



# 2010 School Performance Audit Education Component

Kolbe Catholic College

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Kolbe Catholic College is a co-educational secondary college of nearly 1000 students from Year 7 to 12 with the equivalent of 75 full time teaching staff. The College is located near the Rockingham-Kwinana industrial region and the employment status of families varies significantly, with approximately 18% currently receiving fee assistance.

Kolbe offers a holistic education, embracing the spiritual, religious, intellectual, physical, social and emotional development of all students, where relationships and learning are both important. The College promotes both Gifted and Talented programs, as well as literacy and numeracy support across all years, thereby catering for all students' individual needs. The majority of students hail from three feeder Catholic primary schools. The student population is diverse and inclusive of our 20 Aboriginal students, 38 students with special needs and 42 students from Defence Force families.

Strong university entrance and vocational pathways are offered in the senior school. As a futures oriented school, we are committed to developing independent learning skills amongst students and strongly encourage the use of learning technologies in the classroom. A 1:1 laptop program has been introduced for Year 7 and 8 students, and the College offers a broad range of extra-curricular activities in sport, music, drama, dance and a wide choice of academic competitions and clubs, enhance and compliment pastoral and educational programs. Inter-House sporting competitions, coupled with diverse student leadership experiences both highlight the quality of pastoral care provided to students. The model of schooling offered by the College, underpinned by Gospel values, encourages students to aspire to the tenets of our College Motto - Courage, Faith, Excellence.

## SECTION 2a: CURRENT PERFORMANCE

The College goal "to set high expectations, challenged by Gospel values, that creates a culture of excellence amongst leaders, teachers and students, and generates an engaging and challenging environment" guides all practices and initiatives. With this in mind the long term focus of the College is to raise the academic standards, particularly literacy standards of Year 7 through to Year 10 within the student community. This focus has emerged as a result of data collected from a variety of sources, but in particular, a study of Year 12 results, and Years 7 and 9 NAPLAN and WAMSE results. In working toward the improvement of academic standards the College has implemented a multi-faceted approach. The following is a summary of this approach that spans all year levels.

### ▪ Analysis of Year 12, 2009

Upon reflection of the Year 12 results for 2009, it was evident that there were a number of areas to celebrate, and aspects that were cause for concern and requiring attention. Hence, this has shaped the direction and planning for 2010, particularly for students of Years 10 to 12.

In 2009, the College achieved a 100% graduation rate and was ranked 27<sup>th</sup> in the top 50 VET schools, with nearly 91% of students (89 out of 98 participants) achieving either a Certificate 1 or 2 qualification. A strong performance in the VET area was evident with over 90 000 hours being completed by students. Two students were awarded a Certificate of Distinction, both for Senior Science, while four students achieved an ATAR of 90 or above. Table 1 provides a summary of post school destinations offered to the 2009 student cohort. These statistics were most positive and reflect the conscientious and thorough approach adopted by the College's Careers Counsellor and Head of VET. The College continued to perform well when compared to 'like' schools and those schools within the Rockingham-Kwinana region.

Table 1 – 2009 Kolbe Catholic College Post School Destinations

Post School Option	First Preference (%)	Second Preference (%)
University	84	16
TAFEWA	90	10
Apprenticeship	100	0

While the results of university aspiring students were not strong, they were not unexpected given the cohort of students. Nonetheless, there were aspects that were disappointing and lessons to be learned from the data. To begin with, 59% of the Year 12 cohort were eligible for an ATAR in 2009 compared with 45% in 2008. Additionally, the percentage of students in the lower trile significantly increased, as shown in Table 2. The number of university bound students with one or more scaled mark of 75% or more was disappointing, with only 11% of students attaining this achievement compared with the State average of 30%.

Table 2 – Distribution of Average Scaled Marks of Full-time Eligible Students (4 or more) TEE/WACE Subjects

	Low (%)				Mid (%)				High (%)			
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2006	2007	2008	2009	2006	2007	2008	2009
Kolbe	44.06	43.08	42.59	50.70	33.89	46.15	37.04	38.03	22.05	10.77	20.37	11.27
State	33.33	33.33	33.33	33.33	33.33	33.33	33.33	33.33	33.33	33.33	33.33	33.33

The moderation trends of TEE/WACE subjects was also cause for concern. There was an overall average downward moderation for these subjects of 4.13%. Of the 19 subjects offered to students, 15 were adjusted downward by an average of 6.4% per subject. The remaining subjects were adjusted upwards by an average of 4.25% per subject.

Another area that needs further exploration is the issue of student engagement. Analysis of Year 12 results indicates that only four students achieved an ATAR of greater than 90. Closer examination of the Year 9 NAPLAN results for this group shows that more than 15 students attained a result in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile across the domains of numeracy, literacy and science. Upon reflection, this would appear to indicate that the College should have had more than four students achieving an ATAR greater than 90.

#### ▪ Analysis of Years 7 and 9 NAPLAN and WAMSE Results

When evaluating data gathered from NAPLAN and WAMSE results, care needs to be taken to consider the needs of each specific year group. It is, therefore, important that the College adopts an approach to learning that is sufficiently flexible to meet the specific needs of students. The results from Year 9 students of 2009 indicate that for most categories, the school mean was similar

to or above the All Australian Schools Mean, as highlighted in Table 3. From examination of the minimum benchmarks, it is apparent that a greater number of students are not realising the benchmark for writing and spelling.

**Table 3: Average Standardised Assessment Results for Year 9 Students with Benchmarks**

<b>Category</b>	
Reading	All Australian Schools Mean : 579
	School Mean: 582
	98.9% achieved at or above the benchmark
Writing	All Australian Schools Mean : 571
	School Mean: 571
	93.8% achieved at or above the benchmark
Language Conventions :Spelling	All Australian Schools Mean : 574
	School Mean : 577
	94.4% achieved at or above the benchmark
Language Conventions : Grammar & Punctuation	All Australian Schools Mean : 572
	School Mean: 577
	96.6% achieved at or above the benchmark
Numeracy	All Australian Schools Mean : 588
	School Mean: 584
	97.7% achieved at or above the benchmark
Science WAMSE	Participating Schools Mean: 484
	School Mean: 488
Science Investigating WAMSE	Participating Schools Mean: 483
	School Mean: 489
Society & Environment WAMSE	Participating Schools Mean: 495
	School Mean: 501
Society & Environment, ICP WAMSE	Participating Schools Mean: 496
	School Mean: 503

The needs of Year 7 become quite evident upon closer analysis of results for 2009. For this year group, the College mean is significantly less than the All Australian Schools Mean for all categories as shown in Table 4. Additionally, the College needs to focus upon improving the number of students able to achieve the national benchmark in literacy components.

**Table 4 - Average Standardised Assessment Results for Year 7 Students with Benchmarks**

<b>Category</b>	
Reading	All Australian Schools Mean : 541
	School Mean: 527
	92.3% achieved at or above the benchmark

Writing	All Australian Schools Mean : 533
	School Mean: 529
	91.4% achieved at or above the benchmark
Language Conventions: Spelling	All Australian Schools Mean : 540
	School Mean : 518
	94% achieved at or above the benchmark
Language Conventions: Grammar & Punctuation	All Australian Schools Mean : 540
	School Mean: 522
	91.4% achieved at or above the benchmark
Numeracy	All Australian Schools Mean : 544
	School Mean: 525
	96.6% achieved at or above the benchmark

Student retention is also an area that requires some analysis. Of the 173 Year 9 students who were enrolled at the College, 70% remained to complete Year 12 studies. This could be attributed to the success of the College's School Apprenticeship Link Program, which affords students extended time on work placement and hence enhances the opportunities for students to be given apprenticeships and traineeships as a result of the program. Student disengagement with mainstream education could also contribute to the early departure from the College.

#### ▪ Analysis of Year 9 Bishops' Literacy Test

An analysis of the Year 9 Bishops' Literacy test, indicate student results have improved over the last three years. However, results in Table 5 reveal the College's average still remains lower than the State average, though the difference between the State and College average shows a significant improvement from 2008 to 2009. This improvement could be attributed to the implementation of

**Table 5 - Comparison of Mean for Year 9 Bishops' Literacy Test**

Year	College Mean	State Mean
2007	41.7	44.3
2008	45.4	53.4
2009	53.6	56.1

a coordinated and systematic approach to the delivery of the Religious Education curriculum for Year 7 to Year 12. This has entailed careful planning and programming for all year levels. It has also involved the use of common assessment tasks across each specific year group, with at least one of the tasks testing knowledge and understanding. This task reflects the style of questions students could expect to experience in the Bishops' Literacy Test. The production of revision materials for Year 8 and 9 students has enabled both staff and students to draw out key teaching and learning points. In addition, the introduction of cross marking of tasks within year levels, has ensured teachers have an understanding of the expected standards when assessing tasks. Greater consistency with teams of teachers has also assisted with the delivery of the Religious Education units.

As articulated earlier in this document, the College's NAPLAN results indicate literacy as an area of weakness. This shortfall in literacy could explain the College mean being lower than the State mean in the Bishops' Literacy Test, given the level of literacy required to complete the test.

## **SECTION 2b: CURRENT FOCUS**

### ***Current Focus for Senior School - Years 10 to 12***

#### **1. Moderation of Year 11 and 12 Courses**

Moderation of TEE/WACE subjects in 2009 reversed the trend of recent years, with an average downward adjustment of 4.13% per subject. Combined with unfavourable scaling and standardisation, this has had an adverse effect on the raw school mark in a number of subjects. This would tend to indicate that assessments/marking might not always have been at a TEE/WACE exam standard. This may also indicate that some students may not have performed as well as expected in their exams.

In 2010 teachers have been instructed to aim to be moderated slightly upward in all subjects so as to provide a buffer for any downward statistical adjustments. All teachers will be required to cross mark and use moderation strategies for multiple classes. Teachers of Year 11 and 12 courses with only one class group will be encouraged to cross mark with other colleagues within the College, e.g. Heads of Learning Areas.

#### **2. Subject Counselling**

Upon analysis of the Year 12 students' academic history, in particular their NAPLAN data from Year 9 and their Year 10 results, it is apparent that a more transparent approach to counselling in support of the transition from Years 10 to 11 and from Years 11 to 12 needs to be adopted. In 2009, 59% of Year 12 students studied a university pathway. The Year 9 NAPLAN data suggests that around 40% would have been a more appropriate proportion of students following this pathway.

When counselling students in future, greater attention needs to be given to the academic history of the student. This means tracking their Years 7 and 9 NAPLAN and WAMSE results and Year 10 results. This information is placed on the subject selection form, so that both staff and parents understand that academic success in the past correlates with academic success in the future.

The team of staff trained in the subject counselling process need to adhere to clear course pre-requisites for students. These pre-requisites are based on statistical evidence gathered from previous years and reflect what grades are required at the end of Year 10 to achieve university entry in Year 12. These counselling staff work with students and their parents to provide 1 to 1 counselling and guidance. Those students who are borderline cases will be referred to the Careers Counsellor. For those parents who insist their son/daughter embark upon a course beyond their academic capability, these students will be placed on the College's at risk program, referred to as the GOAL program.

#### **3. Parent Information Evenings**

Parent evenings are held for each of the academic year groups at the commencement of the school year. Each evening provides information about a particular year group – their educational, social, emotional, and spiritual development. This is to reinforce the importance of the partnership between home and school.

The importance of **academic rigour** needs to be raised with parents. There is an expectation that students take responsibility for their own learning. If they work hard in a course that is suitable to their skills and abilities then they will achieve success. Likewise, the issue of distractions such as

paid work and social events that prove detrimental to academic success need to be highlighted. There is evidence to suggest that some parents have a limited understanding of the application and rigour required of students to achieve university entry.

### **3. Alternate Access to University**

The College needs to continue to capitalise on the various alternate methods to access university – e.g. portfolio pathway.

### **4. Year 10 Courses**

With an increasing number of students being subject to the ATAR processes, Year 10 courses must further reflect the rigours and expectations of achievement associated with a Year 11 and 12 courses.

### **5. Assessments**

It is a focus that all assessments in Year 11 and 12 WACE courses reflect those that appear in the WACE examination.

### **6. Examinations**

With an increasing number of students having to sit exams to achieve their WACE, students are to be given strategies to assist them to perform well in these types of assessments. Students who perform poorly in their final exam in Year 12 are doubly impacted – firstly in the form of a reduced combined score and secondly in the form of a negatively adjusted raw school score. The exam is used as a moderating tool and can undo a lot of the hard work achieved by a student over the course of the year if they underperform.

### **7. Prometheus**

As articulated in the analysis, efforts to inspire the more academically able students to remain engaged in learning has brought about the introduction of the Prometheus Club. The appointment of a staff member to oversee this program, whereby selected Year 12 students attend a three hour weekly session after school, has proved invaluable. This session provides opportunities for peer tutoring, guest presenters, and tutoring from teachers, but its main focus is to provide a supportive environment where it is seen as 'acceptable' to achieve academic excellence. This program has been introduced for Year 11 students and will eventually be introduced for Year 10 students.

### **8. VET Studies**

The College remains committed to affording students pathways that enable them to gain first hand experience in the work place. Accordingly, School Based Traineeships and other programs are promoted within the senior school for those students who may otherwise have sought early departure from school.

## ***Current Focus for Years 7 to 9***

Given the NAPLAN results indicate literacy and student engagement as areas of need, the College has implemented the following practices.

### **1. Literacy Intervention**

In Years 7 and 8, those students who have been identified as below the benchmark in national testing, or who score poorly on the Middle Years Ability Test (MYAT), which is administered at the beginning of Year 7, are identified as needing additional literacy support. Once these students have been identified, further testing is conducted to ascertain the specific nature of each child's

literacy deficits. With this knowledge in hand, specialised programs are created that target the most important areas of need for these students. These literacy support classes are in addition to the regular English curriculum. In order to ensure the success of the Literacy Intervention Program, there are only a small number of students in each class. This ensures greater teacher contact, continued reinforcement of key skills, more flexibility to differentiate the learning and the opportunity to enhance self-confidence, which is often a side effect of poor literacy skills in our children.

## **2. Time Allocation to literacy**

In Years 7 and 9, students receive one more period of English each week. This allows for greater time allocation and hence, greater focus on literacy throughout the year.

## **3. Learning Teams**

Learning teams are allocated to classes in Years 7 and 8. This enables staff to collaborate in teams to ensure programs are designed to that meet the specific needs of the students. This process allows for greater reflection on pedagogy.

## **4. Additional Classes**

Additional classes for literacy and numeracy in Years 8 and 9 have been created to reduce the staff student ratio. This means that our students are afforded greater attention from the classroom teacher.

## **5. 1 to 1 Laptop Program**

Youth of today are digital learners and it is, therefore, important that students are afforded opportunities to engage with technology in the classroom. It is through the implementation of the laptop program for Years 7 and 8 that the desire of students to engage with learning has been increased. In the short time this program has been in place, the benefits of increased completion of homework and greater willingness to undertake academic tasks have already become evident. The continued professional development of staff in the use of technology is ever so important if students are to receive worthwhile instruction through the use of this learning tool. An extensive professional development program is currently in place.

## **6. National Partnerships Project (NPP) – Literacy 7-9:**

This Federal Government initiative, supported by specialists from UWA, has allowed four teachers from Kolbe, from different learning areas, the chance to attend a range of literacy-based workshops aimed at improving their literacy teaching skills. The focus of these workshops is on understanding how literacy is the responsibility of all learning areas, not just English. As this is an action research project, the designated teachers apply their new skills, content knowledge and teaching strategies in their classrooms throughout the year. Pre- and post-testing data is used to indicate the impact this professional learning has had on the literacy skills of our students. As this project is also about developing literacy leadership within schools, the long-term aim is to then embed these new teaching strategies across all Learning Areas at the College, by re-shaping teaching practices.

## ***Current Focus for Year 9 Bishops' Literacy Test***

With the overall improvement of the College's results for the Year 9 Bishops' Literacy Test, as shown in Table 5, the current focus is to build upon the many good initiatives that are already in place. A collaborative approach between teachers will remain a focus, along with the development of resources to assist with the delivery of the curriculum. Student engagement with learning is a focus across all curriculum areas, including the Religious Education learning area. With the introduction of the 1 to 1 laptop program for Year 7 and 8 students, teachers have been

challenged to seek innovative ways of using this learning tool to increase student engagement within Religious Education learning area. This will continue to be a teacher focus so that knowledge is presented in a way that helps students connect with the material.

As the College has identified literacy as an overall focus, this too will continue to be important for an improvement in Religious Education learning area, particularly, given the level of literacy required to complete the Bishops' Literacy Test.

### **SECTION 3: FORWARD PLANNING**

Looking beyond 2010, it has become evident that there are a number of areas requiring further development. Most of these are aligned with the plans and objectives of the College's Curriculum Team and in particular the Heads of Learning Areas. The growth of these important leaders within the College community is central to the development of good pedagogical practices within their specific learning areas. Key development areas are as follow:

- Creating a culture of reflective practice in curriculum areas, whereby staff continually reflect and search for best teaching and learning practices. The introduction of a formative appraisal process will be implemented in the future, so as to encourage open and constructive dialogue with their learning area staff and to empower leaders to assume greater responsibility and ownership of their learning area.
- Being a leading digital school, Kolbe curriculum leaders are required to model and promote the effective use of technology. Hence, the College's latest ICT Strategic Plan necessitates curriculum leaders to be ICT mentors and leaders in this field. It is anticipated that, through the development of curriculum leaders as ICT leaders, teachers from each learning area will become better placed to effect a curriculum that is digitally friendly.
- With the implementation of a National Curriculum, curriculum leaders are required to keep abreast of new initiatives and ensure teachers within their learning areas are familiar with curriculum changes. The implementation of the National Curriculum will be a key focus for the coming years, ensuring a seamless transition in its adoption.
- Restructuring the nature of curriculum meetings to improve the effectiveness of these discussion times.

The College has already implemented a number of the initiatives as articulated in this document. These initiatives provide the platform from which to build upon in the future. In concert with the development of ICT, literacy will continue to be a major focus for the College. A systematic, comprehensive and all embracing approach to addressing literacy will be paramount in the forward planning of the curriculum on offer to students.