
2025

ANNUAL REPORT



Camden Haven Community College - RTO 90018
Inform yourself, transform your life!



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ABOUT US

Camden Haven Community College is a not-for-profit Incorporated Association with a volunteer governing Committee. It is community owned and a registered charity.

The college provides lifestyle and vocational courses for our local communities in the Camden Haven and Manning Valley and has been operating for nearly forty years.

Camden Haven Community College is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO 90018), approved to provide nationally accredited units and qualifications. We offer a diverse range of quality vocational and general education learning opportunities.



OUR VISION

Camden Haven Community College will continue to operate as a not-for-profit, community-based Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

It will provide equitable access to education and training through a diverse range of quality, professional, vocational, foundation and general learning opportunities that reflect the changing needs and interests of the Camden Haven and other communities.

The College will be managed in an ethical manner and integrate sustainability into training and facilities.

OUR MISSION

01.

To provide direct relief of poverty, suffering, distress, misfortune or helplessness in the community through training, education, advice and provision of other services which provide learning and development outcomes to enhance opportunities.

02.

To be responsive to the community and provide educational opportunities to satisfy its diverse needs and interests.

03.

To offer a friendly, supportive and inclusive environment in which individuals can achieve their potential.

OUR TEAM



Gillian Paxton

College Manager



Noni Harges

Training Manager



Kristy Bracic

Outreach Support



Sarah Manderson

Bookkeeper



Hayley Proudfoot

Lifestyle Coordinator



Lauren Walsh

Taree Coordinator



Kylie Brittliffe

VET Trainer & administrator



Jennifer Eccleston

VET administrator



Heather Grace

VET Trainer



Andy Bracic

VET Trainer



Cynthia Novac

VET Trainer & Compliance
Officer



Hannah Kelly

VET Trainer

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Val Evans

At the 2024 Annual General Meeting the following were elected to the Management Committee:

Val Evans.....	President
Cate Potts.....	Deputy President
Joneen Troup.....	Secretary
Bruce Dunlop.....	Treasurer
Tony Denzel.....	Committee Member
Julie Reiss.....	Committee Member
Dannielle Worton.....	Committee Member
Patricia Bough.....	Committee Member

The Committee met six times during the year.

I'm pleased to present this annual report, reflecting a year of solid growth, thoughtful transition, and unwavering commitment to our community. We supported a record number of students across both our Taree and Laurieton campuses. This strong enrolment shows the community's growing trust in our training programs and our commitment to education and skill development. The high number of trainees is particularly encouraging, as it confirms our continued role in skilling the next generation and contributing directly to local workforce needs.

A major change this year was the retiring of our Training Manager, Veronica, after eight years of dedicated service. She was replaced by Noni whose close collaboration with Veronica ensured a seamless transition into the position, reflecting the strength of our internal succession planning. We also welcomed Andy, Hannah, Kristy, Kylie and Kim to the VET team. Their integration has been remarkably smooth, thanks to the invaluable support and mentorship provided by our long-term trainers, Heather and Cynthia. A heartfelt thank you to everyone for making this transition so easy and for embracing the changes that come with new leadership.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Our dedicated office team continues to thrive, providing the backbone of our operations. Kylie's completion of her TAE and her expanded role in training and administration has been a great step forward. Jennifer, Lauren, and Hayley have remained steady and reliable, providing consistent support to both trainers and students, even on tough days. Their positive approach makes a real difference in creating a welcoming and supportive environment.

Special thanks must go to Gilly, a manager whose commitment to our college and community is matched by her strong leadership and genuine care for people. Her ability to guide the staff through challenges with clarity and purpose has been instrumental in our continued success. She leads by example, fostering a culture of respect, collaboration and excellence. Her approachable style and people skills bring out the best in those around her, creating a workplace where both staff and students feel supported and empowered.

From 1st July, the revised Standards for RTOs came into effect. We've spent considerable time preparing for these changes, which are designed to enhance the quality and integrity of vocational education and training across Australia. For us, these new standards mean an even greater emphasis on learner-centred approaches, stronger industry engagement, and enhanced accountability for training outcomes. Our team has worked tirelessly to ensure we are not only ready, but eager to embrace these changes, reinforcing our commitment to delivering the highest quality education.

The Management Committee has been closely involved in understanding these new expectations. We've participated in professional development and in-depth discussions around governance, self-assurance, and continuous improvement. We are honing our risk management strategies to identify and mitigate potential challenges proactively, particularly those related to student well-being and financial viability. The new standards reinforce the paramount importance of leadership and accountability, underscoring the Committee's role in fostering a culture of quality throughout the College.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Financial conditions have remained tight, but we've stayed focused on our goals. One highlight was securing funding through the National Skills Agreement. This has allowed us to take training into a childcare centre in Kempsey providing foundation skills training directly to parents and grandparents, demonstrating the success of our strategy to take our trainers to where the people are, making education accessible and relevant. I want to thank the Management Committee for their time, support and insight over the past year. We are fortunate to have a strong committee with diverse representation from the industries we serve including education, consumers, and finance. This diverse expertise allows us to work well together, navigating difficult situations with thoughtful consideration and a shared vision for the College's future.

We continue to offer inclusive, accessible and practical training that makes a real difference in our region. Thank you for your support. We look forward to building on this year's progress.



A WORD FROM THE MANAGER



The Year in Summary: Highlights

Our success is built on the dedication of our wonderful team of trainers and administrative staff who provide student-focused training and comprehensive wrap-around support. Here are some of the key highlights from the past year:

- Welcomed new team members who bring fresh perspectives and exceptional skills, all sharing a passion for adult education.
- Our trainers consistently invested in their professional development, ensuring they deliver up-to-date, best-practice training that effectively adapts to the diverse needs of our students.
- Achieved full staff engagement in preparing for the new RTO standards, demonstrating a unified commitment to quality and compliance.



The Year in Summary: Highlights

- Celebrated Kylie's successful completion of her TAE, enabling her to expand her role into training alongside her VET administration duties.
- Our dedicated Management Committee worked cohesively to effectively manage numerous challenges throughout the year, ensuring steady governance.
- Successfully introduced exciting new lifestyle courses, including German, Cryptic Crosswords, and Guitar, broadening our community offerings.
- Hosted the impactful 'Raising the Bar on Living with Dementia' presentation, providing valuable insights and support to families, individuals, and service providers.
- Continued to receive strong, essential support from the Department of Education for both our ACE and Smart and Skilled funded training programs.
- Successfully secured additional funding through the National Skills Agreement (NSA), enabling us to deliver vital foundational skills training in Kempsey.
- Maintained consistently high employment outcomes for our VET courses, underscoring the real-world value and effectiveness of our training.
- The Laurieton community garden continued its success, flourishing with outstanding support from local businesses, fostering community connection and practical skills.
- Maintained a strong position of ongoing financial sustainability, ensuring our ability to continue serving the community.
- Successfully introduced a one-day-a-week course for CHC33021 Certificate III in Individual Support, specifically designed to upskill those already working in aged care and disability industries.
- Participated in crucial cultural diversity training, funded by the Department of Education through NSA funding, to enhance our inclusive practices.
- Saw a significant increase in professional development participation across all staff and Committee members, reflecting our commitment to continuous learning.
- Achieved an increase in fee-for-service training delivered directly through aged care and disability service providers, demonstrating strong industry partnerships.
- Secured vital funding for an Outreach Student Support position for 2025/26, ensuring continued personalised assistance for our learners.

Participation: Empowering Our Community through Learning

Stepping into our college is a joy. We welcome students from all walks of life, each arriving with their unique objectives but united by a shared eagerness to learn and a thirst for knowledge. For many, it's their first foray into adult education, and while initial nerves might be present, they quickly dissipate as they discover our supportive and engaging environment.

Last financial year, over 800 students participated in our training programs, generating 1499 enrolments. Of these, a significant 52% were vocational enrolments, each representing a tangible opportunity for individual growth and a direct contribution to the strength of our local community. Our core focus remains on the critical sectors of aged care, disability support, and in-home care. These are vital industries where local service providers consistently rely on our high-quality, industry-aligned training to upskill their existing workforce and cultivate new, industry-ready professionals.

It's incredibly rewarding to see so many students successfully complete their CHC33021 Certificate III in Individual Support, with many securing employment even before their studies are finalised.

Helped by changes to legislation, we're observing a growing and encouraging trend: an increasing number of individuals already working in these crucial industries are returning to our college to attain formal qualifications, deepening their skills and enhancing the quality of care provided. Furthermore, many of our former students have advanced to complete their Certificate IV in their chosen specialty, making a tangible difference in the quality of care offered across our region.

We ensure that all students are encouraged to engage with foundational skills (language, literacy, numeracy, employability and digital), which we integrate into their vocational training. Foundation Skills training is also readily available as a valuable stand-alone option and we have invested heavily in trainer skills to ensure that we can expand this training in future.

Beyond core qualifications, our vocational training prominently features essential skills such as foot care, medication management, first aid, and manual handling. We pride ourselves on our responsiveness to the individual needs of employers, often delivering tailored training directly within their workplaces. Our popular non-accredited Mental Health First Aid training continues to attract a strong cohort of students, many of whom recognise its vital importance as a professional tool in today's demanding environments.

Despite the tight fiscal environment facing both State and Federal Governments, their commitment to supporting vocational education through fee-free opportunities in critical skills areas, including aged and disability care, remains steadfast. We understand that resources are finite, and our college works hard to maximise every available opportunity. We are proactive in capitalising on the often-small windows when fee-free Smart and Skilled training becomes available, ensuring this critical training remains accessible to those who need it most.

Our students consistently find our training to be accessible, highly informative, and genuinely supportive.

Complementing our vocational offerings, our Lifestyle training programs continue to be immensely popular, with many exciting new courses introduced, particularly at our Laurieton campus. We look forward to introducing even more opportunities in the future, catering to all ages and abilities.

Finally, when we reflect on participation, it's essential to acknowledge the unforeseen barriers that can impact our students' access to training. Earlier in the year, Taree and its surrounding areas experienced another devastating flood event. This led to the temporary suspension of classes, significantly impacted many of our students, and caused unavoidable delays in training delivery. I want to extend a heartfelt acknowledgement of the incredible resilience shown by our community and our students during this difficult time, and to commend the wonderful, supportive role our trainers played in assisting students through such challenging circumstances.

Government Subsidised Training

In a period marked by tightening fiscal environments at both state and federal government levels, our focus has remained steadfast on delivering high-quality, impactful vocational education and training that directly addresses the nation's and NSW's most pressing skills needs. We recognise that public investment in VET is more scrutinised than ever, demanding demonstrable outcomes and a clear alignment with strategic priorities.



ACE Program: Bridging Gaps and Fostering Engagement

Our Adult and Community Education (ACE) program continues to be a cornerstone of our community engagement, providing a vital platform for transformative change for our most disadvantaged participants. Operating within the stringent ACE guidelines, this program is instrumental in offering nationally accredited training, alongside invaluable non-accredited opportunities, primarily for those in regional areas who face significant barriers to education and employment. ACE funding, particularly crucial in this tight fiscal landscape, ensures the existence of pathways for engagement and real change that would otherwise be out of reach for many within our communities.

We acknowledge the exceptional support from the ACE team within the Department. Their commitment to fostering collaboration and promoting best practice is unwavering, creating an environment where providers can thrive even amidst financial constraints. The team were so supportive during the recent flooding events, ensuring we were able to offer students the support they needed to continue their studies.

Smart and Skilled: Responding to Workforce Demands

Our participation in the NSW Government's Smart & Skilled program remains central to our full qualification vocational offerings. Reflecting both our commitment to accessibility and the program's design, the majority of our students qualified for fee-free training, a critical support mechanism in the current economic climate that aligns with the NSW Government's priority to remove financial barriers for priority cohorts and ensure a skilled workforce. Our highest activity was consistently seen in CHC33021 Certificate III in Individual Support, directly addressing the significant and ongoing demand within the care and support economy – a key priority area for both NSW and federal governments.

Our ability to continue offering a number of Certificate IV courses fee-free has enabled numerous local workers to upskill and provide even better care in their chosen professions, directly enhancing the quality of vital health and community services in our region. Local facilities and service providers have actively encouraged and supported their staff in pursuing these qualifications, keenly aware that additional skills directly translate to improved care outcomes and increased workforce capability.

We remain hopeful that access to such fee-free training will continue, as it directly underpins the sustainability and quality of these essential services, a shared objective of both state and federal skills agendas.

Increasing enrolments of trainees continues, especially within the Manning Valley area. We have proactively deepened our collaboration with aged care and disability providers, meticulously adapting our training schedules to meet the dynamic needs of these critical industries. This dedicated approach to supporting their trainees through their studies is yielding success and is, in turn, encouraging these service providers to engage additional trainee cohorts and explore pathways for students seeking Certificate IV training opportunities. This aligns perfectly with the National Skills Agreement's (NSA) overarching objective to deliver a more productive and highly skilled workforce, and the NSW Government's specific focus on boosting apprenticeships and traineeships to address persistent skills shortages.

The year has seen fiscal tightening for both state and federal governments, a reality we anticipate will continue to shape the funding landscape. Nevertheless, we are pleased to report that we continue to experience strong support from the Department and maintain a close, collaborative working relationship. This partnership is vital as we collectively navigate a future focused on targeted skill investment, improved skills planning, and ensuring the VET system is agile and responsive to the evolving needs of industry and the community.

Acknowledging our Management Committee

Camden Haven Community College Inc. is fortunate to be governed by a dedicated volunteer Committee, the unwavering guiding force of our Association. Their commitment, wisdom, and passion are the bedrock of our success.

Our President, Val Evans, was elected at the 2023 AGM after two years of outstanding service as Vice President. Val works tirelessly for the College, always available to discuss issues and provide invaluable advice. Her extensive background in vocational education, coupled with her strong and steady leadership, are immense assets. Personally, I am deeply grateful for her support through many difficult issues this past year and will forever be indebted for the time, patience, and wisdom she has so generously afforded me. Her exceptional leadership inspires us all.

Our long-serving Treasurer, Bruce Dunlop, plays a pivotal role in ensuring our financial sustainability. Despite his many demands, Bruce consistently provides wise counsel, meticulously safeguarding our financial position. His long-standing roots within the Camden Haven community are invaluable, positioning him perfectly to seek essential support and advice when we need it most.

My sincere thanks extend to all Committee members for their support throughout the year. Our Committee boasts a breadth of knowledge and experience, with everyone willing to share their expertise. A special acknowledgment goes to Julie Reiss, who, despite relocating to the south of the State, continues to attend every meeting remotely. We are fortunate to have retained her invaluable insights and dedication amidst the many demands of her new position. I am personally indebted to every member for their time, their wisdom, and their unwavering support.

With the introduction of the revised Standards for RTOs, a greater burden has been placed on this group of volunteers. They have embraced these new responsibilities, each remaining steadfastly committed to the College's mission and future. Our Committee possesses a profound understanding of both the College and the communities we serve. They consistently bring their knowledge, passion, and wisdom to their vital role, serving as advocates for the important work we do.

Our Exceptional Team

Our College's success is a testament to those who went before us and our incredible team, whose depth of skills and experience ensures our communities receive the very best in education and support. Everyone involved in organising and delivering training brings talent to their role, coupled with an unwavering passion for community education. This team is nimble, creative, and deeply committed to the people we serve. We love helping, we love witnessing the success of others, and we're always striving to do it better.



This past year brought change to our leadership team, with the retirement of our much-respected Training Manager, Veronica, and the appointment of Noni in her place. Noni brings something special to the College. Her unique background and professional experience have shaped an extraordinary leader who is perfectly poised to guide our training programs through their next exciting chapter.

I want to make special mention of our vocational trainers, who bring their vast industry experience directly into every course we run. They pour their energy into face-to-face learning, tirelessly encouraging students throughout their studies. Their real-world stories and infectious energy make the industry come alive for our learners, and they are unequivocally the backbone of our training excellence. We welcomed several new trainers to the team. Their energy and enthusiasm have been well-received, and they will play a pivotal role in shaping the College of the future.

Our lifestyle trainers are equally adaptive and inclusive, consistently enriching the lives of our students. They embody the philosophy that you're never too old to learn, fostering the warmest and most welcoming environment, whatever your journey. This year, for instance, saw a rush on Windows 11 training, showcasing our ability to be quick and responsive to community needs, delivering the practical skills our students genuinely want and require.

As we reflect on another year of dedication and achievement, it's clear that the true strength of Camden Haven Community College lies within its people. It's in every shared laugh, every "aha!" moment, and every challenge overcome together. "Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much." The team at Camden Haven Community College embodies this spirit, and I am grateful to work alongside each of them.





“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” – African proverb.

Human endeavour is built on co-operation. This is true at all levels of society, but it is only within local communities that we find true trust, respect and morality. We feel safe in relying on our friends, neighbours and local institutions.

For Camden Haven Writers Group members, Camden Haven Community College (CHCC) has provided not only brilliant tutelage, but an ongoing sense of purpose and togetherness, a safe and welcoming environment, and resilient mortar that binds and allows us to continue learning and express ourselves with freedom and vitality.

It is no coincidence that the CHCC name is built around the word “Community”. The college engenders generosity, inclusiveness, and a genuine sense of being connected with the greater Camden Haven community. The range of courses on offer is diverse, from vocational training to a wide range of general education designed and delivered to improve and strengthen the knowledge, skills and wellbeing of locals – the community!

Throw in local business links, community gardens and help for the less fortunate, and CHCC shines as an indispensable stitch in the Camden Haven tapestry.

Stephen Lowcock
Write Your Story Graduate



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