

STATEMENT OF VALUES AND SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the Principal, Stewart Milner.

CONTEXT

The Centre for Higher Education Studies

The Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES) is a new co-educational, purpose-built centre where high-achieving and high-ability (HA) students can find the support, structure and space to extend their learning beyond a standard VCE program. Through a state-of-the-art facility and high-quality virtual platform, CHES will provide a suite of programs for Year 11 and 12 students from across Victoria's government schools. With an inspiring, enriching and engaging learning environment, CHES is a catalyst for new ways of learning that bridge traditional secondary and tertiary study.

CHES complements the efforts of Victorian government schools to engage and meet the needs of their HA students and is committed to excellence and equity. CHES aims to address the outcomes of various studies and reviews which have found there is considerable potential within the government school system to develop programs, courses, initiatives and teacher capabilities to better support the academic, social and emotional needs of HA secondary students. Additionally, CHES aligns with the research that reveals the benefits in bridging secondary schooling with tertiary education providers to better meet the accelerated needs of HA students.

CHES provides a university-like learning environment. The state-of-the-art CHES facility is a four-storey building, and features an auditorium, tertiary-standard science laboratories and design spaces, as well as learning neighbourhoods that support innovative teaching and learning. Additionally, CHES provides general-purpose classrooms, collaboration zones and a distinctive learning space on the roof terrace. These learning spaces reflect the CHES flexible approach to teaching and learning—research-driven; design-driven; self-driven. CHES also hosts a high-quality virtual platform that will support students to access programs at CHES regardless of where they are located.

CHES has an established partnership with a foundation network of five local schools (Mac.Robertson Girls' High School, Melbourne Girls' College, Melbourne High School, Prahran High School and Richmond High School) and reaches out to other Victorian secondary schools through its operational principles. CHES is flexible and dynamic in its approach to teaching and learning and aims to actively connect to the local and wider communities through technology and rich learning experiences.

The culture of CHES is inclusive, respectful and welcoming of HA students from diverse backgrounds and priority groups, including students from regional and rural Victoria, students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Programs at CHES

CHES is a senior secondary provider with a specific purpose. In partnership with universities, CHES makes available Higher Education Studies (HES), which are first-year university subjects that allow students to gain ATAR points and university credits while completing their VCE studies. CHES also offers select VCE subjects. Students who undertake a HES or VCE subject at CHES will also have access to the Student Enrichment Series, which includes workshops, master classes, events, lecturing and mentoring.

Students participating in CHES programs remain enrolled at their chosen secondary school and are supported to undertake a course at CHES as part of their VCE program. Working in close partnership with students' base schools, students will be enrolled in a CHES course for a fraction of their timetable (generally 20 per cent), with the remainder of their enrolment and timetable reflecting the subjects being completed at their base school.

The overarching curriculum and learning objectives of CHES are:

- improve access to tertiary courses and strengthen tertiary pathways for students
- making available enrichment and extension opportunities to further stretch and challenge senior students
- provide additional opportunities for academic stretch and challenge to high-achieving and high-ability students in rural and regional areas and those in priority cohorts.

CHES enables students to design an education program that best supports them in pursuing their interests and passions during their final years of secondary school. The suite of CHES programs includes Higher Education Studies and VCE Extended Investigation and VCE Algorithmics as core studies, and the provision of a series of workshops, masterclasses and events targeted to the needs of Victoria's most capable students. CHES partners with several universities in the delivery of Higher Education Studies, in the provision of enrichment opportunities, and in establishing the ways in which CHES operates more broadly.

University partnerships facilitate access to academia and practicing education experts and build relevant connections to support the learning experience of students. A unique feature of the CHES environment will be the opportunity for students, teachers and academics to form strong relationships that are essential for collaboration and deep learning.

Modes of delivery

To enable students across Victoria to access CHES programs, including rural and regional students, CHES programs are accessible through virtual platforms as well as on-site. Given its unique offering, the Minister for Education has approved special criteria for entry to a CHES program.

CHES will use a hy-flex delivery mode, meaning that classroom delivery, discussion and collaboration opportunities are also available to those students who may be engaging virtually. The use of technology through CHES supports the integration of all students, regardless of where in Victoria they may be based. Comprehensive induction programs, and opportunities for all students - including those in regional and rural areas, will be available throughout the year, ensuring equitable learning opportunities are available to all.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the values of our CHES community and explain the vision, mission and objectives of our centre.

POLICY

CHES is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. CHES recognises the importance of the partnership between CHES and parents/carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

The programs and teaching at CHES support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance.

This policy outlines our vision, mission, objectives, values, and expectations of our school community.

To celebrate and embed our Statement of Values and Philosophy in our school community, we:

- display posters and banners that promote our values in our school
- celebrate our values in our CHES newsletters and on our website
- provide awards and recognition for students who actively demonstrate the values
- discuss our values with students in the learning spaces, in meetings and at assemblies
- promote our values in information sessions and open days for prospective students and their families.

VISION

The Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES) aims to become a state-wide Centre of Excellence with an effective framework for developing partnerships with tertiary institutions to encourage and nurture high-achieving and high-ability students (HA) across Victoria and provide support to their teachers.

MISSION

The Centre for Higher Education Studies' (CHES) mission is to excite and develop the full intellectual, social and emotional potential of high-achieving and high-ability (HA) Victorian students in Years 11 and 12 by delivering a suite of programs to stretch, challenge and enhance learning, with access to leading expertise, practices and technology in a purpose-built facility.

OBJECTIVE

CHES seeks to strengthen provision for Victoria's high-achieving and high-ability (HA) senior students by:

- improving access to tertiary courses and strengthening tertiary pathways

- making available enrichment and extension opportunities to further stretch and challenge senior students
- providing additional opportunities for academic stretch and challenge to HA students in rural and regional areas and those in priority cohorts
- developing and enhancing teachers' abilities to meet the needs of HA students.

CHES aims to be a bridge between:

- school and university
- city and the regions
- students and teachers
- research and learning
- reaching and achieving.

Objective 1 – Provide opportunities in partnership with universities that will provide greater stretch and challenge to Victoria's HA students in their final years of secondary schooling.

CHES is a beacon of excellence, and provides eligible students the following opportunities:

- access to Higher Education Studies, supporting capable students to commence their tertiary pathways whilst completing their senior secondary studies
- increased access, over time, to a greater range of Higher Education Studies including new, innovative and bespoke studies that explicitly align with the CHES priorities
- access to a suite of enrichment opportunities including lectures, workshops, seminars and events, delivered in partnership with universities and industry leaders
- access to leading academics or industry leaders to mentor CHES students, providing support for students' research, career aspirations or study pathways
- a purposefully designed setting that supports innovative tertiary-level study for senior secondary students.

Objective 2 – Increase opportunities for students to access VCE courses that enable agency, independence and the ability to develop critical thinking skills in an area aligned to student passions and interests.

- Increase access to VCE Extended Investigation—supporting students to develop and refine key skills centred on research, design and critical thinking, and further supporting preparation for tertiary courses
- Increase access to VCE Algorithmics—supporting students to solve real-world, practical problems with computational methods to analyse those problems and identify the salient aspects that need to be modelled as the basis for finding a solution. Through VCE Algorithmics, students can develop a powerful approach to manipulating, and reasoning about, structured information.
- Develop (and share) teacher skill and expertise and establish CHES as the 'centre of best practice' regarding Extended Investigation and Algorithmics teaching and learning
- Utilise teams of teachers (who hold differing specialisations) to create a conducive and enriching learning environment for HA students
- Leverage partnerships with universities to identify and enhance opportunities for student engagement with academic experts (or other mentors) to further enhance learning opportunities

- Regularly review performance data, identifying opportunities to refine teaching and learning practice to ensure students realise their potential
- Make available teaching spaces when not required for CHES programs to support an expansion of subject breadth for schools within the foundation network.

Objective 3 – Enable equitable access to CHES programs for HA students, with a particular focus on those in rural and regional areas or from priority cohorts.

- Use and regularly review principles to determine access arrangements to CHES programs for those in priority cohorts
- Establish clear and transparent processes for the assessment of applications and ensure equitable access for those in regional and rural areas, as well those in priority cohorts, including students who may be ‘first in the family’ to participate in a university course
- Harness technology to support the delivery of programs in CHES, and via virtual platforms for students unable to physically attend
- Deploy a Hy-Flex approach to program delivery at CHES—flexibility in student attendance onsite will be supported using digital resources and the virtual platform, enabling innovative teaching and learning and student collaboration, irrespective of their location
- Prioritise collaboration between and across students, staff, schools and universities and support this through the Centre’s design, infrastructure and practice
- Clearly articulate teaching and learning approaches, developed in consultation with students, academics, teachers and system leaders and in alignment with the professional learning available through CHES, to inform the delivery of courses in the Centre
- Undertake regular reviews of teaching and learning programs, as well as CHES operations to ensure opportunities for refinement are maximised.

Objective 4 – Build system excellence by facilitating professional learning for Victorian teachers in the identification and support of HA students within the school context.

Given its alignment within the Department of Education and Training’s excellence agenda, CHES is well placed to support the dissemination and development of high-quality teaching practice across the state. CHES:

- Facilitates professional learning programs, available to all teachers, that builds high-quality practice to improve outcomes of HA students
- Recruits teachers from government schools on a temporary transfer basis, supporting the exchange of ideas, research and best practice at the Centre and in their base schools post-secondment
- Engages staff teaching within the Centre in the development of teaching and learning approaches that are responsive and flexible to meet the emotional, social and academic needs of HA learners
- Facilitates an approach to the delivery of professional learning that will enable participants to coach and mentor peers within their own school setting
- Regularly reviews participant feedback to ensure that professional learning opportunities are optimal and align with broader system messaging
- Liaises with colleagues across the Department of Education and Training to ensure alignment and consistency of messaging and agreed priorities in teacher professional learning opportunities.

Our school's objectives are considered as part of the 4 yearly strategic planning process and reflected in the goals listed in our current School Strategic Plan (SSP). We also develop an Annual Implementation Plan to operationalise the goals and key improvement strategies contained in our SSP.

VALUES

The values and foundation pillars of CHES are Reach, Connection, Understanding. **'We Reach, We Connect, We Understand'. The essence of CHES is that 'We are Forward Thinking'.**

- **We Reach** – This is a place to extend learning. To challenge, push and advance traditional ways of thinking. We want to develop the full intellectual, social and emotional potential of students. With the right spaces, strategies and staff in place, this is where high-ability and high-achieving students can design their education and scale even greater heights.
- **We Connect** – CHES fosters connections through collaboration between staff and students, between students and students, and through a new education model bridging secondary and tertiary study. Here, skills, knowledge, and academic journeys are shared. Through new connections, we want to spark new ideas, and give rise to new possibilities.
- **We Understand** – As well as an educational institution focused on greater academic understanding, CHES is a place to find emotional understanding. With like-minded peers and nurturing staff, students are engaged and empowered, drawn together from varied backgrounds to create a scholarly community that's active, open and kind.

The underlying essence of these three values is that they are Forward Thinking. CHES is a learning environment that looks forward, with a new model of education that bridges traditional secondary and tertiary study. Future focused and open minded, here young adults can extend their thinking, create connections, and find understanding in an active and shared academic journey.

For students, the values are summarised as follows:

WE REACH. We're here to extend our learning. To challenge and advance traditional ways of thinking. We want to scale greater heights of academic study.

WE CONNECT. Student to student, teacher to student, school to university, this is where we connect and collaborate, sparking new ideas and building on our potential. Together.

WE UNDERSTAND. We're part of a community that's supportive, open and kind. Our centre is where skills, knowledge, and inspiring academic journeys are shared.

WE ARE FORWARD THINKING. Our focus is on the future, with an open mind, and a pursuit of learning that's active and shared.

BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS

CHES acknowledges that the behaviour of staff, parents, carers and students has an impact on our community and culture. We acknowledge a shared responsibility to create a positive learning environment for the young people at CHES.

As principals and school leaders, we will:

- model positive behaviour and effective leadership
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the CHES community and the wider community

- work collaboratively to create a learning environment where respectful and safe behaviour is expected of everyone
- behave in a manner consistent with the standards of our profession and meet core responsibilities to provide safe and inclusive environments, consistent with our CHES values
- plan, implement and review our work to ensure the care, safety, security and general wellbeing of all students enrolled in CHES for on-site and virtual learning programs
- identify and support students who are or may be at risk
- do our best to ensure every child achieves their personal and learning potential
- work with parents and carers to understand their child's needs and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
- proactively engage with government secondary schools across Victoria in high-quality teaching and learning and the CHES programs for HA students
- liaise and work closely with the base schools of students in support of the social and emotional needs, wellbeing and progress of CHES students
- respond appropriately when safe and inclusive behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions and sanctions when required
- inform parents and carers of the CHES communication and complaints procedures
- ask any person who is acting in an offensive, intimidating or otherwise inappropriate way to leave the CHES grounds or virtual spaces.
- ensure all parents/carers are aware of the expectations outlined in the Department's Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy.

As teachers and non-teaching school staff, we will:

- model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of our profession and our CHES values
- treat all members of the CHES community with respect and communicate politely with all members of the CHES community
- proactively engage with parents and carers about student outcomes
- work with parents and carers to understand the needs of each student and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
- work collaboratively with parents and carers to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for students with additional needs
- communicate with the principal and CHES leaders in the event we anticipate or face any tension or challenging behaviours from parents and carers.

As parents and carers, we will:

- model positive behaviour to our child
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the CHES community, in line with the Department's Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy.
- ensure our child attends CHES on time, in terms of both virtual learning and on-site learning
- take an interest in our child's learning and in CHES
- work with CHES to achieve the best outcomes for our child
- support CHES staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students
- follow CHES processes for communication with staff and making complaints
- communicate constructively with CHES and use expected processes and protocols when raising concerns

- treat all school leaders, staff, students, and other members of the CHES community with respect.

As students, we will:

- model positive behaviour to other students
- respect ourselves and other members of the CHES community
- communicate politely with all members of the CHES community
- accept other members of the CHES community and the right of other students to learn as much as possible
- keep focused on learning activities
- represent CHES with pride and make the most of the opportunity by actively participating in the centre's programs, activities and events
- take care of our belongings, treat the property of others with care, and treat the CHES facilities and environment with care and consideration
- comply with and model the CHES values and foundation principles that underpin expected behaviours
- make positive contributions through online virtual platforms, take care of our digital footprint, and respect the rights of others when communicating online
- behave in a safe and responsible manner in on-site and virtual learning spaces, around the centre, and when traveling to and from CHES or to external CHES events
- not disrupt the learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities
- exercise personal safety when traveling to and from CHES.

As community members, we will:

- model positive behaviour to the CHES community
- treat other members of the CHES community with respect
- support CHES staff to maintain a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students
- utilise CHES processes for communication with staff and submitting complaints.

UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOURS

Schools are not public places, and the Principal has the right to permit or deny entry to school grounds (for more information, see our *Visitors Policy*).

Unreasonable behaviour that is demonstrated by school staff, parents, carers, students or members of our school community will not be tolerated at CHES, or during school activities.

Unreasonable behaviour includes:

- being violent or threatening violence of any kind, including physically intimidating behaviour such as aggressive hand gestures or invading another person's personal space
- speaking or behaving in a rude, aggressive or threatening way, either in person, via email, social media, or over the telephone
- sending demanding, rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages
- discriminatory or derogatory comments
- the use of social media or public forums to make inappropriate or threatening remarks about CHES or its staff or students
- inappropriate use of the CHES virtual learning, teaching and collaboration platforms.

Harassment, bullying, violence, aggression, threatening behaviour and unlawful discrimination are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at CHES.

Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences by the CHES Principal.

At the Principal's discretion, unreasonable behaviour may be managed by:

- requesting that the parties attend a mediation or counselling sessions
- implementing specific communication protocols
- written warnings
- conditions of entry to CHES grounds or activities
- exclusion from CHES grounds or attendance at activities
- reports to Victoria Police
- notification to the base school principal
- legal action.

Inappropriate student behaviour will be managed in according with the CHES *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

Our *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* ensures that everyone in our CHES community will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, we will strive to create an environment that is inclusive and safe, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our CHES community in the following ways:

- available publicly on our website
- included in staff induction processes, including induction for university staff delivering Higher Education Studies through CHES
- included in student induction and enrolment packs
- included as reference in CHES newsletter at the start of each semester
- made available in hard copy from school administration upon request.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Department of Education and Training policies and resources:

- [Work-Related Violence in Schools Policy](#)
- [Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy](#)

CHES policies:

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Parent Complaints Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Agreement

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2022
Approved by	Principal*
Next scheduled review date	February 2023 - to ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed by the CHES School Council every 3-4 years thereafter. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the CHES community and foundation network.

* The Statement of Values and School Philosophy will be reviewed and approved by the School Council once they are appointed.