

OFFICIAL



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Western Australian College of Agriculture - Cunderdin

Public School Review

Public School Review

Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed by the Department of Education's School and Principal Review directorate. A review gives assurance to the local community, the Minister for Education and the Director General about the performance of public schools in delivering high quality education to students. The review acknowledges the achievements of the school and gives feedback to support the Principal and staff with their improvement planning.

Initially conducted on a 3 year cycle, subsequent reviews are determined to occur on a one, 3 or 5 year timeframe.

The Principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence from the school. Information to be validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the Public School Review report and determines when the next review will occur. The report is provided to the Principal and the regional Director of Education.

Expectations of schools

The Statement of Expectation (the Statement) makes clear and public the expectations and responsibilities of schools and the Department of Education (the Department) in student achievement and progress.

The Statement is between; the Department, represented by the Director General; the school, represented by the Principal; and is noted by the school council/board, represented by the Chair.

The Statement sets out the expectations of Principals in relation to the delivery of the 2020-2024 strategic directions *Every student, every classroom, every day*, and *Building on Strength*.

The Statement will underpin each school's strategic planning and self-assessment and will form part of the school's Public School Review. It will also support the Principal Professional Review.

Public School Review – The Standard

A Standard has been developed across the domains of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework to describe essential indicators of performance. The selection of the indicators is based on literature research and historical reviews of school performance in Western Australian public schools.

The purpose is to better ensure that judgements about student performance are standardised and objective. Indicators describe what is evident in schools functioning 'as expected' within each domain.

The Standard defines the expected level of school performance. Judgements are made in relation to the Standard. External validation is also based on evidence presented relating to the Standard.

For further information or resources in alternative formats for people with accessibility needs, please contact PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au

Context

Western Australian College of Agriculture – Cunderdin was first opened in 1984. Comprising over 4000 hectares and situated approximately 160 kilometres from the Perth central business district, the college is well located in the Wheatbelt Education Region.

In 2012, the college was granted Independent Public School status.

Western Australian College of Agriculture - Cunderdin supports students with aspirations in horticulture, farming, university entrance and trade entrance.

The college has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 994 (decile 5). Currently, there are 134 students enrolled in Year 11 and Year 12.

The College Board has a governance role and a high profile within the college and wider community. The college is also supported by a Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

The first Public School Review of Western Australian College of Agriculture – Cunderdin was conducted in Term 4, 2021. This 2026 Public School Review report provides a current point of reference for the next cycle of school improvement.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a comprehensive and rigorous school self-assessment.

The following aspects of the school's self-assessment process are confirmed:

- The Principal and staff engaged in analysis of the college's progress toward meeting the Standard as part of an opportunity to deeply understand the performance of the college in preparing students to be work ready.
- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission was well structured and clearly aligned to the domains of the Standard. Evidence covering all foci within these domains was presented.
- The self-assessment process effectively addressed the complexity of the college's organisational structure, incorporating evidence and reflection from whole-school operations, classroom practice, trades, farm programs and residential boarding.
- The leadership team reported strong staff engagement in the process, with staff identifying strengths to celebrate and areas for future growth. This has sharpened the focus for ongoing strategic planning.
- Meetings held during the validation visit provided the review team with valuable insights from a broad representation of staff, students and community members. A cohesive team culture focused on continuous growth was evident.

The following recommendation is made:

- Maintain a deliberate and structured approach to selecting and analysing evidence, within each domain of the Standard, that demonstrates impact on student performance across the life of the new business plan.

Relationships and partnerships

The college engenders respect across its widely dispersed community through the clear, consistent communication of key messages and the maintenance of a positive reputation. Students express strong appreciation for the genuine support provided by staff and for the development of pathways that equip them for productive and fulfilling futures.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A skilled and representative College Board provides strong governance, with members advocating for the future of the college. The valued expertise of Board members underpins the intent to set a strategic direction focused on positive student outcomes.
- Consultative decision making is a hallmark of the college's approach, with information sought from staff, students and parents incorporated into planning processes. This ensures that emerging issues are identified early and addressed collaboratively.
- Collaboration with industry partners creates authentic pathways to employment, connecting students to potential careers through site visits to Living Farm Research Station, participation in agricultural competitions and shows, and engagement in the careers and transition program. As a result of these well-established partnerships, almost all students secure employment upon completing their studies.
- Mutually beneficial partnerships with local sporting clubs and businesses provide students with opportunities to learn about contemporary machinery and technology and participate in team sports.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Maintain opportunities to develop positive and productive relationships with students that support academic success and wellbeing.

Learning environment

The college and community share a clear vision for a supportive environment that fosters a strong sense of care, teamwork and belonging, strengthening the wellbeing of all staff and students. Programs that build resilience, connection, engagement and cultural responsiveness have been a sustained focus.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Wellio program provides authentic learning experiences on topics identified by students as important for young adults and teenagers. Areas such as driver awareness, sexual health, consent and drug education are delivered in ways that are relevant and meaningful.
- The case management approach of the student services team brings together allied professionals, the chaplain, school psychologist and residential manager to identify and support students at risk.
- Parent feedback reflects high levels of satisfaction with the college's high expectations for positive behaviour, its culture of safety, and the academic and social-emotional support provided to students.
- Practical learning is underpinned by robust safety practices, including a clear student driver policy, safe work procedures and job safety analysis. These processes illustrate the high priority placed on student safety and wellbeing, particularly in farm-based learning environments.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Progress the Cultural Committee Plan to maintain attention towards building cultural responsiveness and connection to families of Aboriginal students.
- Implement a formal process for student voice, enabling students to present ideas and feedback to staff for consideration in improvement planning and maintaining positive behaviour standards.

Leadership

College leaders understand the need for a consistently applied process for ongoing organisational improvement through resourced capacity building and support for middle leaders and aspirants.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Clear alignment is evident between the collaboratively developed business plan and carefully structured operational planning driven by middle leaders. Increasing staff capacity and empowerment to contribute to and enact these plans has been an intentional focus of the college.
- Strategic planning is supported by a well-defined accountability schedule, with considered targets and an annual performance review process providing a structured approach to regularly measuring the impact of plans on student outcomes and celebrating success.
- To address the complexities of delivering high-quality, industry-compliant agricultural education, the college has developed a dedicated strategic plan for the farm, detailing priorities in quality agricultural education, adaptable and resilient enterprise practices, industry collaboration and effective governance.
- Improved student outcomes are the central focus of implementation plans, which include ATAR¹ advancement, OLNA² support, staff and student wellbeing, the agreed instructional model and the work of the Cultural Committee.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Persist in aligning the development of effective instruction and work-ready programs with the identified needs of industry, ensuring students are equipped with relevant and future-focused skills.
- Maintain a strong focus on performance development processes that build staff capacity to drive improved student outcomes across the breadth of college offerings, including ATAR pathways.

Use of resources

In a complex resourcing environment, the focus of resource allocation and monitoring is to ensure maximum impact on improved student outcomes through the identification of student and industry needs and applying resources prudently.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Finance Committee draws on the expertise of staff across the farm, class, trades and residential areas, enabling collaborative, well-informed decisions that prioritise what best supports students.
- Disability Resourcing System funding is used strategically to enhance service provision, contributing to well-trained education assistants, chaplaincy support, improved physical accessibility and the establishment of a wellbeing and sensory room to meet diverse student needs.
- Rollover funding resulting from unfilled staffing positions has been repurposed prudently, enabling investment in contemporary equipment that expands students' access to industry-standard technology. Innovations such as the CNC (Computer Numerical Control) plasma cutter, Magnabend, greenhouse upgrades and drones broaden learning opportunities and strengthen vocational readiness.
- Applications to the Agricultural Education Trust are aligned to the strategic direction of the college and allow for the development of a fleet of large-scale machinery and implements to support agricultural skill building.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Maintain a sharp focus on addressing the ongoing effect of the Consumer Price Index on current and future college operations through funding applications and flexible resource management.
- Continue to investigate and invest in creative recruitment and attraction strategies to meet the ongoing workforce needs of the college.

Teaching quality

Staff have designed and adopted an instructional model based on Teaching for Impact pedagogy across the class, farm and trade areas. This is based on their experience and beliefs around the learning needs of young adults and articulates the agreed approaches currently in use across the college.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Collaboration meetings provide the opportunity for staff to analyse student performance data, identify knowledge gaps and plan for improved outcomes through program review and evaluation.
- The college has achieved Registered Training Organisation re-registration, indicating compliance in qualifications, industry experience, content knowledge and demonstrating evidence of ongoing access to professional learning and skill development of staff.
- Students appreciate the extensive opportunities provided to enable them to experience trades and academic pathways that maximise post-school transition. Success is indicated by 94% of the 2025 graduates engaging in employment, apprenticeships, training or university study in 2026.
- A system of feedback and development is supported through peer observations and walkthroughs from curriculum leaders to build consistency in teaching practice across the college.
- Parents report high levels of satisfaction with the detailed, timely student progress and achievement information provided by the college.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Develop and maintain partnerships with other senior secondary schools to continue to build staff capacity in planning, instruction and assessment of student learning.

Student achievement and progress

The leadership team has facilitated a team approach to planning and target setting, based on the regular analysis of system and school-based performance data. This demonstrates a clear commitment to collectively improve student performance.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- High expectations are articulated at the strategic level, and by classroom teachers who regularly utilise data sets to provide targeted teaching and intervention, driving good academic outcomes for students. As an indication of this, 100% of students achieved their WACE³ in 2025.
- Personalised education plans and information sharing between the class, farm and residential teams of the college support students to complete competencies, assignments and projects to maximise success.
- Scheduled moderation and validation activities are undertaken for General, ATAR and VET⁴ courses.
- 98% of all year 12 students attained a minimum of three qualifications in 2025. 43% graduated with at least one Certificate III qualification.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Sustain structured moderation sessions that outline clear expectations for consistency and accuracy in grade allocation.
- Maintain a focus on the ongoing development of staff data literacy to further drive improved student outcomes across all educational pathways.

Reviewers	
Jennifer Graffin Director, Public School Review	Myles Draper Principal, Duncraig Senior High School Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse the commendations and recommendations made by the review team regarding your school's performance.

Your next school review is to be scheduled for 2029. You will be formally notified in the 2 terms leading up to your school's scheduled review.



Vicki McKeown
A/Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
- 2 Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
- 3 Western Australian Certificate of Education
- 4 Vocational Education and Training