

A new model for agricultural education

Frequently asked questions

February 2020

General

What is involved in the new model?

A new model for state wide agricultural education involves the establishment of Richmond Agricultural College - a Centre of Excellence in Agricultural Education in the Hawkesbury and a new agricultural specialty stream and a new academic selective stream established at Richmond High School. As part of this new model, Hurlstone Agricultural High School will keep its name and stay at the Glenfield site.

What does this mean for each school?

The Centre of Excellence is proposed as a new purpose build facility in the Hawkesbury, available to students across NSW.

Richmond High School will have a new agricultural specialty stream and a new academic selective stream. It will also receive new agricultural and STEM facilities.

Hurlstone Agricultural High School will keep its name and stay at the Glenfield site. It will also receive an upgrade to boarding facilities and the dairy will be retained.

What is the next step in the design process?

Following community consultation, the agricultural model will be presented in a business case and submitted to NSW Treasury in early 2020.

How can the community follow progress?

On the School Infrastructure website, the specific school websites and social media. The School Infrastructure websites are:

<https://www.schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au/projects/r/richmond-high-school.html>

<https://www.schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au/projects/c/centre-of-excellence-for-agricultural-education.html>

<https://www.schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au/projects/h/hurlstone-agricultural-high-school-project.html>

How can the community provide feedback?

At any time, the community can email or phone School Infrastructure to provide feedback or ask questions.

In February 2020, we are holding community information sessions locally to Richmond and Glenfield. Online surveys for each school are available for you to provide feedback. To complete a survey, visit the School Infrastructure website for each school. Surveys are open until Monday 9 March 2020.

Will my feedback be taken on board?

All comments and suggestions received will be reviewed by the project and school leadership teams. Where possible, comments and suggestions will be incorporated in the project in line with the scope of work for the three schools.

What happens after the business case is submitted?

After the business case is approved by NSW Treasury, we will start detailed design and delivery activities.

What is the overall timeline for the three schools?

The current project timeline for all three schools is the same. In February 2020, we will consult with the community before submitting the business case to NSW Treasury. In mid 2020, we expect to have commenced detailed design for each school as well as lodged the planning applications.

Should any of these timings change, we will update the community through any communication materials we produce, and on the School Infrastructure project websites.

For more information contact:

School Infrastructure NSW
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Centre of Excellence in agricultural education

What is the Centre of Excellence in agricultural education?

The Centre of Excellence (CoE) will be a purpose built education facility that will deliver contemporary agricultural and STEM education programs to students and professional learning programs for teachers. Programs run by the centre will be linked to the NSW syllabus.

Where will the Centre of Excellence be located?

The CoE will be co-located at the Western Sydney University (WSU) Hawkesbury campus.

Who will the Centre of Excellence be available to?

It will be available for agricultural students from all schools in NSW, including Richmond High School, and Hurlstone Agricultural High School. It will also be available for teacher training for TAFE and WSU and partnered industry programs.

The CoE will have short-term residential facilities on site to enable education and training opportunities for students and teachers from rural and regional areas of NSW as well as overseas students.

How much time will my child spend at the Centre of Excellence?

This will depend on the nature of the program that your child is connected to within the CoE. The CoE Principal has managed a number of pilot programs since 2018 from the WSU Hawkesbury campus in partnership with WSU, TAFE and industry. The Principal will determine future syllabus and programs to support the educational delivery of agriculture and STEM education across NSW.

How can I enrol my child in the Centre of Excellence?

You cannot enrol directly in the CoE. The CoE will provide various programs and project based learning opportunities to visiting school groups from across NSW. To attend, your child's school must initiate engagement in an agricultural program managed by the CoE.

What facilities and enterprises will be shared with WSU and TAFE NSW?

Students will have access to shared facilities on the WSU campus, including sports fields, specialist teaching and research areas as part of partnered projects. They will have access to the WSU Living Labs, including the WSU Farm, water management, land management and resource sustainability systems.

Agricultural programs, in partnership with TAFE, will also facilitate access to specialist areas on the TAFE campus, including horticulture, landscaping and animal care facilities.

There are existing farm enterprises at Richmond High School and there will be newly developed enterprises at the CoE. There will be industry enterprises as part of partnered learning programs.

What types of educational programs are being developed with WSU and TAFE?

A variety of projects are being developed including:

- Immersion programs in specialist areas including agriculture, STEM, sustainability
- Partnered programs with specialist schools in the university
- Articulated entry pathways
- Shared delivery of curriculum
- Academic mentoring
- Undergraduate mentoring
- Leadership opportunities
- Teacher professional learning
- Teacher pre-service education
- K-12 programs to tailored stages/curriculum areas
- Shared use of facilities

Who is the Principal of the Centre of Excellence?

Kris Beazley

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Richmond High School

What is changing at Richmond High School?

Richmond High School will have both a new agricultural specialty stream and a new academically selective stream. A new school building and refurbishment of school facilities will occur.

Students will be able to apply for the new academic selective stream through the Department of Education's Selective Schools placement processes. Students will also be able to apply for the new agricultural education specialist stream based on a portfolio and interview which determines their interests and potential in agriculture.

When can students enrol in the academic selective stream at Richmond High School?

It is anticipated that the first intake for the academic selective stream will be Year 7 in 2022. Information regarding this intake will be released in 2020.

When can students enrol in the agricultural specialty stream at Richmond High School?

It is anticipated that the first intake for the agricultural specialty stream will be Year 7 in 2021. Information regarding this intake will be released in early 2020.

How far is the Centre of Excellence from Richmond High School?

By car/ bus: 8 minutes/ 4km.

Walking: 30 minutes / 3km

Is the academically selective stream at Richmond High School only for students who reside in the Hawkesbury area?

No. The entry requirements will be the same as for all selective classes across the state. Additional information will be located on the Selective Schools section of the Department website:
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7>

What application processes will apply for entry to the academically selective stream at Richmond High School?

The entry requirements will be the same as for all selective classes across the state.

Enrolment will be through the Department of Education's High Performing Students Team. Entry in Year 7 will be through the Selective Schools Testing process. Vacancies in Years 8 to 11 will be managed through the High Performing Students Team and utilise school based processes.

Timelines will be advertised on the school website and Selective Schools section of the Department's website.

How does the academic selective stream at Richmond High School work?

The Principals will work with Department staff, teachers, educational experts in high potential, and gifted education and selective school colleagues across NSW to determine the new academically selective stream curriculum model.

Students will engage in programs at both Richmond High School and the new Centre of Excellence using existing and purpose built facilities.

Students will have the opportunity to engage in tailored programs delivered by the CoE in partnership with WSU and TAFE. These programs will be aligned to support students in their ability to apply for entry pathways to university/TAFE. Investigations are also currently underway to identify possible articulation entry paths for students into WSU undergraduate programs.

What application processes will apply for entry to the agricultural specialty stream at Richmond High School?

Application will be through an Expression of Interest, portfolio and interview process. The focus of the process is to determine the student's interest and potential in agricultural education and their suitability to the designed educational program. This will be managed by the Principals of Richmond High School and the Centre of Excellence

How many places will be in the agricultural speciality stream at Richmond High School?

Initially 30 places per year group (one class). The first agricultural specialty stream Year 7 cohort will commence in 2021.

How many places will be in the academic selective stream at Richmond High School?

Initially 30 places per year group (one class). The first academically selective Year 7 cohort will commence in 2022.

What does this change mean for local students enrolled at Richmond High School?

Local students in the catchment for Richmond High School will continue to enrol in the usual way and will not be required to apply through specific entry pathways unless they wish to access the selective or agricultural specialist stream. Richmond High School students will benefit from new facilities, access to the Centre of Excellence and a broader range of elective courses due to increased student numbers.

Can students already enrolled at Richmond High School enter the selective or agricultural speciality streams?

Yes. They must follow the same application processes as other students applying for these positions.

Will students in each stream have access to the same HSC courses?

Yes, increased enrolments and access to both campuses will enhance the educational offering of courses for both Year 11 and Year 12.

Didn't Richmond High School recently receive an upgrade?

An upgrade to Richmond High School was completed in 2019, delivering a multipurpose sports facility.

What is happening to the bini-dome at Richmond High School?

Demolition of the bini-dome and landscaping is part of the previous upgrade at the high school and still to be completed. Work is forecast to occur in 2020.

The new building is proposed to be located at the bini-dome site.

Who is the principal of Richmond High School?

Cliff Ralph

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Hurlstone Agricultural High School

Are the previous announced changes to Hurlstone Agricultural High School (previously referred to as Roy Watts High School) going ahead?

Hurlstone Agricultural High School will remain at Glenfield. An upgrade to boarding facilities is planned and the dairy facilities will be retained. The school's name will remain at the Glenfield site.

What will happen to the Roy Watts name?

Roy Watts was an important figure and significant contributor to the local community and agriculture in Australia and internationally. We will continue to consult with members of the Roy Watts family on potential naming opportunities as part of the delivery of the project.

Why have you taken so long to update us about Hurlstone?

It takes time to get things right. Consultation has been ongoing and we have listened to our stakeholders. The new agricultural model reflects the conversations we had with school stakeholders and the community. We are confident this agricultural education model is the right model and will benefit students across the State.

When will students be able to enrol in Hurlstone Agricultural High School?

Hurlstone Agricultural High School is already operational and currently has 990 students enrolled in Year 7 to 12. From 2020, enrolment applications for boarding students in Year 8, 9, 10 and 11 will be accepted. Year 7 students will be able to apply for boarding places in 2021, as part of the Department's state-wide selective schools process in 2020.

What is included in the new project at Hurlstone Agricultural High School?

An upgrade to boarding facilities is planned and the dairy facilities will be retained. The project is currently in design and a new business case will be devised early in 2020.

Didn't Hurlstone Agricultural High School recently receive an upgrade?

In 2019, a redevelopment at Hurlstone Agricultural High School was completed. The redevelopment delivered:

- Five new modern science laboratories
- Modern technology and applied studies facilities, including new innovative food and textiles and wood and metal learning spaces
- New and refurbished visual arts learning spaces
- A new central learning commons courtyard space

Will any land at Hurlstone Agricultural High School site be sold as part of future plans for the site?

The Hurlstone Agricultural High School site is part of the Glenfield-Macarthur urban renewal precinct that is being master planned for a range of future uses.

As part of this, some land surrounding the High School will be rezoned for alternative uses including residential, public open space and commercial. Some land will then be available for future sale. We have not yet determined the amount of land.

We will continue to consult with the local community on any future plans for the site.

The previous announcement included planning for a new primary school at Glenfield as a part of the land sale, will this still occur?

A new primary school at Glenfield is part of the master plan being considered.

How many boarders will Hurlstone cater for?

The final number of boarders is being examined as part of the business case submission.

What kind of boarding layout will the upgrade deliver?

The layout and look and feel of boarding facilities is being examined as part of the business case submission. We are asking for feedback on this from the community through our survey available on the project website.

Who is the Principal of Hurlstone Agricultural High School?

Christine Castle

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