



**DICKSON COLLEGE**  
excellence opportunity community

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*Dickson College provides a supportive, innovative and enriched learning environment. Together we develop informed, caring, creative and confident global citizens.*

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# DC Parent Handbook 2020

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Moving to college is a major transition for students and parents. This is the time that also coincides with young people more increasingly taking on adult responsibilities and at time that students feel extra pressure to succeed as they draw nearer to post-school pathways in life. Many students find this stressful; as do their parents.

Students also find that the more open spaces and flexible timetable mean that they are making independent decisions regarding time at school and the way they use free time. Students can make choices that they have not been able to make throughout the rest of their schooling. This is like the academic freedom of university.

Students are well supported at Dickson College but at times they may need the extra support of parents to help them access appropriate help to navigate the extra issues that they encounter in senior secondary studies. The DC Parent Handbook is intended to provide parents with information you may need at various points in your young person's life at Dickson College.

#### [Enrolling at Dickson College](#)

To enrol at Dickson College, you must complete an online [enrolment form](#). For most students, this is done in Semester 2, year 10. As our feeder schools, students at Campbell and Lyneham High Schools participate in a variety of transition information sessions, with Dickson College staff meeting with students in groups and individually to provide information on the process of transitioning to college. Students living out of area or attending other schools, are also provided transition processes. Students' year 10 coordinators provide the college with transition information on the students as well. As part of the transition process, students are asked to select classes for year 11. Students are asked to consider these choices carefully as the college is staffed based on student selections and once classes have been staffed, options for change become limited to available spaces in each class.

An Orientation Evening is held each year for interested families. The Orientation Evening for the incoming cohort of 2021 will be held on **Thursday 28 May 2020**.

If you are enrolling after the commencement of semester 1 year 11, you will be required to attend an interview with the Deputy Principal - Students. This interview is to discuss the reasons for wanting to move and whether this would be the most appropriate option for the student's success. The ACT Senior Secondary system is only two years and each semester is equally weighted for students, so it is important to ensure students are not disadvantaged by moving during the two years.

Students who do move are required to provide evidence of prior study and where students have successfully completed study at the senior secondary level, they will be given recognition of prior study and the relevant points for the units count towards their Senior Secondary Certificate. A student completing an accredited package must complete at least 8.5 points at Dickson College; a student completing a tertiary package must complete at least 10 points at Dickson College. No scores from previous schools will be used towards the student's ATAR.

Once students are offered a place, they will be given the opportunity to select classes based on available spaces in classes and their requirements for Major and Minor study options.

The usual pattern of study is for students to enrol in five academic classes, a transition class (year 11 Semester 1) and for some students a Study Skills class. Classes are run on lines. One line is 3.5 hours per week. The Year 11 Transition class in semester 1 and Study Skills classes are run for one hour per week each. So, a student will have two full lines free and a further 2.5 hours off each week. This may mean that some students begin college later in the day or leave earlier than their peers. Students may also have lines off during the day. Students use this time to catch up with friends or use the time to study in various locations around the school. Students may also choose to participate in a range of [workshops](#) run throughout each day. Students can leave the college grounds during their free lessons; however, they must be in their classes on time. Student timetables are sent out at the beginning of each semester to students and parents.

**Consider the type of Senior Secondary Certificate you wish to complete:**

**Tertiary (T)**

These courses prepare you for university or further education. T course scores are used to calculate an ATAR, along with your AST result.

**Accredited (A)**

These courses prepare you for further study at CIT or TAFE, employment or alternative pathways to university.

**Vocational (V)**

These courses lead to skill development in industry areas that can lead to nationally recognised vocational qualifications.

**Accredited Package Requirements:**

To gain an Accredited Package, you must successfully complete:

- 4 minors in at least 3 different course areas
- AND one of the minors must be English/ ESL/ Literature
- AND obtain at least 17 points
- AND if you have moved from another school you must complete at least 8.5 points at Dickson College

**Tertiary Package Requirements:**

To gain a Tertiary Package you must successfully complete:

- 3 T Majors and 3 Minors (1 minor must be T)
- OR 4 Majors and 1 Minor (4 of these must be T)
- OR 5 Majors (4 of these must be T)
- AND be studying in at least 4 courses in at least 3 different course areas
- AND at least one Minor must be in English/ ESL/ Literature
- AND sit the AST
- AND obtain at least 20 points (18 points must come from T/A/M/H/E/C units – not R units)
- AND if you have moved from another school you must complete at least 10 points at Dickson College (and at least half of each Major or Minor used to calculate your ATAR)

**What is a Standard Unit?**

A standard unit is the completion of a class over 1 semester (or 55 hours)

A half unit (0.5 unit) is the completion of a class over a quadrimester (or 27.5 hours)

*To pass each standard unit, students must meet the 90% attendance and 70% assessment requirements otherwise a V (Void) grade will result*

Talk to your Year Co-ordinator or Careers Advisors if you are unsure whether an A or T package is best for you.

**Course Patterns of Study:**

Minor = 2 standard units

Major = 3.5 standard units

Major/Minor = 5.5 standard units

Double Major = 7 standard units

*No more than 8 units can be studied in any course.*

**Registered Units (R):**

R units provide the opportunity to learn new skills or participate in other activity e.g. Clubs, Study Skills, Sport, WEX, etc.

*R units are assessed on participation only, so it is essential to meet the attendance requirements.*

### ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS)

The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (ACT BSSS) is a statutory authority responsible for the certification of senior secondary school studies in government and non-government schools in the Australian Capital Territory.

The ACT operates a system of school-based curriculum and assessment within the policy and procedures of the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS).

School-based curriculum means that college teachers are involved in all curriculum development and that colleges determine what courses they offer to students. There is a commitment to offering high quality educational programs from a wide range of academic and vocational areas.

Students and parents can access a wide range of information on the role of the BSSS and the ACT Senior Secondary system at:

[http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students)

#### Range of Course Options

- Tertiary (T)
- Accredited (A)
- Modified (M)
- Vocational (V)
- External – through an ASBA (E)
- Higher Education (H)
- Competency Assessed (C)
- Registered (R)

Students can complete a Senior Secondary Certificate or TES with a combination of these.

#### Supporting students to choose courses

Students are encouraged to select subjects that they like; that they are good at; and subjects that they will need for their post-school pathways. Students should not choose subjects because they think they score well. Students are ranked against their own group. It is how they compare to their peers in each course that defines their rank and score in that course.

Students are encouraged to consider their Mathematical options at the beginning of their time at the college, as this can have significant impact on their achievement and satisfaction levels. When considering which mathematics course is most suitable, it is important to consider:

- possible career paths that may be of interest,
- level of interest in the subject, and
- level of study and achievement in high school mathematics.

College Course	Purpose of Course	Other Skills
Contemporary Mathematics (A)	Supports improvement in basic numeracy and everyday use of maths. An accredited course designed for students who want to gain valuable skills for working in an office or industry	Maintains and improves numeracy skills and applies these in a wide range of real-life settings Has an emphasis on basic numeracy
Essential Mathematics (A)	Supports trades, financial skills and numeracy. Useful if intending to study at CIT later	Needs good skills in application of the basic algebraic skills, measurement and geometry.
Mathematical Applications (T)	Supports university study in areas esp. in statistics, such as Commerce, Psychology, Sociology, Primary Education and Health	Some algebra skills will be helpful
Specialist Methods (T) / Mathematical Methods(T)	Supports university study in areas using considerable maths – Accounting, Sciences, including Physics, Medical science & Engineering	Needs strong algebra skills
Specialist Mathematics (T)	Supports the study of Mathematics, Physics, or Engineering, Actuarial Studies at university.	Needs excellent algebra skills
ANU Mathematics (H)	A course run at the ANU to provide an enhanced learning in Mathematics.	Entry to this ANU program should have a confirmed enrolment.

You are welcome to discuss this matter with a member of the mathematics team at Dickson for further advice to help you in selecting the best Mathematics Course for you or contact the Executive Teacher for STEM, Josephine Kim, by ringing 6142 0161 to make an appointment.

#### Tertiary Entrance Statement (ATAR)

The ACT Tertiary Entrance Statement (TES) is awarded to all students who meet the ACT BSSS' requirements. It reports information used in the calculation of the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), which is required for admission into universities in Australia. To receive a TES, students must have completed a Tertiary Package

#### The Board's requirements for a TES (Tertiary Package)

Students must:

- complete a minimum of 20 standard units during senior secondary studies (18 units must be BSSS units),
- form at least four majors and one minor, or three majors and three minors from A, T, M, H, C or E courses,
- complete at least three majors and one minor classified T or H,
- one minor must be in English, and
- sit all components of the ACT Scaling Test.

Course scores awarded in T or H courses at the college are used by the ACT BSSS to calculate students' Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). These scores are scaled to achieve comparability of students' achievements across colleges and across courses. The scaling process allows all course scores to be reported on a common scale. Student results in the AST contribute to the scaling process.

The calculation of the ATAR is based on students' best three major courses plus 0.6 of the next best major or minor. Each T course students complete will be given a weight based on how much of this 3.6 it is contributing. Any other courses would have been given a weighting of 0 and not used in the calculation of the ATAR.

The Aggregate Scores for all students who have met the requirements are listed in order from highest to lowest (99.95 – 30.00). This ranking is then converted to an age rank (ATAR) by using a table supplied by the NSW Technical Committee on Scaling. This gives a rank for ACT students as if they were part of the NSW age cohort.

#### VET Certificates and Statements of Attainment

Many ACT senior secondary colleges offer nationally recognised vocational courses. These courses are delivered to industry standard and, provided you meet the requirements, you will be issued with a qualification that will be recognised by vocational training providers (TAFEs, CIT, etc.) and employers around Australia.

Vocational qualifications certify what you have demonstrated you can do, and this achievement is measured through competency-based assessment. Each industry has a list of competencies and students are assessed against these competencies.

A Statement of Attainment is issued for the partial completion of a vocational certificate. It shows competencies achieved and the qualifications studied through an ACT College.

#### Academic Rules and Regulations

##### Unit Grades

Student achievement in A, T and M courses is reported on the ACT SSC on a 5-point A to E scale based on the A - E grade standards described in the Course Frameworks (these are provided to students each semester on their unit outlines). Grades appear on your Senior Secondary Certificate.

Moderation Days are conducted twice a year where all college teachers review samples of units, including student work and the grades awarded against the grade standards. This is to ensure that grades awarded across the ACT are consistent. Students are not required to attend college on these days.

A Pass (P) grade is awarded in R, E and C units when a student has satisfactorily completed the unit and achieved at least some of the competencies (C, E units).

A Participated (P) grade is awarded in C units when a student has met the attendance and assessment requirements but achieved none of the competencies.

A Status (S) grade is awarded when a student has been unable to complete the unit through illness or misadventure and the college does not have enough evidence to award a grade (12).

A Recognition grade is awarded when a student has completed some year 11/12 studies in other jurisdictions.

Unit grades for H units will be awarded by the university, using the descriptors from that university. These grades include High Distinction, Distinction, Credit, Pass, Ungraded Pass and Conceded Pass.

##### V Grades

V stands for 'void', it means that a student has not met the requirements for the unit and cannot be graded or gain a point for the unit. Void units are **not** recorded on the Senior Secondary Certificate; however, they are recorded on student reports at the end of each period of study.

V grades are awarded if students have:

- completed less than 70% of assessment for a unit,
- attended less than 90% of the classes for a unit (unexplained absences), or
- have not met both the attendance and assessment requirements.

##### Calculation of Unit Scores

Each T unit also generates a score. The score is based on an aggregation of assessment items within the unit. The unit outline will show students the weighting of each assessment item towards the unit score. Scores rank all the students who have completed an assessment item. So, a student could get a score of 75 and a grade of B in one unit, and a score of 60 and a grade of B in another unit.

Scaled scores at the end of a semester are not out of 100. The range is not 0 – 100; rather 40 – 95 is normal. Students should be aware of their performance relative to the average score for the unit as their score is scaled based on their ranking against their peers in the unit.

Scores appear on the Tertiary Entrance Statement. The unit scores are scaled to historic parameters. This scale is a 'predictor' of a likely scaled score at the end of year 12.

##### Assessment

At the beginning of each semester, students are provided with a unit outline detailing the content of each course and the assessment required for completion of the unit.

Students are expected to substantially complete and submit all assessment items. To meet the minimum assessment requirements of a unit, a student must substantially complete and submit at least 70% of the total assessment.

Assessment can be deemed insubstantial. This means that not enough work was completed to mark the item. If an assessment item is deemed insubstantial, it counts as not submitted. Therefore, students could submit all assessment items and still V grade if more than 30% of their items are considered insubstantial. This is particularly important to note when assessment items are worth more than 30%.

Assessment that is submitted late is penalised at a rate of 5% of total possible marks per day it is late. Weekends count as late days. Example: an item that is due on a Friday but handed in on the following Monday will be penalised 15% of total possible marks as it is 3 days late. If the original score (out of 100) was 75 then the adjusted score after the penalty would be 60. Late assessment counts towards determining grades and scores.

All assessment is due at 4:00pm on the day. This ensures equity of submission across all course areas and is a way for the college to support students to not stay up late to complete assessment tasks.

#### Extensions

If students are aware that they will be unable to complete an assessment item on time, and have a valid reason for an extension, students should talk to their teacher first, then their year coordinator.

If the extension request is for 1 day, students can discuss this with their teacher or study skills teacher who are able to approve the request if the reason is valid. Evidence must be provided with the assessment task. Please note the STEM faculty policy is that all requests for any extensions for tertiary units of study are through the student's co-ordinator or case manager. Students are encouraged to discuss their difficulties with their teachers as well.

If the extension request is for 2 or more days, these must go through the student's co-ordinator or case manager; evidence needs to be provided and attached to an application form, which will be provided to the classroom teacher and put on file. New due dates will be determined in consultation with the classroom teacher. Applications for extensions should be submitted BEFORE the due date of the assessment item. AFTER the due date, students will need to complete a special consideration form.

#### Missed tests/exams

If a student is absent for an exam, it is very important to contact the class teacher and Student Wellbeing ASAP to make alternative arrangements. Generally, exams are rescheduled any time within the exam period. Evidence is required to re-sit a missed exam without penalty if missed due to illness or adversity. A medical certificate is required if an exam is missed due to illness. If insufficient evidence is provided, a late penalty will be applied to tests/exams sat on a later date.

#### Special Consideration

Some students require curriculum adjustments to be made. The evidence provided will determine the adjustments made to curriculum delivery and/or assessment requirements. This will be recorded as part of the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

At times, students require special consideration for part of their studies when they were adversely affected by circumstances beyond their control. These can be either categorised as illness or misadventure.

Applications for special consideration require documentary evidence under BSSS guidelines ([Short term misadventure/special consideration](#)). If students apply without supporting documents/evidence in writing, it cannot be processed until the evidence has been supplied. Strong evidence is required for all applications, preferably supported by a professional practitioner.

Students should make an appointment with a member of the Student Wellbeing team (usually their Year Coordinator) or their Case Manager to complete the application and attach their documentary evidence such as a note from their doctor, psychologist or parent.

Once the application is completed and documentary evidence has been supplied, it will be appraised by the Special Considerations Panel. Students and teachers will be notified of the panel's decision via email.

#### Plagiarism

All colleges are required to adhere to the Board of Senior Secondary Studies policy and procedures. Plagiarism is the copying, paraphrasing or summarising of work, in any form, without acknowledgement of sources, and presenting this as a student's own work. Any plagiarism, dishonesty, cheating, alteration of results or improper practice in relation to any school-based assessment in any subject accredited or registered by the Board shall constitute a breach of discipline.

Students are asked to submit their assessment tasks via the Turnitin portal: <https://www.turnitin.com/> Each class sets up a submission page and students are provided the information on assessment tasks. This portal allows students and teachers to identify any examples of academic dishonesty and allow students opportunities before final submission of assessment tasks to adjust their work to fulfil all academic requirements.

At Dickson College, plagiarism is addressed with the student and recorded on the school database. An initial incident is seen as a learning opportunity for the teacher to build academic skills with the student. Students are provided with strategies to avoid further incidents. However, repeat incidents across all subjects are dealt with increasingly more serious penalties. Parents are notified in writing of any incidents of plagiarism and the penalty imposed. Students may appeal the determination of plagiarism and/or the penalty imposed. If a student chooses to appeal, please follow the same steps as listed below for appealing a grade/score. For further details on the possible consequences, the BSSS documentation can be found here:

[http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students/whats\\_plagiarism\\_how\\_to\\_avoid\\_it](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/whats_plagiarism_how_to_avoid_it)

#### Appeals

Every student has the right to appeal assessment and unit grades and scores. If a student is unhappy with their grade or score, they should speak with these people (**in this order**):

1. The class teacher - explain the concerns and ask for clarification of why they awarded the score/grade. If the student is still not satisfied, go to step 2.
2. The faculty executive teacher - explain what was discussed with the teacher, the concerns and ask for them to review the score or grade. If the student is still not satisfied, go to step 3.
3. The Assessment and Certification Executive teacher – explain what was discussed with you in steps one and two, what the concerns are and the desired outcome. At this stage the appeal can become a formal written appeal and BSSS policy and procedures will be followed. The Assessment and Certification Executive teacher will go through the procedures with the student.

There is limited time to appeal unit scores/grades. Please make sure students check unit scores/grades within the timeframe outlined in the end of semester calendar (usually 1-3 days after unit scores are posted) to ensure that appeals are heard.

### Attendance Requirements

It is expected that students will attend and participate in all scheduled classes/contact time/structured learning activities for the units in which they are enrolled, unless there is due cause and adequate documentary evidence is provided. Any student whose attendance falls below 90% of the scheduled classes/contact time or 90% participation in structured learning activities in a unit, without having due cause with adequate documentary evidence will be deemed to have voided the unit.

If students are absent from school, parents need to provide a valid explanation in writing via the completion of a Student Absence Form or emailing [dicksonc.absences@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:dicksonc.absences@ed.act.edu.au). "Due cause with adequate documentary evidence" (ACT BSSS) and a "reasonable excuse" (ACT Education Act 2004 Part 2.2 10A (3)) are required for students to explain an absence from class. Medical certificates and/or other explanation should be attached to the notification of absence. Absence notes should be returned within 2 weeks of the absence. For absences longer than three days, please see the information on extended leave below.

### Extended Leave requirements

Students should complete an extended absence agreement form if they know in advance, they will be on leave from school for more than 3 days. This is not required for a school sanctioned program such as an excursion or work experience. Students must provide evidence of due cause for the absence and complete an Extended Absence Agreement with class teachers to ensure all assessment requirements are met.

If a student is absent for three days or more without prior notice, such as a family emergency or illness, parents should notify [dicksonc.absences@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:dicksonc.absences@ed.act.edu.au) and the relevant coordinator/case manager as soon as possible to ensure the student is supported in relation to assessment requirements for each class. In relevant instances, students will be supported to complete a special consideration application relating to relevant assessment requirements.

Please note - Family holidays are not recommended to be taken during school term time in line with BSSS policy. If a student is absent for a family holiday, they are not eligible for special consideration such as extensions unless there are extenuating circumstances that can be discussed with a coordinator/case manager. Students will need to submit assessment that falls in the time frame they will be absent before they go on leave or submit the assessment electronically on the due date, otherwise the usual late penalties will be applied.

### Infectious Diseases

If a student is absent due to an infectious disease, please refer to the [table](#) to identify whether an exclusion period applies.

### Staff absence

When staff are absent from the college, students are provided with learning opportunities in their teachers' absences that are carefully designed by the classroom teacher. Teachers develop a lesson plan with clear outcomes required of students for each lesson. Teachers also decide whether the learning will be undertaken in the classroom environment with a relief teacher delivering the content and supervising the learning or teachers may decide to Flex the lesson. A flexed lesson is placed in the Google classroom and students can undertake the learning and complete the activity in their own time. Students are not expected to attend the class for that lesson; students are notified ahead of the lesson that this will be in place.

### Pastoral Care at Dickson College

The community at Dickson College places a great importance on the wellbeing of all members of the community. There are a range of formal and informal programs/supports for students as needed.

Students are encouraged to access supports from relevant staff, if required, such as: classroom teachers, their transition or mentor teacher, their coordinator, case manager, the executive teacher of Student Wellbeing or Support Programs, or the school psychologist. Appointments to see coordinators or the school psychologist may be made through the admin team in Student Wellbeing. Appointments with Case Managers may be made directly with the case manager. Parents are also welcomed to make appointments or communicate with teachers or coordinators/case managers to seek support for students, if you are concerned about the student's academic or wellbeing needs.

Other relevant supports are provided below.

### Transition Program

This is our pastoral care program for incoming year 11 students in semester 1. Transition teachers' role is to guide and mentor students through their first semester at college. Transition teachers meet with their group for one hour per week.

Transition teachers can assist with one on one discussions with students to monitor wellbeing, academic packages and to facilitate connections with other relevant staff as needed. They can be one of the first staff members that students and parents can contact if students experience any issues or challenges.

The Transition Program class is an R unit (0.2 per semester) and it is assessed through satisfying the BSSS attendance and participation requirements. Students are required to meet the 90% attendance requirements as per the BSSS policy to be awarded a unit and a grade (Pass). Given R unit assessment is based on participation, students who have not met the attendance and participation requirements (less than 90%) will be given a V grade, even if they have submitted notes for their absences.

### Study Skills

The Dickson College Study Skills program is open to all students at the college. It is a tutorial support program run for one timetabled hour per week where students can access help and guidance from staff who will also monitor their progress and communicate with parents/carers and the Student Wellbeing team as frequently as needed. The program is designed to promote student wellbeing and academic success.

The Study Skills class is an R unit (0.2 per semester) and it is assessed through satisfying the BSSS attendance and participation requirements. Students are required to meet the 90% attendance requirements as per the BSSS policy to be awarded a unit and a grade (Pass). Given R unit assessment is based on participation, students who have not met the attendance and participation requirements (less than 90%) will be given a V grade, even if they have submitted notes for their absences.

### Mentor Teachers

From semester 2 year 11 onwards, students are allocated a mentor teacher whose role is to check in with students and families throughout each semester to check on general progress and wellbeing. Students and teachers negotiate the way this contact will be made based on their individual needs.

Mentor teachers will check on student attendance and communicate with families should there be issues. Mentor teachers assist with one on one discussions with students to monitor wellbeing, academic packages and to facilitate connections with other relevant staff as needed. They can be one of the first staff members that students and parents can contact if students experience any issues or challenges.

#### Year Coordinators

There are three Year Coordinators for each year group. Year Coordinators provide support for students to talk through options for managing issues affecting attendance, academic performance or wellbeing. They utilise a case management approach that encourages students to develop maturity and independence by actively engaging with the school's relevant supports and BSSS processes.

For students with more intensive case management requirements, year coordinators liaise with parents/carers, professional practitioners and external agencies.

#### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can access extra support from the Indigenous Contact Officer, Elinor Archer. She may be contacted via email [Elinor.Archer@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Elinor.Archer@ed.act.edu.au) or by phoning the College. Her role is that of a mentor teacher. Further students and families may access further support by contacting the Dickson College Cluster Indigenous Education Transitions Officer Jenny Dries. She also works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Campbell High School and Lyneham High School.

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students are also encouraged to join the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander group to access individual supports within a group environment. This group is led by Elinor Archer.

#### ESL students

The ESL Coordinator is Marcus Lee ([Marcus.Lee@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Marcus.Lee@ed.act.edu.au)). His role is that of a Coordinator for ESL students. Marcus liaises with parents to determine the levels of supports required for each student, and where necessary adjustments to curriculum and assessment are negotiated.

ESL students are required to participate in an ESL tutorial program. The program offers language assistance with work across a range of subject areas. Students can also access Bridging Intensive English classes for students who need extra support with language to access the curriculum.

#### International Students

The IPS Coordinators are Yani Tian ([Yani.Tian@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Yani.Tian@ed.act.edu.au)) and Christiane Roth ([Christiane.Roth@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Christiane.Roth@ed.act.edu.au)). Their role is that of a Coordinator for ISP students. They liaise with families and the International Education Unit of the Education Directorate to support students in accessing the curriculum and to fully participate in the life of the college.

#### Refugee Bridging Program

The RBP Coordinator is Ros Phillips ([Roslyn.Phillips@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Roslyn.Phillips@ed.act.edu.au)). Her role is that of a Coordinator for students in the program. Students in the program are given the opportunity to study units that are appropriate to, and support, their past educational and life experiences. Students can also access classes in the fundamentals of English as a Second Language, Mathematics and IT. Students are also placed in an RBP support class.

#### Support Programs

Students enrolling in the support program must have completed year 10 studies in a disability education setting or be assessed by a school psychologist as meeting the criteria for access to a place in the program.

The support program is based on coursework that can lead to the awarding of the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate.

The Disability Education Coordinator (DECO) is Caitlin Hanby ([Caitlin.Hanby@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Caitlin.Hanby@ed.act.edu.au)). Students are supported by an individual case manager, who provides tutorial support, and operates as a pastoral care coordinator. The case manager liaises with the student, parents and teachers to ensure the identified needs on the ILP are appropriate and delivered for students. When students are experiencing difficulties, they and their parents are encouraged to contact the case manager for support.

#### Careers

The careers team are available to provide advice on post-school options, career pathways, training opportunities, vocational education and training, tertiary education, work experience and Australia School Based Apprenticeships (ASBAs).

The careers team have a number of communication tools to provide students and parents with information to consider pathways options, training and apprenticeship opportunities, employment opportunities, university admission requirements and other careers information.

Students and parents can join the Google Classroom: **r17tc3** or visit the [Dickson College Careers website](#).

Students may undertake work experience (WEX) throughout the year and can discuss options with the Careers team. The team can then provide the appropriate paperwork for insurance coverage while on the placement and to ensure the points count towards the student's Senior Secondary Certificate. Further information on WEX options may be found at InPlace on the students' digital backpack.

The Careers team also offers a resume service to look at the current resume and make changes as appropriate.

Parents and students are encouraged to make an appointment to discuss career pathways and further study and training opportunities, as well as for WEX placements and resume help. Please drop in to make an appointment with Bec or phone on 6142 0151.

#### Careers team

Executive Teacher – [Jenny.Cowell@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Jenny.Cowell@ed.act.edu.au)

Careers Advisors – [Lia.McKerihan@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Lia.McKerihan@ed.act.edu.au) and [Sara.Hillier@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Sara.Hillier@ed.act.edu.au)

WEX Administrator – [Rebecca.Osborne@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Rebecca.Osborne@ed.act.edu.au)

### Parent-Teacher partnerships

At the end of Q1 and Q3, reports are emailed out to families to identify the progress of the student. The report outlines strengths, areas for development and strategies for improvement in each academic class. Parents are invited to attend a follow up parent teacher evening to discuss any areas of development. Bookings can be made through the online booking portal PTO. Parents receive login details at the same time as the progress reports are sent.

It is strongly encouraged that students attend the interviews with parents. If you are unable to attend the interviews, then please feel free to contact the individual teachers to gather more specific information on ways to support further progress.

At the end of each semester, a report of student achievement on individual assessment items and final scores and grades in each unit is provided to parents and students.

### Supporting Students

As parents/carers, your role is to support the students through their final years of school. This can be a challenging role as there are many competing pressures on young people during this time. There are several supports within the college and externally for parents to access as needed. A useful website is <https://headspace.org.au/> - it has a section providing information and services for friends and family to support a young person, including health and wellbeing; life issues and work and study support.

Parents/carers are also encouraged to contact the student's Transition/Mentor teacher, relevant coordinator/case manager, Student Wellbeing Executive teacher or the school psychologist for advice on appropriate ways to support the student.

### Communication

#### Website

You will find key information, including a PDF of this handbook, on the Dickson College website: <http://www.dicksonc.act.edu.au/>. The website is updated regularly and the latest news, as well as copies of the latest newsletters can be located on the website.

#### DC Newsletter and Community Update

A school newsletter is published twice per term. The newsletters provide the community with information on upcoming events, highlighting the learning and opportunities available for students and highlights over the past few weeks. In the off fortnights (Week 2, 6 and 10), families receive a DC Community Update, which provides the community with timely updates of important information and events at the school. Both the newsletter and the community updates are sent to parents/guardians and students via their identified emails. Newsletters are also available on the college website.

#### Facebook

We also have a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/dicksoncollege>). All key events at the college are advertised through this page. You will also find videos from staff and students to show what the Dickson College community get up to. Please follow us and share the videos with the family and friends of the students.

### Student Absences

If students are absent from school, parents need to provide a valid explanation in writing via the completion of a Student Absence Form or emailing [dicksonc.absences@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:dicksonc.absences@ed.act.edu.au).

Examples of a 'reasonable excuse' for a child's absence may include:

- illness, including recovery from major illness, injury or medical condition
- medical or dental treatment
- bereavement
- religious or cultural observation
- attendance at court or other legal hearings or meetings associated with hearings
- participation in sanctioned debates, sports, musical or theatrical productions not directly arranged by the school, or participation in interstate, national, or international academic or sporting event or equivalent

Please note absences not in accordance with the ACT Education Directorate's attendance procedures will be marked as an "unauthorised" explanation.

An absence summary is emailed to parents fortnightly and a daily SMS is sent to parents if a student has any absences. The information on the notification provides information about the time of absence; partial absence from classes are also recorded so the absence may be for 5 mins of a lesson up to the full length of the lesson. It is important to have a copy of the student timetable and the name of the student's teachers for each class.

If you believe there is an error in the absence information, please contact the classroom teacher in the first instance and they will adjust the records if an error has been made. If the absence information is correct, and the student has due cause for the absence, please notify [dicksonc.absences@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:dicksonc.absences@ed.act.edu.au) of the reasons for the absence and the records will indicate the absence as approved.

### Issues and concerns

If students are having issues within classes, in the first instance, please contact the classroom teacher via email or by phoning the college. Teachers will endeavour to respond to communication from parents/carers within two working days. If the initial communication is not able to resolve the issue, please contact the executive teacher of the area. The executive teacher can liaise with the student, teacher and parent to help resolve more complex issues.

If these interventions are not successful, you may contact Michelle Morthorpe (Deputy Students) or Craig Edwards (Principal), who will investigate the identified issues and provide appropriate solutions and supports. If the issue relates to Assessment or Certification issues, parents/carers must contact Scott Eastburn (Assessment and Certification Officer) who will provide support in resolving appeals, including referring the issue to the BSSS, if required.

If the issue is unable to be resolved at the school level parents/carers are also welcome to contact the Education Directorate's Liaison Unit: [https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/forms/etd\\_liaison\\_feedback](https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/forms/etd_liaison_feedback)

When phoning the school, please provide the Administration team brief details of the issue and any prior communication you have had with staff so that they are able to appropriately direct your call and provide context for the staff member involved. The school's number is: 6142 0140.

#### Executive Team

English and Humanities – [Kirk.Zwangobani@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Kirk.Zwangobani@ed.act.edu.au)

Maths, IT, Science (STEM) – [Josephine.Kim@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Josephine.Kim@ed.act.edu.au)

Arts and PE – [Rod.Harding@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Rod.Harding@ed.act.edu.au)

VET, Careers, Transitions, Technology – [Jenny.Cowell@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Jenny.Cowell@ed.act.edu.au)

RBP, ESL, IPS, Languages (REIL) – [Rosslyn.Phillips@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Rosslyn.Phillips@ed.act.edu.au)

Support Programs – [Caitlin.Hanby@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Caitlin.Hanby@ed.act.edu.au)

SIEC – [Scott.Eastburn@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Scott.Eastburn@ed.act.edu.au)

To email a staff member at the school via email the emails follow the same pattern: [firstname.secondname@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:firstname.secondname@ed.act.edu.au).

#### Student Wellbeing Team

Alison Di Berardino – Student Wellbeing Executive teacher: [Alison.DiBerardino@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Alison.DiBerardino@ed.act.edu.au)

Juliette Bornas – Assessment and Certification Officer: [Scott.Eastburn@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Scott.Eastburn@ed.act.edu.au)

Michelle Morthorpe – Deputy Principal Students: [Michelle.Morthorpe@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Michelle.Morthorpe@ed.act.edu.au)

Rebecca Pashley - School Psychologist: [Rebecca.Pashley@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Rebecca.Pashley@ed.act.edu.au)

#### Year 11 Coordinators:

Robert Howatson (A – G): [Robert.Howatson@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Robert.Howatson@ed.act.edu.au)

Mel Cook (H – N): [Melanie.Cook@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Melanie.Cook@ed.act.edu.au)

Anna Beaver (O – Z): [Anna.Beaver@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Anna.Beaver@ed.act.edu.au)

#### Year 12 Coordinators:

Ryan Davis-Philp (A – G): [Ryan.Davis-Philp@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Ryan.Davis-Philp@ed.act.edu.au)

John Forrest (H – O): [John.Forrest@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:John.Forrest@ed.act.edu.au)

Ella Packham (P – Z): [Ella.Packham@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Ella.Packham@ed.act.edu.au)

Student Wellbeing Admin team (Robert Brown, Lyndall Bolton, Karen Burt): [Info\\_DicksonC@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Info_DicksonC@ed.act.edu.au)

#### Administrative Team

The Administrative team are located at the front office of the school.

Business Hours: 8:30am – 4:00pm

Payments can be made from 8:30am – 2:30pm (Mon – Thurs) and 8:30am – 1:30pm (Fri)

Business and Facilities Manager – Emily Gulliver

Building Services Officer – Craig Osteraas

Receptionist – Jodie Roberson

Finance Officer – Madi Wynne

Executive Assistant (Principal) - Trudy Bush

SEMESTER 1 2020			SEMESTER 2 2020				
WEEK	DATES	COLLEGE INFORMATION	WEEK	DATES	COLLEGE INFORMATION		
1	Feb 3 - Feb 7	Mon Feb 4: New students Tue Feb 5: All students	TEACHING PERIOD: Q1	1	Jul 20 - Jul 24	TEACHING PERIOD: Q3	
2	Feb 10 - Feb 14			2	Jul 27 - Jul 31		NAIDOC Week
3	Feb 17 - Feb 21	Parent Information Session – Intro to the ACT College System (Thurs)		3	AUG 5 - AUG 9		
4	Feb 24 - Feb 28			4	AUG 12 - AUG 16		
5	Mar 2 - Mar 6	<b>Moderation Day</b> – Tues 3 Mar (No college classes on Tues)		5	AUG 19 - AUG 23		<b>Moderation Day</b> – Thurs 22 Aug (No college classes on Thurs)
6	Mar 9 - Mar 13	<b>Canberra Day</b> (Mon)		6	AUG 26 - AUG 30		
7	Mar 16 - Mar 20	SHLiRP presentation (Mon)		7	SEPT 2 - SEPT 6		AST Assembly (Mon L3) AST Sessions 1 & 2 (Tues) AST Session 3 (Wed)
8	Mar 23 - Mar 27			8	SEPT 9 - SEPT 13		RUOK BBQ (Thurs lunch) Cross line testing (Fri) End Q3 (Fri)
9	Mar 30 - Apr 3	Crossline testing (Mon/Tues) Alternate testing – (Wed) End Q1 (Wed)		9	SEPT 16 - SEPT 20		Crossline testing (Mon) Alternate testing (Tues) <b>Pupil free days (Wed – Fri)</b> Reports emailed (Fri)
10	Apr 6 - Apr 10	Mon - Last day of classes Tues - AST trials – Year 12 only Wed – AST trials – Year 11 & 12 Thurs – reports emailed home <b>Good Friday</b>	TEACHING PERIOD: Q2	10	SEPT 23 - SEPT 27	<b>Parent Teacher Evening (Thurs)</b>	
CLASS FREE PERIOD				CLASS FREE PERIOD			
11	Apr 27 - May 1	<b>ANZAC Day Holiday</b> (Mon) ANZAC Day assembly (Tues – line 8) SHLiRP results – ind. apts Parent Teacher Evening (Thurs)	TEACHING PERIOD: Q4	11	OCT 14 - OCT 18	Yr 12 AST Second Sitting (Tues – Wed)	
12	May 4 - May 8			12	OCT 21 - OCT 25		
13	May 11 - May 15	Yr 11 Elevate incursions (Tues)		13	OCT 28 - NOV 1		
14	May 18 - May 22			14	NOV 4 - NOV 8		
15	May 25 - May 29	Open Night (Thurs 28 May)		15	NOV 11 - NOV 15		
16	Jun 1 - Jun 5	<b>Reconciliation Day</b> (Mon)		16	NOV 18 - NOV 22	Year 12 Farewell Assembly End Q4 (Thurs) End of semester tests (Fri)	
17	Jun 8 - Jun 12	<b>Queen's Birthday</b> (Mon)		17	NOV 25 - NOV 29	End of semester tests (Mon) Alternative tests (Tues) AST Trial – Year 11 (Wed)	
18	Jun 15 - Jun 19	End Q2/Last day of classes (Fri)		18	DEC 2 - DEC 6	Unit scores emailed (Mon) Course scores emailed (Tues) Year 12 Brunch/Package check (Wed) Year 12 Formal (Wed) BSSS final date for appeals (Fri)	
19	Jun 22 - Jun 26	End of semester tests (Mon – Wed) Alternative tests (Wed pm & Thurs)		19	DEC 9 - DEC 13		
20	Jun 29 - Jul 3	Work Experience Week Handback Day (Mon) Scores/Reports emailed (Fri)	20	DEC 16 - DEC 20	BSSS Recognition of Excellence Ceremony (Tues) Grad rehearsal (Thurs – 11am) DC Year 12 Graduation (Thurs)		

## Timetable



Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:50 – 10:20	1 (A)	6 (B)	5 (C)	2 (D)	4 (E)
10:20 – 10:40	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
10:40 – 11:45	2 (F)	7 (G)	4 (H)	5 (I)	6 (J)
11:45 – 1:15	3 (K)	8 (L)	7 (M)	8 (N)	3 (O)
1:15 – 1:55	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	12:45 Lunch	12:45 Lunch
1:55 – 3:00	4 (P)	1 (Q)	2 (R)	1 (S)	8 (T)
3:00 – 4:00	5 (U)	3 (V)	6 (W)	2:30 9 (X) Extra-Curricular Extension & Sport	2:30 – 3:30 7 (Y)

### Teaching strategies at Dickson College

Students are encouraged to select subjects that they like; that they are good at; and subjects that they will need for their post-school pathways. Often the classes students enjoy are those that incorporate teaching strategies that they enjoy, for instance, more practical course allow for a greater hands-on experience for students and more theoretical classes often require students to engage in active communication with peers and teachers to fully develop their understandings.

In all classes, staff use a variety of teaching approaches within individual lessons and across a unit of study. Some common approaches are:

- Inquiry learning
- Explicit instruction
- Cooperative learning
- Individual work

Teachers also differentiate the curriculum for students to engage each student at their point of learning. This could be to provide added scaffolding through lessons to complete tasks and/or delivering the content in multiple ways throughout a lesson for students to understand the content. For students with specific learning needs identified, assessment requirements are adjusted based on the student's ILP or via a special considerations process.

### Useful Resources

#### Class resources

All ACT public education students from years 7 – 12 receive a Chromebook from the ACT Government. All units have a Google classroom page, as well as several different student groups and the various support programs at the school, such as the Careers team, the DC Weekly Announcements and the AST page. Students can access all the class materials, notifications about key dates for class and importantly their assignment requirements in the classroom page.

Parents/guardians are connected to each page as guardians and you will see information on due dates and topics as they are posted. Therefore, for most classes, a charged Chromebook will be enough for students in classes.

Students newly enrolling in an ACT public school need to complete the Chromebook application and go to the library to collect their Chromebooks when they arrive at the college if they would like to take up the offer.

In classes where there is a requirement for more, students are notified of the specific resources within the first week of semester. Teachers do not expect students to have more until they are notified.

However, it is useful for students to have a notebook/lined paper, pens, highlighters, etc as there may be times when students will be asked to work in a different style than simply on devices. Students generally know their preferred learning and study styles, and this is a good rule of thumb to determine appropriate stationery for school.

For students enrolled in mathematics (Tertiary and Accredited), they will need a scientific calculator. No student should be using a programmable calculator as these calculators may not be used in any tests, including the AST. Students completing Specialist Methods course in year 12, should have a graphics calculator. Students can purchase a CASIO fx-9860G AU PLUS from the front office.

#### Useful links

- ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies: <http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/>
  - ACT Qualifications: [http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students/act\\_qualifications](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/act_qualifications)
  - Appeal Process: [http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students/your\\_rights\\_to\\_appeal](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/your_rights_to_appeal)
  - Equitable Assessment and Special Consideration: [http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students/equitable\\_assessment\\_and\\_special\\_consideration\\_in\\_assessment\\_in\\_years\\_11\\_and\\_12\\_student\\_guide](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/equitable_assessment_and_special_consideration_in_assessment_in_years_11_and_12_student_guide)
  - Information for Students: [http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students)
  - Moderation: [http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students/whats\\_moderation](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/whats_moderation)
  - Plagiarism information: [http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students/whats\\_plagiarism\\_how\\_to\\_avoid\\_it](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/whats_plagiarism_how_to_avoid_it)
  - Policy and Procedures Manual: [http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/The\\_Board/policy\\_and\\_procedures\\_manual](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/The_Board/policy_and_procedures_manual)
  - Scaling and the ATAR: [http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students/scaling\\_and\\_the\\_atar](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/scaling_and_the_atar)
  - Transferring students: [http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students/transferring\\_students](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/transferring_students)
- ACT Education Directorate: <https://www.education.act.gov.au/>
  - ACT Education Directorate Policies: [https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications\\_and\\_policies/policies](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policies)
  - ACT Education Directorate Publications: [https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications\\_and\\_policies/publications\\_a-z/publications-a-z-list-all-publication-new](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/publications_a-z/publications-a-z-list-all-publication-new)
  - Code of Conduct: [https://www.education.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0015/1202910/Working-Together-With-Your-School-Brochure\\_WEB-FINAL.PDF](https://www.education.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/1202910/Working-Together-With-Your-School-Brochure_WEB-FINAL.PDF)
  - Education Directorate contact form: [https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/forms/etd\\_liaison\\_feedback](https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/forms/etd_liaison_feedback)
  - Enrolling in ACT Public Schools: [https://www.education.act.gov.au/school\\_education/enrolling\\_in\\_an\\_act\\_public\\_school](https://www.education.act.gov.au/school_education/enrolling_in_an_act_public_school)
  - Infectious Diseases: [https://www.education.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/845267/20160322-InfectiousDiseasesProcedures.pdf](https://www.education.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/845267/20160322-InfectiousDiseasesProcedures.pdf)
  - NSW Resident Enrolments: [https://www.education.act.gov.au/school\\_education/enrolling\\_in\\_an\\_act\\_public\\_school/nsw-resident-enrolments](https://www.education.act.gov.au/school_education/enrolling_in_an_act_public_school/nsw-resident-enrolments)
  - Parental Engagement: [https://www.education.act.gov.au/teaching\\_and\\_learning/parental-engagement](https://www.education.act.gov.au/teaching_and_learning/parental-engagement)
  - Term Dates and Public Holidays: [https://www.education.act.gov.au/school\\_education/term\\_dates\\_and\\_public\\_holidays](https://www.education.act.gov.au/school_education/term_dates_and_public_holidays)
- Useful wellbeing websites:
  - Headspace - <http://headspace.org.au/>
  - Reach Out (lots of mental health and drug and alcohol info) - <http://au.reachout.com/>
  - Beyond Blue (depression and anxiety) - <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>
  - The Black Dog Institute (depression and bipolar disorder) - <http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/>
  - The Butterfly Foundation (eating disorders and body image) - <https://thebutterflyfoundation.org.au/>
  - National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre - <https://ncpic.org.au/>
  - Online treatment or prevention programs for common mental health problems, such as anxiety and depression - <https://moodgym.anu.edu.au>

#### Useful documents

- *DC Essentials Guide for Students* – supplied to all students in Year 11 each year. Students in Study Skills classes are also provided with copies each year.
- *Unit Outlines* – unit outlines are provided to students for each class they are enrolled in at the beginning of each learning period. These are usually provided through the student's Google Classroom.
- *Google Classroom* – this is an online portal where teachers upload relevant lessons, resources and assessment. Students are provided with a link and parents are invited as guardians – guardians can receive notifications of upcoming assessment/homework due dates. If parents would like to see assessment tasks or unit outlines, they should ask for copies from the student or they may contact the classroom teacher to receive the information.