two years in order to obtain their senior certificate. Students have the



choice at the end of Year 11 to either take an academic or vocational pathway but will move through to complete their schooling at Holmes. The school however can have a number of student withdrawals than might normally be the case. There are a variety of reasons for this including, those who make the decision to transfer from one course to another within the school, those who choose to transfer to another school environment, and those who may have made the decision to return home for personal and/or academic reasons. Furthermore, with some of the changes in VISA conditions for students on a 500 VISA Subclass, some will now apply directly into certificate or diploma courses.

A further factor to this, and one that has already been expressed in this report, was the sustained impact of COVID-19 and the choice made by some families to have their children return home. This occurred at different points of the year, but in some cases, students took the option to continue their course remotely through our online delivery, for which the school would accommodate. However, there were those who withdrew completely, opting for further study in their own country.

A continuing challenge, albeit down from previous years, was the pathway presented to students for Foundation courses. The school works hard to counsel students about the natural progression from Year 11 VCE to either Year 12 VCE or Senior VCAL. As international students, an attractive option is to complete Year 11 and accept offers into Foundation streams across some larger providers. The attraction relates to the perception that Foundation avoids a process of assessment, examination and university application as applied through the ATAR process. There is also the misconception that Foundation represents an easier academic choice, lacking the rigour of Year 12 VCE. Throughout the course of the Year 11 VCE year, the school undertakes a series of information sessions, career and course counselling as well as individual consultation in order for students to make informed choices. At times, this choice is determined by the role of their Education Agent and the school can be disempowered by such intervention, even after meaningful discussion with parents.

POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

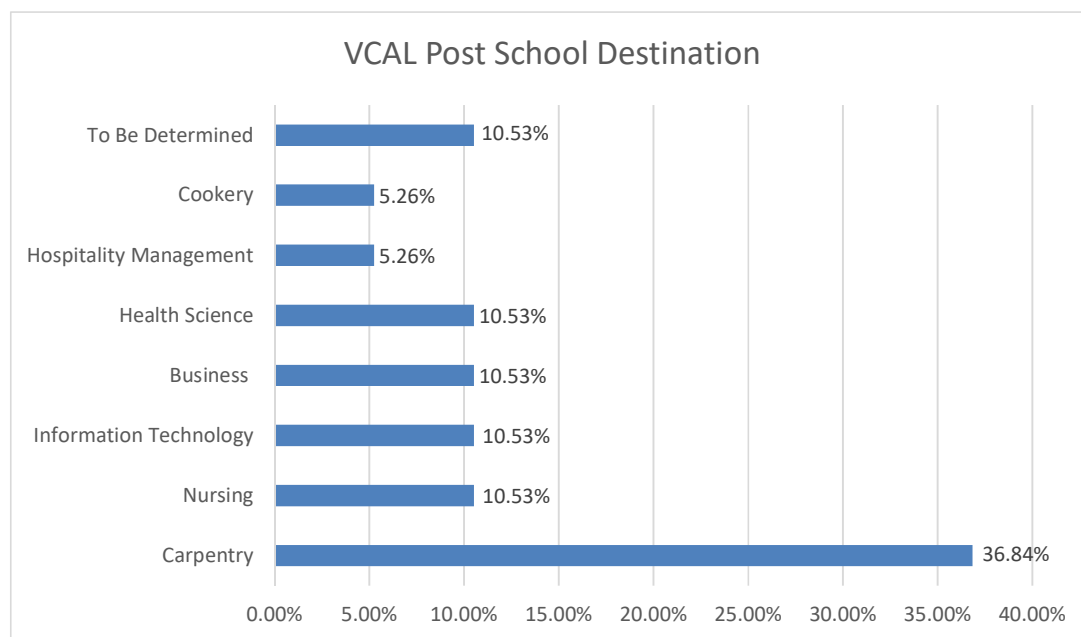
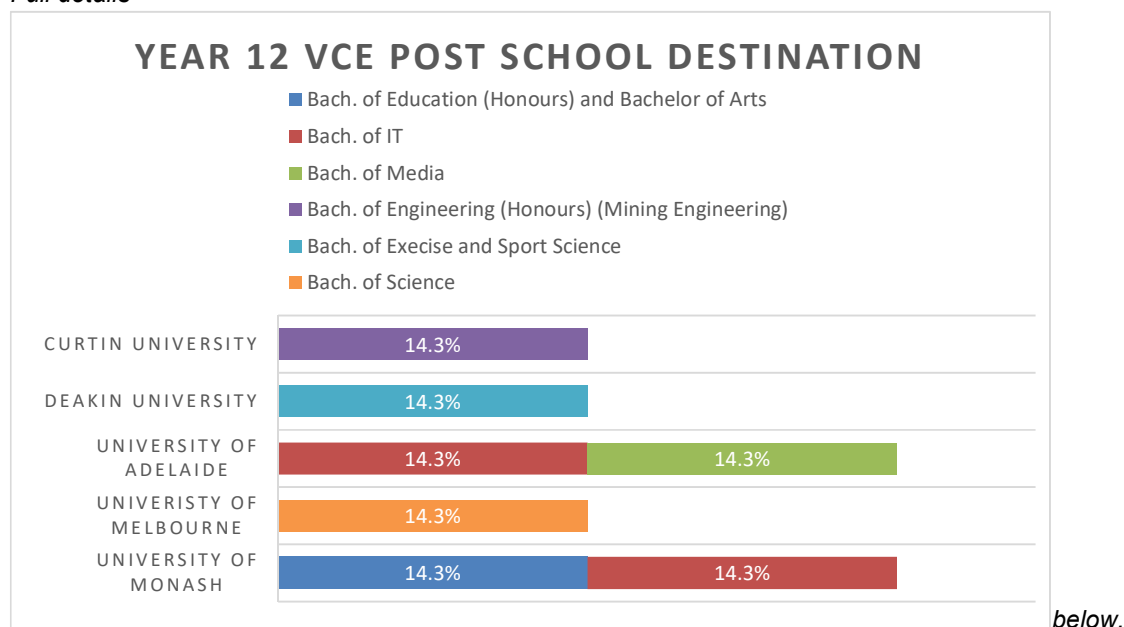
The following table represents student destinations once they completed their Year 12 study. This includes the full Year 12 cohort of 2021 through the study of the Victorian Certificate of Education and the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning. The significance of the first table is that the school increased its percentage of school leavers in 2021 moving into post-secondary study at the degree level. Over 85% were offered places in line with their course preferences. These places were across a multitude of providers that included the University of Melbourne, Monash University, University of Adelaide, Deakin University and Curtin University.

For those students who complete Senior VCAL, their pathway is directly to vocational study, although in some instances there is potential to take entry into a degree study on completion of their vocational course, similar to some of those who have completed their Year 12 VCE.

Another feature of 2021 destination for VCAL students was the diverse range of courses undertaken beyond their completion. In 2021, there were 16 graduates of VCAL out of 32 enrolments, with the remaining number continuing into 2022. The school is particularly proud of its success in creating meaningful pathways for our students who had made the decision to take the vocational option of VCAL. Diploma course choices included Nursing, Carpentry, Commercial Cookery, Hospitality, Information Technology, Health Science and Business.

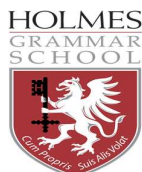


Full details



SCHOOL POLICIES

The school continues to maintain clear and concise policies clearly expressed to staff and students via both the Staff Manual and Student Study Planner. These are extended to the wider community by being made publicly available on the Holmes Website: www.holmes.edu.au. Each of its policies are



reviewed and amended as scheduled and where required, with formal endorsement by School Council.

By virtue of the process that the school undertook as part of its VRQA Cyclical review, it was an opportunity to look critically at each policy against the minimum standards.

The following policies undertook minor or significant changes as a result changes to the minimum standards and in some instances, as part of a legislative requirement.

- Child Safe
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Communication Plan
- Mandatory Reporting
- Reporting Sexual Abuse
- Risk Management Strategy
- Behaviour Management
- Complaints and Grievance
- Anaphylaxis Management
- Student Attendance
- Safe Environment
- Bullying & Harassment
- Emergency Management Plan
- Enrolment Policy
- Discipline Policy & Procedure
- Teaching and Learning
- Employment Procedures
- Assessment and Reporting
- Student Code of Conduct

The care, safety and welfare of students are critical policy documents and are underpinned by the philosophy that all students are entitled to the rights given by the laws of the land and arising from the educational philosophy of the school.

All children who come to Holmes Grammar School have a right to feel and be safe. Holmes Grammar School is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people who are in our care and the welfare of our students will always be our first priority. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, children and individuals involved in this school.

Holmes Grammar School has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of safety and protection within the school.

These policies and related procedures are designed to ensure that Holmes Grammar School

- Reflects this school's philosophy, which include values, ethics and a code of conduct for all its staff and community
- Establishes the procedures for child protection matters including identifying, documenting, reporting and managing concerns or incidents
- Maintains procedural fairness and natural justice concepts in all circumstances
- Identifies safe protective behaviours for all persons who access the school's premises, facilities and/or programs
- Details complaints, grievances and disciplinary procedures



- Demonstrates a commitment to ongoing professional development and education for all staff

The Child Safe policy is significant in meeting the principles above.

Child Safety Policy

The school's Child Safety Policy is underpinned by its Safe Environment Policy incorporating both its Reporting Sexual Abuse and Mandatory Reporting Policy. It recognises and adheres to the seven Child Safe Standards promoting:

- the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- the safety of children with a disability

Our commitment to child safety

Holmes Grammar School is committed to child safety.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Our organisation is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

Our organisation has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

Our organisation is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of children in particular to those that are from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, who make up the school's cohort, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments. These policies and procedures are expressed explicitly within the school's existing Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting policy.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Our children

This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants in our organisation. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children



- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds. The school's recruitment and its community are those students defined as International Students, holding a Student VISA for study in Australia.
- ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

Integral to this is the Child Safe Code of Conduct, constituting a signed understanding by Council, all staff, contractors, third parties and any other member of the school community involved in child related work.

Child Safe Code of Conduct

Holmes Grammar School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment, which respects and fosters the safety, wellbeing and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, school policies and procedures and professional standards, code and ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and School Council of Holmes Grammar School will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Principal and Council of Holmes Grammar School will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

Staff, contractors, third parties and any other member of the school community involved in child related work is required to comply with the Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including Homestay, Student Care support, camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Acceptable Behaviours

Staff, contractors, third parties and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of child by:

1. Upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times adhering to the Holmes Grammar School Child Safe Policy.
2. Treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities.
3. Listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child.
4. Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
5. Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
6. Reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school Principal.
7. Understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
8. If child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.



Unacceptable Behaviours

Staff, student support services, contractors, third parties and any other member of the school community involved in child-related must not:

1. *Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.*
2. *Develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'to grooming' behaviour.*
3. *Exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context.*
4. *Ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate.*
5. *Discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting.*
6. *Treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.*
7. *Communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, text etc.) except where that communication is reasonable in all circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter. Exceptions also extend to Student Care Assist and approved Homestay families.*
8. *Photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes.*
9. *In the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.*

Another significant development as a result of the VRQA School Review across its existing policies, was the ratification of a Student Code of Conduct:

Student Code of Conduct – Holmes Grammar School

All students who come to Holmes Grammar School have a right to feel and be safe. Holmes Grammar School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of its students and the welfare of our students will always be our first priority. Holmes Grammar has a duty of care to ensure that all students are provided with a high level of safety and protection within the school.

The following Student Code of Conduct is underpinned by the school's behaviour, discipline and attendance policies. The intention of this Code of Conduct is to provide clear guidelines to all students regarding the conduct expected of them whilst at School, engaging in School related activities or representing the School. The Code of Conduct applies to all Holmes Grammar School students.

Students have the right to:

- *A safe and secure environment*
- *Equal Opportunity*
- *Quality Educational Programs*
- *To learn in a challenging environment*
- *Free of Harassment – Sexual, Racism*
- *Fair Treatment*
- *Free to Question and Express Views*
- *Complaints Procedures*
- *Privacy of Personal Information*



Students have a responsibility to:

- Provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for all regardless of age, colour, disability, gender, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation
- Treating others with respect and fairness
- Avoiding unsafe or unhealthy situations
- Accept school policies regarding behaviour
- Act and work co-operatively with other students and teachers
- Respect the learning needs of other students
- Take progressive responsibility for their own learning, to work consistently and complete tasks as required
- Be tolerant of differences
- Be punctual and regular in attendance
- Taking care of Holmes Grammar School property
- Inform parents of educational progress and to ensure that all school communication is effectively delivered.

RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

In a school made up largely of international students, its core values are directly connected to its multicultural population, where respect for others is a key value in ensuring that students work together accepting their responsibility in creating a harmonious learning environment. With this multicultural student population, teachers place strong emphasis when together in assemblies, Homeroom and in class, for students to accept their responsibility in respecting others.

An excellent forum for the promotion of respect and responsibility is within the Homeroom context where activities and discussions are designed to reinforce the school's core values. It is further expressed via both the Student Study Planner and Student Information Booklet with a series of rules prescribed supporting a Student Code of Conduct. Transgression of this code may result in activities that require students to give something back to the school and its environment. Students were awarded Certificates of Merit at Assemblies in recognition of their contribution to the principles of respect and responsibility and Guest Speakers and Presentations were held as special events that took a similar theme.

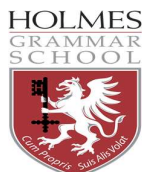
Staff are expected to act as good role models and promote actively these principles in all contexts, particularly that of the classroom.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF NON-ATTENDANCE

The school has maintained a strict approach to its management of non-attendance.

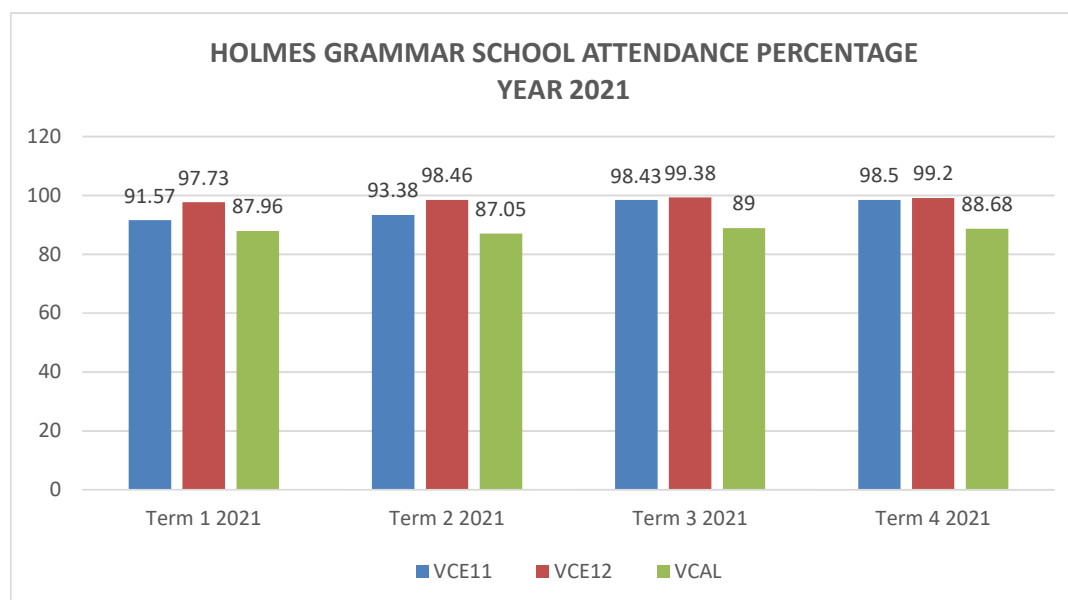
Attendance rolls are entered into a computerised student management system (BECAS). Attendance rolls are marked for every period of the day. Each staff member completes absence slips by the end of Period 2 & Period 5. Student follow up is then conducted daily by the School Administrator with contact made to Parents, Care Assist, Homestay families and/or Education Agents. Attendance monitoring meetings are held with Principal, Head of School & Student Administration on a weekly basis.

In accordance with the National Code (of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018), if an overseas student's attendance falls below 85% of scheduled classes in the term, then the Principal/ Campus Administration will issue a written warning of the consequences of a possible future breach of the student's visa conditions. If an overseas student's



attendance falls below 80% of scheduled classes in the term, then the Principal/ Campus Administration will issue a notification of Intention to Report of the student to DoE for breach of VISA conditions. The student will be reported unless a successful written appeal is lodged in accordance with Holmes Grammar School's 'Complaints, Appeals and Disputes' policy.

A common theme and listed before as a School Determined Improvement target is that of school attendance. What already has been described in this report are issues that impact directly on an international student's attendance that generally don't exist for the domestic student. On recognising these and implementing strategies within its existing resources, Holmes can report that the school was able to sustain the improvement achieved in 2020 and with some groups, able to lift these further. Year 12 VCAL recorded an increase of nearly 2% compared to figures from 2020, whilst both Year 12 & 11 VCE remained high throughout, recording an average of 99% and 95% respectively. There is now compelling statistical evidence that over a relatively short period of time, the school's determination to build a culture of strong attendance, is reflected in every student's commitment to learning. To remain vigilant and strategic has been successful, where a cultural shift in student attitudes has meant for even further consolidation.

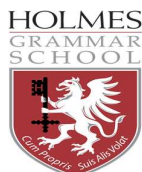


SCHOOL-DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS

The school can now reflect on those improvement targets as presented in its Annual Report in 2020.

Improvement targets for 2021, have as its backdrop, COVID-19, and its direct impact on the school through enrolments and mode of delivery for its academic programme. It is our belief that the school has remained extremely agile in continuing to allow and accommodate for both the traditional mode of delivery through face to face to that of online learning. As already highlighted, for the Melbourne based students, 15 out of 38 weeks, were spent online with teachers, whilst for our offshore students, it was effectively the whole year.

The results then, emanating from 2021 are particularly impressive and something that the school is very proud of. As reported, it has been able to maintain its median ATAR and yet improve its position with regard to the median VCE Study Score. In comparison to other schools in this small sector for international students, it outperformed every other provider in this statistic. We need to remember that



88% of our whole Year 12 VCE cohort had their complete programme delivered remotely and this success is testament to the students as well as their staff for their dedication and single-minded pursuit for success without compromise. We have been able to work with parents in assuring them, that despite this scenario, as a school we could guarantee that they will be given the best possible opportunity to realise their full potential in the completion of their VCE. Their results, through subject study scores, ATAR's and ultimately university offers have borne this out.

Again, within the COVID context and the duality of course delivery, the school has also been able to meet its improvement target for its VCAL students with successful completion for its students and the pathways then available to them.

Every educational institution is looking to find areas of improvement and with each year this school has continued to build and consolidate in areas that we consider to be central to our philosophy. Over an extended period of time much has been done with regard to student learning outcomes and it is important that the school continues to evaluate these and find strategies in which to improve. An improvement target for 2021 was for the school look to protect and maintain the standards it has worked hard to achieve. Whilst we recognise that different cohorts bring different levels, it is the consistency of these strategies and their implementation that gives every student the best possible chance to maximise their strengths. Proudly, there has been continued improvement with an upward trajectory reflected in the assessment grades, both internally (SACS) and externally (Examinations), to that of the school's median study scores and ATAR's.

The same can be said of attendance that has enjoyed a similar trajectory over a relatively short period of time, and this has remained a focus and will continue to be so in the year ahead.

And so, to improvement targets for 2022.

Again, one can only envisage what the continued impact of COVID-19 may have across many aspects of the school. Will it have to endure the disruptive nature of its delivery through the implementation of online learning at the expense of its regular mode? What has been learnt over the last two years is that it is critical that the school continues to remain flexible and attempt to shift seamlessly from one mode to another. We have watched with admiration the way that teachers have learnt to develop their craft further within this context and with the support of both educational technology and Learning Management Systems, have worked hard to ensure that each student's learning is not compromised. The results of both 2020 and 2021 are testament to how successful the staff have been. The theme then for the year ahead is to continue to respond with flexibility and agility, if and when required, and whilst we all hope for an academic year that can be considered normal, the school remains ready to adjust.

It is pertinent to recognise, that whilst COVID-19 has affected all schools, in all sectors with regard to delivery mode and student learning, the pandemic has seriously affected our enrolments for a programme that is exclusively for senior high school students from abroad. The sheer viability of the programme has been seriously challenged as numbers continued to decrease due to travel restrictions and restraints. Whilst robust in its operation, the reality of reducing numbers has required the School Council to think carefully about how to best manage and resource its programmes in a determined attempt to deal with difficult times. It carries a vision that will be central in the council's planning for the school. Already, we know that students are now free to come into Australia, with restrictions lifted in the latter part of 2021.

The School Council will look to identify markets offshore in terms of recruitment to build school numbers, given the free return of students. Consequently, there is a compelling case to revisit important relationships in engaging Education Agents both here and offshore, particularly the



traditional markets of China, Vietnam, Cambodia and more recently, the subcontinent. This role would extend to participation in the many High School Expos to include those very countries who continue to be interested in senior high school study in Australia. Opportunities need to be sought in order to raise the unique profile of the school and to develop a presence in some of these key markets.

It is also maybe a telling time as the market looks to scramble and rebuild programmes that have been affected in the same way as Holmes Grammar School. It is an opportunity for the school to shine and present itself as a robust and viable alternative for students from abroad against its direct competitors.

The school can be justly described as a dynamic and energetic learning environment. Despite the challenges through COVID-19, lockdowns and travel restrictions, there was still a sense of momentum and community, albeit somewhat fractured with the isolation of some of its students. In going forward, the school will continue to nurture an atmosphere of learning and achievement, to build and consolidate a culture of academic excellence, making it a place for students to want to come. For many of our students, school is their only community and sole network within their life in Australia and we remain mindful of the important role we have in nurturing this connection.

PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

The school endeavours to monitor its performance in open communication with that of its community. Much of the feedback in this regard surfaces through one on one discussion with students via the forum of Homeroom. A teaching staff member is allocated the responsibility of the Homeroom programme and included in this is regular counselling with students regarding their school life. From this point of view, Homeroom teachers take on an important mentoring role in order to assist the student on any matter of concern. The information shared in this context is a powerful indicator in gauging student satisfaction.

The parent community is not as readily accessible given that they reside in other countries, but every effort is made to communicate matters of importance to them. At times this is done via translation through the telephone or where appropriate, via email. In this way, this type of interaction is an important point of contact and opportunity for all families to share their views on the performance of the school, or at least to discuss issues of concern impacting on their child. An even more critical player in this relationship is the student's Education Agent. They act as the conduit between the school and family and are heavily involved in the student's educational life. The school regularly schedules meetings or discussions with the agent in support of the student's education; agents are a consistent provider of feedback to school. The agent receives all correspondence including reports and assessments.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Holmes Grammar School – Melbourne, is a division of Holmes Commercial Colleges (Melbourne) Ltd (HCC). HCC is a private company limited by guarantee.

Its principal purpose is education; it receives no government funding for the senior secondary school. Tuition fees for 2021 were \$17,250 per year. The balance sheet as at June 30, 2021 shows net assets of \$6,904,027. Income for the school for 2020/21 was \$1,024,344 with company net profit of approximately \$143,180.

Audited accounts for the company are available at ASIC.

