Denison College *Future Directions* student transition program

Denison College of Secondary Education, which commenced operation in 2007, is a year 7 to 12 College consisting of Kelso High and Bathurst High Campuses in the Western NSW Region. Denison College has over 1600 students, a college teaching staff of 121 and support staff of 29. There are two year 7-12 campuses with a shared senior curriculum.

Denison College offers over 90 courses for study in the senior years and works in association with TAFE NSW Western Institute, which offers 30 TAFE delivered courses in Stage 6, to provide students with further opportunities, subject choice and exciting career pathways.

Denison College has a very strong transition program, *Future Directions*, for students moving from year 10 into 11. *Future Directions* is a highly personalised and comprehensive program for students, the key features of which include:

- The Denison College *Senior Study Guide* provides details of the courses offered on all campuses, including TAFE. The *Career Planning Guide* describes future pathways to careers and tertiary study. The guides are published commercially for Year 10 students entering Year 11 and are made widely available in the Bathurst community.

- Students wishing to study at Denison College are asked to submit an application form which includes questions on their proposed subject choices, their career goals as well as their current attitude to study and progress in Year 10.

- All students attend the *Future Directions Evening* conducted at Charles Sturt University. Students and parents are given a formal overview of the Denison College Stage 6 structure and then they can gain further advice and clarification at the faculty booths which are manned jointly by personnel from both campuses. TAFE, Charles Sturt University and Central West Group Apprentices also have booths at the event.

- The timetable lines are drawn up based on student initial choices.

- All applicants attend an interview with their parents/caregivers conducted by College staff. The interview includes career guidance and assistance to help students choose the most suitable subject combination. An Aboriginal teacher mentor attends all the interviews with Aboriginal students and their parents/caregivers.

- All students with course issues after this process attend a further interview with college personnel.
Confirmation of course placements and subject choices are made in writing to each applicant.

Tours of the campuses are also conducted for new enrolments as well as for key community businesses such as Real Estate agencies.

This has been a highly successful process with high levels of satisfaction expressed by all stakeholders.

The Transition Team – implementing Future Directions
Denison College has formed a transition team to plan transition activities which consists of the following staff:

- College Principal
- College HT
- Year 10 Adviser – Kelso High Campus
- Year 10 Adviser – Bathurst High Campus
- Careers Adviser – Kelso High Campus
- Careers Adviser – Bathurst High Campus
- Transition Adviser – Kelso High Campus
- Transition Adviser – Bathurst High Campus

Transition Advisers have completed the 4 day Transition Adviser Course conducted by the Vocational Education in Schools Directorate.

This team is responsible for:

1. Review and development of Subject Selection and Career Planning Guides
2. Transport of students to Job Expo.
3. Organisation of Future Directions Night
4. Organisation of Subject Selection Interviews
5. Collation of subject choices for handover to Deputy Principals at completion of interviews
6. Evaluation of transition activities

Initially the transition team meets regularly in Term 2 and then as required until the end of Term 3.

Careers Lessons
Year 10 Work Education lessons focus on helping students transition into future work, TAFE or higher studies. Year 10 have a dedicated class once per fortnight for Work Education and study units such as; The World of Work, Australian Workplaces, Self-awareness and Pathways Planning plus Enterprising Communities. The student use the Subject Selection Guide, Career Planning Guide, TAFE handbook, UAC and University Guides and other publications to support work in this course.

In continuity with Work Education they explore post school options at The Careers Expo in Orange, where students have access to industry representative advice on future career pathways.

Career support for Aboriginal students involves working very closely with students in supporting them with transition and future pathways. This has included helping them in and out of the
classroom with extra curricular activities and work through in-class tutors, homework centre support, supporting and working closely with parents and community members, and other Aboriginal support organisations.

Year 10 Meetings
A one period meeting is held with all Year 10 students prior to the subject information night (Future Directions Night). At this meeting students are presented:

- With an outline of the subject selection process at their campus.
- A copy of the Senior Studies Guide and Career Planning Guide are distributed to students.
- An overview of BOS requirements and points to consider for subject selection.
- Lists of faculty Head Teachers

These meetings are conducted at each campus by the Deputy Principal supported by members of the campus transition team and college staff.

Job Expo
The Job Expo is held each year in Bathurst or Orange. The Job Expo provides students with the opportunity to ask questions and explore job conditions and requirements. The Job Expo is coordinated by Central West Youth Transition Services. The Year Adviser encourages all Year 10 students to attend.

At the Job Expo students are required to complete The My Future Direction Questionnaire which supports information submitted by students in their Transition Action Plan.

Subject Selection sheets
The Transition Action Plan is used as the subject selection sheet. It contains the following sections:

1. Student details
3. Student Profile – Career goals and current commitments
4. Student Personal Commitment
5. Media Release
6. Policy for Student Access to the Internet
7. Initial Subject Choice for Year 11 – 2008
8. Information for Parents/Carers and Students

Campus Deputy Principals review Action Plans for inappropriate choices and non-compliant BOS requirements. Student’s subject choices are recorded in the Transition database, along with their action plans, Year 10 half yearly report and interview documentation.

Staff Training
Training on course and BOS requirements is provided for all staff involved in interviewing process. The interview training is conducted a few days prior to the start of interviews. The interview training involves:

- Details about interview process and structures
- Overview of course requirements
Training is provided in identification of inappropriate courses for students and choices that do not meet BOS studies requirements. This training involves using submitted Action Plans from the current Year 10 to highlight issues and common errors.

**Student Interviews**

All students in Year 10 at both Bathurst High and Kelso High Campuses are interviewed about their future career choices including leavers. Students are given the timetable lines that have been drawn up based on their initial selections. All students are required to complete a Transition Action Plan even when they have indicated that they will not return. The non returning Action Plans are recorded but not included in the Time Table process.

All parents and students are posted an invitation letter 1-2 weeks prior to their interviews. A SASS staff member is employed to provide documentation support and records.

**Student follow up**

Follow-up occurs:
- Directly after the interviews to resolve any errors or issues identified from the Interview process
- Some Students will need to reselect subjects if a course does not run due to numbers or other factors.
- After TAFE has finalised course numbers and any courses culled due to lack of numbers.

This process is supported by the Deputy Principals.

**Year 11 into 12 Interview**

At the beginning of Term 4 Denison College conducts a formal interview for all students in Year 11 to confirm their subject for Year 12. Parents/carers are encouraged to attend. The aims of the interview are:
- Confirm Year 12 courses
- Provide advice on future career options
- Confirm UAI and HSC requirement
- Update student OASIS contact data
- Counsel students on attendance
- Discuss the payment of fees
- Confirm students ability to use their det email

The interview teams from each campus include:
- College Principal
- College Head Teachers
- Campus DP
- Campus Careers Adviser
- Campus Year 11 Adviser
- Technology support

As part of the Yr 11 - 12 process students complete an on online survey regarding Denison College, programs and procedures - the survey instrument is located on the Denison College online learning site.

Denison College provides another fine example of a whole school response to supporting students with a personalised career and transition planning service.