



2026



Annual Report

Camden Haven Community College

RTO 90018

**Inform yourself,
transform your life!**

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www.chace.org.au



Table of Contents

About us	2
Vision	3
Mission statement	3
Our team	4
President's report	5-7
A word from the Manager	8-15
At a glance	16

About Us



Camden Haven Community College is a not-for-profit Incorporated Association with a volunteer governing Committee. Our committee members are inspiring community members who give their time, skills and expertise to strategically direct the college, taking legal and financial responsibility of the association.



The college is community owned and a registered charity, providing lifestyle and vocational courses in the Camden Haven and Manning Valley 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

1

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.

2

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

3

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



Cindy Yarnold
Administration
Assistant



Kristy Bracic
Outreach Support



Lauren Walsh
Training Manager
Assistant



Hayley Proudfoot
Lifestyle Coordinator



Jennifer Eccleston
VET Administrator



Sarah Manderson
Bookkeeper



Kylie Brittliffe
VET Trainer &
Administrator



Heather Grace
VET Trainer



Andy Bracic
VET Trainer



Cynthia Novac
VET Trainer



Mandy Edlington
VET Trainer

President's Report

At the 2025 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.

As a Community College, we offer flexible, local, inclusive learning that meets adults exactly where they are, whatever their age or stage of life. We're in the community, with the community, for the community, helping build skills, connection and confidence for everyone wanting to learn.

This year has been one of significant progress and organisational maturity. While financial pressures continue to challenge the adult education sector, Camden Haven Community College has remained focused on delivering high-quality education, strengthening governance and ensuring every decision we make is centred on better outcomes for our students and community.

This has been our first year operating under the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2025, which came into effect on 1 July 2025. Gilly has spent considerable time working through the new standards and guiding the Management Committee throughout. These standards place a greater emphasis on learner outcomes, quality systems, governance and continuous improvement. Although it is still early days, we have embraced the changes and are already seeing the benefits. The standards encourage a more student-centred approach and provide greater clarity around organisational responsibilities. They have challenged us to examine not only what we do, but how we do it, resulting in stronger systems and an even greater focus on quality learning experiences.

The Management Committee has embraced this new approach. Our meetings are now structured around the governance expectations of the Standards, providing greater oversight of quality, risk, compliance and continuous improvement. This has proven to be an effective way of ensuring the Committee remains focused on the matters that are most important to the long-term success of the College.

During the year we adopted a new enterprise risk management framework. With the College maintaining a deliberately low appetite for organisational risk, this more detailed framework provides a practical and structured approach to identifying, monitoring and managing risks across all aspects of the organisation. Supporting this work is our new Governance Calendar, which provides a clear roadmap of the key activities, reviews and reporting requirements that ensure the College continues to meet its governance and compliance obligations throughout the year.

Our investment in people has strengthened the organisation. The creation of a Training Assistant position has reduced the administrative burden on our Training Manager, Noni, allowing her to dedicate more time to supporting students, leading our trainers and focusing on the strategic initiatives that underpin high-quality vocational education and training.

We were delighted to secure funding for our Outreach Support role through to 2028. Kristy's impact in this role has been profound, particularly for students in Taree who face significant barriers to participating in education. Her dedication has helped many students remain engaged in their studies, complete their qualifications and move into meaningful employment. This work exemplifies the difference a community college can make when we invest in supporting the whole learner.

Lauren's appointment as Training Assistant created the opportunity to welcome Cindy to our administration team at Taree. Cindy has settled in well, embracing the College's culture and our shared commitment to helping students succeed in both life and work. At our Laurieton campus, Kylie, Jennifer and Hayley continue to work seamlessly together, providing outstanding support to our trainers and students.



On behalf of the Committee, I extend my sincere thanks to Gilly and Noni for their outstanding leadership throughout the implementation of the new Standards. Gilly has invested countless hours reviewing policies, refining systems and ensuring our work practices genuinely reflect the requirements of the Standards, while Noni has successfully embedded these changes into our training operations. Together they have led the College through a significant period of change with professionalism and vision.

There were no changes to the membership of the Management Committee this year. The experience and maturity of the Committee, together with the strong relationship we enjoy with the College team, has enabled us to navigate challenges with confidence. We work collaboratively, support one another and share a common purpose. No one carries the responsibility alone—we are, quite simply, a strong and committed team.

Finally, I thank my fellow Committee members, our staff, students, partners and supporters for their ongoing commitment to Camden Haven Community College. Together we continue to demonstrate the important role community colleges play in building skills, creating opportunities and strengthening the communities we proudly serve.

Val Evans
President



A word from *The Manager*

The Year in Summary: Highlights

As an organisation dedicated to providing flexible, local and inclusive learning, we meet adults exactly where they are, whatever their age or stage of life. We're in the community, with the community, for the community, helping build skills, connection and confidence for everyone who wants to learn.

This Year's Highlights:

- Successfully embedding the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations, strengthening learner outcomes, governance and continuous improvement.
- Welcoming new team members whose skills, empathy and commitment enrich our College culture and enhance the student experience.
- Celebrating the achievements of National Skills Agreement-funded Foundation Skills students in Taree, with many progressing into Certificate III studies.
- Maximising government funding opportunities to deliver high-quality, accessible training that responds to community and workforce needs.
- Strengthening governance through new Committee processes, a comprehensive Governance Calendar and an enterprise Risk Management Framework.
- Investing in professional development across our staff and Management Committee, building capability and embracing the opportunities presented by the new Standards.
- Continuing to receive strong support from the NSW Department of Education through Adult and Community Education, Smart and Skilled and National Skills Agreement funding.
- Expanding our Outreach Support program, helping students overcome barriers to participation and achieve successful study and employment outcomes.
- Contributing to the Department's Foundation Skills Community of Practice while continuing to build the College's expertise in foundation skills education.
- Maintaining consistently high employment outcomes for graduates of our vocational education and training programs.
- Remaining financially strong, enabling the College to support students experiencing financial hardship while continuing to deliver valued learning opportunities.

Highlights Continued:

- Introducing new lifestyle learning opportunities, including Photography and Qi Gong, which have been enthusiastically embraced.
- Completing improvements to our Taree office, creating additional workstations and dedicated spaces that enhance collaboration and staff wellbeing.
- Securing ongoing support for the Laurieton Community Garden through the generous sponsorship of Laurieton United Services Club, Club North Haven, Three Brothers and a successful grant from the Kendall Op Shop.

Welcome Cindy



This year we were delighted to welcome Cindy Yarnold to the team. Cindy brings with her a wealth of experience, along with a warm, friendly and positive approach, that creates a welcoming environment for everyone that steps through the College doors. She has a natural ability to make people feel comfortable, supported and included.

- Representing the community college sector through active participation in the NSW ACE Contract Reform Committee.
- Continuing to foster a positive organisational culture reflected in high staff and Committee retention, strong student outcomes and a shared commitment to continuous improvement.

Participation - Our students and community

Camden Haven Community College exists to serve the communities of the Camden Haven and Manning Valley. Across our region, many adults face barriers to education that can make returning to study feel overwhelming.

Financial hardship, limited transport, caring responsibilities, mental health challenges, low confidence and previous negative educational experiences can all stand in the way of learning. Our role is to remove as many of those barriers as possible and provide a welcoming, supportive environment where everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

Participation across the College remained strong during the year, with over 700 students undertaking 1238 enrolments across vocational, foundation skills and lifestyle learning. Of these, 59% were vocational enrolments. While participation numbers are important, our focus continues to be on delivering training that is engaging, relevant and leads to meaningful outcomes for learners and employers alike.

Despite ongoing cost-of-living pressures, people continued to invest in lifestyle learning, reinforcing the important role these programs play in promoting lifelong learning, social connection, wellbeing and community participation.

Student success continues to be measured not simply by qualifications awarded, but by the confidence people gain along the way. Many students completed their studies and moved directly into employment, with others securing work while still undertaking their mandatory work placement. Local employers recognise the quality of Camden Haven Community College graduates, increasingly employing our students and investing in further professional development for their own staff through training such as Medication Management, Foot Care and Manual Handling.

We are particularly encouraged by the number of Certificate III graduates choosing to continue their learning by enrolling in Certificate IV qualifications. This reflects both the confidence students develop during their studies and the strong reputation the College has established for delivering practical, industry-relevant education.

The introduction of National Skills Agreement (NSA) funding has created exciting opportunities to engage learners who may never have considered formal education. During the year, the College expanded Foundation Skills delivery into the Taree and Forster communities, deliberately taking training into familiar venues rather than expecting people to come to us. This approach has proven highly successful. Our trainers developed new learning resources specifically designed for these cohorts, and many participants have already progressed into Certificate III studies. We are optimistic that, over time, increasing numbers of Foundation Skills students will continue their learning journey into full vocational qualifications.

Building this capability has required significant investment by the College with exceptional support from the Department of Education. Our trainers have undertaken extensive professional development in Foundation Skills and actively contributed to the NSW Department of Education's Foundation Skills Community of Practice, strengthening both our own expertise and the broader adult education sector.

Lifestyle learning continues to flourish from our Laurieton campus, where dedicated facilities and passionate trainers create opportunities for people of all ages to learn, connect and thrive. Technology programs such as Tech Savvy Seniors and Introduction to Windows 11 remain consistently popular, while Mental Health First Aid continues to attract both members of the local community and those working or studying in the aged care and disability sectors. New courses including Photography and Qi Gong have been enthusiastically embraced, alongside

longstanding favourites that encourage people to learn simply for the enjoyment of learning. We thank our lifestyle trainers, whose enthusiasm, generosity and expertise make these programs such a valued part of community life.

For some students, simply walking through our doors each morning is a significant achievement. Success is rarely determined by academic ability alone. It is often influenced by the challenges students carry with them, including financial stress, childcare responsibilities, transport difficulties, family commitments and mental health concerns. Supporting students requires a genuine whole-of-college approach. Every member of our team contributes to creating an environment where students feel welcomed, respected and encouraged to succeed. Our Outreach Support service has become an essential part of that journey, working one-on-one with students to identify barriers, connect them with appropriate supports and help them remain engaged in their studies. Time and again we have seen students who may otherwise have withdrawn successfully complete their training, gain employment or develop the confidence to continue their education. Not every student completes their qualification the first time. Sometimes life simply gets in the way. When that happens, our message remains the same: the door is always open. Whenever our students are ready, we are ready to welcome them back.

Government Subsidised Training

Public investment in vocational education and community learning has never been more important. Governments across Australia continue to balance increasing demands on public services with finite resources, making it essential that every dollar invested delivers meaningful outcomes for individuals, communities and the economy.

We are grateful for the continued support of the NSW Department of Education and recognise the Department as a genuine partner in the work we do.



Their investment enables us to deliver quality education to people who might otherwise miss the opportunity to participate in learning, while their collaborative approach and willingness to engage with providers ensures programs continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of communities across New South Wales.

On behalf of the College, I extend my sincere thanks to the Department's Adult and Community Education, Smart and Skilled and National Skills Agreement teams for their ongoing guidance, support and commitment to community education.

Adult and Community Education

The Adult and Community Education (ACE) program remains the cornerstone of Camden Haven Community College and the foundation on which our organisation was built. ACE represents far more than a funding program—it embodies the belief that education should be accessible, inclusive and available to everyone, regardless of their circumstances.

Through ACE funding we continue to provide pathways into learning for people who face barriers to education, while also delivering the lifestyle and learning opportunities that contribute so significantly to social connection, wellbeing and lifelong learning throughout our region.

The College continues to enjoy a strong and constructive relationship with the Department's ACE team. Their professionalism, responsiveness and genuine commitment to community education creates an environment where providers are supported to innovate while remaining focused on delivering quality outcomes for learners.

The ACE program is entering an important period of reform following the NSW Government's commitment to Secure Jobs and Funding. A new five-year contract model is expected to commence from 1 January 2028, providing greater certainty for providers and the communities they serve. Camden Haven Community College is pleased to contribute to this work through participation on the Department's ACE Contract Reform Committee. The Committee is committed to preserving the strengths that have made ACE such an effective program while identifying opportunities to modernise the contract and strengthen outcomes for learners well into the future.

Smart and Skilled

Smart and Skilled continues to be the primary funding program supporting our nationally recognised vocational qualifications. Demand for training in the care and

support economy remains exceptionally strong, with CHC33021 Certificate III in Individual Support continuing to attract the highest enrolments across the College.

During the year we fully utilised our Smart and Skilled funding allocation, ensuring every available training place was used to maximise opportunities for our community. The continued availability of fee-free and subsidised training has enabled people to enter new careers, existing workers to gain formal qualifications and experienced staff to continue building their professional capability through higher-level qualifications.

Welcome Mandy



Mandy joined the College this year as a new VET trainer, bringing with her extensive experience as an enrolled nurse and educator. Her knowledge, practical skills, and genuine passion for the care industry are already making a positive impact, supporting students as they begin their own journeys in the care industry.

We also continue to see strong support from local employers, many of whom invest directly in their workforce by enrolling staff in targeted professional development, including Medication Management, Foot Care and Manual Handling. These partnerships ensure training remains relevant, practical and responsive to industry needs while strengthening the capability of the local workforce.

Traineeships continue to be an important part of the College's vocational education model and remain an area of steady growth. Our approach is built on strong partnerships with local employers, recognising that every workplace

operates differently and that training must be flexible enough to meet the needs of both the learner and the employer. We work closely with service providers to tailor delivery schedules, minimise disruption to workplace operations and ensure trainees receive the support they need to successfully balance employment with study. This collaborative approach has strengthened our relationships with industry, with many employers returning year after year to enrol new trainee cohorts. These partnerships are helping to build a skilled, confident workforce while ensuring local employers have access to the qualified staff they need to meet growing demand.

National Skills Agreement

The National Skills Agreement has enabled the College to extend its reach into communities that have traditionally experienced lower participation in formal education. Establishing Foundation Skills programs for this cohort has required considerable planning, investment and collaboration. Our trainers have undertaken significant professional development, developed new learning resources and worked closely with local organisations to deliver training in venues at Taree and Forster. While bringing all these elements together is complex, the outcomes have more than justified the effort.

Students who may once have lacked the confidence to consider further study are now developing the language, literacy, numeracy, digital and employability skills that provide the foundation for lifelong learning. Many have progressed into Certificate III studies with the College, while others have gained the confidence to seek employment or pursue new opportunities within their communities.

This is precisely the type of long-term impact community colleges are uniquely positioned to deliver. The National Skills Agreement has allowed us to reach learners who might otherwise remain disconnected from education and employment, creating benefits that extend well beyond individual students to their families, employers and the broader community.

Governance, Leadership and Our Team

The strength of Camden Haven Community College lies not only in the quality of our training, but in the people who guide, support and deliver it every day. We are fortunate to have a Management Committee and staff whose commitment to adult education is unwavering and whose collective knowledge continues to shape the future of the College.

On behalf of the College, I extend my sincere thanks to every member of our volunteer Management Committee for the time, expertise and thoughtful leadership they contribute throughout the year. Their willingness to embrace the governance expectations of the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations has further strengthened the College, with members enthusiastically engaging in professional development, governance reform and continuous improvement. There were no changes to Committee membership during the year, providing the benefit of continuity, experience and strong working relationships.

I offer particular thanks to our President, Val Evans, whose wisdom, guidance and unwavering support continue to be invaluable to both the Committee and the management team. Val's extensive experience in vocational education, coupled with her calm leadership and genuine commitment to the College, provides confidence during both the opportunities and challenges that arise throughout the year. I am grateful for the support the Committee has extended to our Training Manager, Noni, recognising the critical leadership role she plays and embracing the collaborative approach that has become a hallmark of our organisation.

Our Treasurer, Bruce Dunlop, continues to provide exceptional stewardship of the College's finances. His extensive financial expertise, deep understanding of governance and longstanding connections within the local community bring considerable strength to the Committee's decision-making and help ensure the College remains financially sustainable.

The diversity of experience across the Committee—including vocational education, finance, governance, consumer representation and the aged care sector—ensures decisions are informed by a broad range of perspectives while remaining firmly focused on the needs of our students and communities.

To our staff, thank you. Your professionalism, care and commitment are evident in every interaction with our students and community. My sincere thanks go to Noni and our vocational training team, whose passion for quality education and student success continues to inspire those they teach. Together they have embraced significant change throughout the year while maintaining an unwavering focus on delivering outstanding learning experiences.

A special acknowledgement must go to Kristy, whose Outreach Support work continues to change lives. Through patience, empathy and practical support, she has assisted countless students to overcome barriers that might otherwise have prevented them from completing their studies or securing employment.

Lauren has transitioned seamlessly into her new role as Training Support, providing valuable assistance to our trainers and helping strengthen the systems that underpin quality training delivery.





We were also delighted to welcome Cindy to the team, whose enthusiasm and positive approach have made her a wonderful addition to our Taree office.

At our Laurieton campus, Kylie and Jennifer continue to provide exceptional vocational administration, ensuring students and trainers receive the support they need throughout their learning journey. Hayley continues to expertly coordinate our lifestyle learning programs, manage the Laurieton office and work alongside our dedicated Community Garden volunteers, whose contribution enriches both the College and the wider community.



Education changes lives, but it is people who make education possible. Every member of our Committee, every trainer, every member of our administration team and every volunteer contributes to making Camden Haven Community College the welcoming and supportive place it is today. Together we have created a culture where students are encouraged to succeed, staff are supported to grow and communities know they have a trusted place to learn. It is a privilege to work alongside such an extraordinary group of people.



2026

At a glance:

- 700+ students
- 1,238 enrolments
- 59% vocational training
- 35 trainees
- 684 ACE students
- 123 Smart & Skilled students
- 31 NSA students
- 118 Fee for Service VET students
- 506 Lifestyle students
- 90 Lifestyle courses delivered
- 75 Certificate III students graduated
- 11 Certificate IV students graduated
- 142 Tech Savvy Senior students
- 10 work placement partners

