

JULY 2025

# **Kingston High School – Review of Timetable Offerings**

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Version 1 – 24/07/2025

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## 1 Outline of the review

The purpose of this review is to consider the current timetable structure and range of offerings (as of Term 3, 2025) at Kingston High School, to inform strategic decisions for 2026. This document

outlines the process that will be used and will provide a summary of the findings and decisions made as a result of those findings.

The considerations that will guide decisions will be:

- The [DECYP Strategic Plan 2024 - 2030](#)
- The DECYP (and KHS) values of Connection, Courage, Growth, Respect and Responsibility
- The principle that we have a responsibility to provide the highest level of educational opportunity to all students
- The belief that Kingston HS will be the exemplar of inclusive public education in Tasmania
- That with finite resources, to meet these goals we must make well-informed, transparent and strategic decisions

Ultimately, the principal is responsible for decisions affecting the school's strategic direction, in line with DECYP priorities. The purpose of this review is to ensure that those decisions are made with the widest range of perspectives and in a transparent and accountable manner.

## 2 Review process – Phase 1 (Term 3)

### 2.1 Planning

Concerns around the current timetable and its effect on student outcomes and staff wellbeing were raised early in 2025. This led to a commitment in our 2025 School Improvement Plan to conduct a review of our timetable to inform changes for 2026.

The principal is responsible for developing the plan, which will be shared with the executive and leadership teams for input. The School Association Committee, broader parent body and the student body will be asked for feedback throughout the process.

The review will be split into two phases due to the number of items that must be considered, and the necessity of making certain decisions in time for subject selections. The items that must be decided before subject selection will be considered in term 3, and the remainder in term 4 (phase 2).

KEY DATE	EVENT
Thursday, 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025 (Week 2, Term 3)	Review introduced at staff meeting. Staff nominated to develop and share analysis
Week 4, Term 3	Principal to attend grade assemblies and introduce the review and ask for interested students to join working group. Social media "Save the date" for review forum.
Thursday, 14 <sup>th</sup> August 2025 (Week 4, Term 3)	Analysis shared with all staff and invited SAC members. Compiled for further sharing.
Week 5, Term 3	Principal to share the review concept with school community (letter home, social media) and invite community to forum in week 6.

KEY DATE	EVENT
Week 6, Term 3	Community forum: Share overview and feedback to date. Ask for final feedback.
Week 7, Term 3	Final discussions with executive and leadership teams. Principal to announce which changes to 2026 structure and offerings will be made as a result of the review.
Weeks 8 to 10, Term 3	Students provided with 2026 subject selections based on review findings
Week 9, Term 3	Executive team present at Parent-Teacher-Student Interviews to discuss 2026 timetable and offerings.

## 2.2 Information gathering

This process will be introduced to staff at the after-school meeting in Week 2 of Term 3 (31<sup>st</sup> July 2025).

### 2.2.1 Overview of current offerings and structure

A list of areas to consider has been developed in consultation with the executive team at KHS, informed by feedback from staff, students and parents. The first phase of the review will be to gather information about these areas, using the formats described below. The areas are grouped into two categories: Student offerings and school structure.

#### Student offerings:

- ARC
- Clubs
- Hub
- Electives – range and choice

#### School structure:

- Class sizes and number of classes per grade
- Teaching across multiple grades and subjects
- Part-time teaching staff

#### Areas to be considered in Phase 2 – Term 4:

- Number of lessons per day, including Community class
- Number of lessons per subject, including electives
- Students/teachers moving between classes
- Students in core classes for all subjects
- Governance str

To widen the perspectives considered, and to leverage the staff experience and expertise, staff who are involved with particular programs or who are affected by structural decisions will be invited to conduct and share the analysis for each area. Nominated staff will share their analysis in the

staff meeting of Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> August. This will be compiled and then published for further comment.

### **2.2.2 Further feedback**

The analysis shared in the staff meeting will be made available for review and feedback via MS Forms for staff and parents.

Student feedback will be sought via working groups made up of students. The review concept will be shared with students in grade assemblies during week 4, and requests made for students to join the working group/s (number and composition of the working group/s will depend on student interest). During week 5, the principal will meet with the working group/s, share the overviews, and invite further feedback. This will be summarised and included in the results.

In week 6, a forum will be held to share the results so far with the entire school community, and to invite further and final feedback.

## **3 Feedback**

### **3.1 Summary of feedback from community**

There were 49 responses from community to the feedback survey. As well as the survey, there were 30 participants in the community forum that was held on Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> August. The forum participants were mainly attending to hear information about our offerings, rather than advocate for or against anything. The few opinions that were expressed were in line with the summary below.

### **ARC Program – Community Opinions**

#### **Positive**

Many parents and staff see ARC as a transformative program that re-engages students who might otherwise struggle in mainstream schooling.

Strong praise for its flexibility, differentiation, smaller class environment, and opportunities like work placements.

Families described children becoming more confident, motivated, and willing to attend school.

#### **Mixed / Conditional**

Several respondents noted that ARC works very well for motivated or suited students, but less effective for those who lack self-direction.

Some expressed concern that class sizes have grown, and new enrolments have changed the program's dynamic, reducing the supportive environment.

Occasional comments suggested the program can feel 'not very academic' or less structured than expected.

## **Negative**

A few saw ARC as failing to meet basic expectations, with some students eventually needing to return to mainstream classes.

Perceptions from outside the program included that it can appear chaotic or disorganised.

A handful had no personal connection but expressed doubts about its academic rigour.

## **Clubs Program – Community Opinions**

### **Positive**

Widely valued by families and staff as a fun, engaging, and communal program.

Parents highlighted that children enjoy the variety and cultural/interest-based options (e.g., Aboriginal heritage clubs).

Seen as a way for students to connect socially and try things outside core academics.

### **Mixed / Conditional**

Some reported uneven experiences — while most students enjoyed clubs, others found them less engaging or didn't take them seriously.

A few comments suggested that attendance or participation varies, with not all students equally involved.

Several gave neutral feedback such as 'okay' or 'fine,' indicating acceptance but not enthusiasm.

### **Negative**

Isolated concerns that clubs may not always be run seriously or seen as academically valuable.

One or two comments implied they can become a filler subject rather than a meaningful offering.

A few respondents didn't see strong connection or benefit for their own child.

## **Hub Program – Community Opinions**

### **Positive**

Generally described as supportive, positive, and engaging — a safe space where students can reconnect with school.

Families valued the staff support, resources, and personal connection it provides.

Several noted it is helpful for students needing extra guidance or wellbeing support.

### **Mixed / Conditional**

Some had limited personal connection and were unsure of the details, but assumed it was beneficial.

A few parents said they only found out their child was in the Hub after the fact, raising concerns about communication.

Perceptions varied: for some, a positive reputation; for others, less clarity about its purpose.

### **Negative**

Concerns about lack of transparency: parents not always informed when their child is placed in the Hub.

A small number saw it as not academically focused or were sceptical about its rigour.  
A handful gave 'no feedback' or indicated no real connection, sometimes coupled with indifference.

## 3.2 Summary of feedback from staff

There were 23 responses to the staff feedback survey.

### ARC Program – Staff Opinions

#### **Positive**

Recognised as a great opportunity for pathways and student connection.  
Staff who taught in ARC valued its impact on engagement and relationships.  
Seen as helpful for students pursuing apprenticeships or needing alternatives.

#### **Mixed / Conditional**

Works well for motivated students but less effective for those lacking focus.  
Some felt it is not consistently specialised or academic.  
Variable attendance and uneven outcomes were mentioned.

#### **Negative**

Criticised as under-specialised, chaotic, and not always rigorous.  
A few staff resented being involuntarily assigned to ARC.  
Concerns that it is not always well-attended.  
Concerns that it doesn't address all the curriculum.

### Clubs Program – Staff Opinions

#### **Positive**

Offers breadth and opportunities for student choice.  
Great for students who engage, with potential to be excellent.

#### **Mixed / Conditional**

Idea valued, but execution described as uneven and hectic.  
Seen as workable in principle but not consistently effective.

#### **Negative**

Belief that clubs invite gaps in learning time.  
Some staff recommended not continuing in the current form.  
Described as a good concept poorly executed.

## Hub Program – Staff Opinions

### Positive

Strong support as an excellent Tier 2 support program.

Provides hands-on learning, has evolved positively, and delivers benefits for students.

Many staff consider it well-run and valuable.

### Mixed / Conditional

Calls for expansion — more frequent, daily, or broader application.

Resource dependency noted.

### Negative

Very limited criticism, though one concern raised about students missing general skills (e.g., cooking).

Small concern about balancing resources.

## Part-time Teaching Loads – Summary of Opinions

Staff strongly supported part-time arrangements as vital for wellbeing and retention. Part-time staff valued the flexibility, though some acknowledged challenges in balancing timetables. Concerns were raised that all staff workloads are increasing regardless of FTE, and a few felt timetable fragmentation from part-time distribution is an issue.

## Teaching Loads Across Subjects/Grades – Summary of Opinions

Views varied: some staff enjoyed the variety and believed it works well for experienced teachers, while others preferred teaching one grade or subject for consistency. Neutral acceptance was common, with some noting load allocation often feels dictated by timetables rather than logic. A call was made for a more balanced and supportive model.

## Class Sizes – Summary of Opinions

Strong theme that current class sizes are too large. Many staff called for caps at 25, particularly for Year 7, and expressed that smaller is always better for students and teachers. Some noted ranges of 22–25 are workable, but others were blunt in stating large classes are 'terrible for students and teachers.'

## Elective & Specialist Classes – Summary of Opinions

Staff generally valued the wide choice and Year 7 tasters, praising specialist programs and opportunities. However, concerns included electives being driven by timetable constraints rather than student needs, and fragmentation compared to past models. Suggestions included smaller blocks of lessons, improved sequencing, and ensuring electives align better with staff expertise.



### 3.3 Student feedback summary

To gain student feedback, KHS principal Lachlan Joyce went to all grade assemblies to explain this review, then asked students to self-select into a focus group from each grade. Lachlan then met with each focus group, and their grade AST, for an hour to get their voice. Summary below.

#### ARC Program – Student Opinions

##### **Positive**

Students valued work experience opportunities and focus on future pathways.  
Seen as useful for those aiming at trade or apprenticeship pathways.  
Some liked the independence and flexibility compared to mainstream classes.

##### **Mixed / Conditional**

Effectiveness depended on teacher availability and support — if a teacher was away, students felt the program lacked structure.  
Works well for motivated learners, but others struggled with self-direction.  
Year 8 and Year 9 emphasised trade/apprenticeship relevance, while ARC focus group notes included structural frustrations such as timetabling or staffing issues.

##### **Negative**

Clear reports of non-engagement: some students admitted 'nobody did their work at all' and just sat around.  
Perception that ARC can become a dumping ground for disengaged students, lowering overall quality.  
Concerns that it doesn't always provide real learning if not managed well.

#### Clubs Program – Student Opinions

##### **Positive**

Students liked having a range of choices and generally enjoyed the club experience.  
Year 7 students especially noted enjoyment and appreciation for variety.  
Year 9 and Year 10 said clubs were better when scheduled mid-week

##### **Mixed / Conditional**

Some grades (Year 8, 9) commented that options are too sport-heavy, with fewer non-sport alternatives.  
Quality of the experience was seen as variable depending on timing and organisation.  
Some noted enjoyment depended on whether they could get their preferred club.

##### **Negative**

Frustration when students couldn't do the club they wanted due to low numbers or restrictions.  
Year 10 students described early implementation as 'not good', with low attendance and poor scheduling.  
Perception that some clubs lacked purpose or were filler.

## Hub Program – Student Opinions

### Positive

Widely seen as a good break from mainstream/core classes and a place where students could access extra support.

Students liked hands-on activities such as gardening and barista skills.

Described as helpful for those who 'need it' and a chance to learn differently.

### Mixed / Conditional

Some grades stressed the importance of Hub being different from normal classes — valued when distinct, less so when it felt like 'just more schoolwork.'

Year 7 emphasised its value for students needing additional support, while older years framed it more as a break.

### Negative

If not well-structured, it risks becoming just a free period.

Concern that not everyone accessing Hub was genuinely engaged.

## 4 Discussion and conclusions

The information and feedback above should be considered in terms of the below:

- The [DECYP Strategic Plan 2024 - 2030](#)
- The DECYP (and KHS) values of Connection, Courage, Growth, Respect and Responsibility
- The guiding principle that we have a responsibility to provide the highest level of educational opportunity to all students
- The belief that Kingston HS has the potential to be the exemplar of inclusive public education in the state of Tasmania
- That with finite resources, to meet these goals we must make well-informed, transparent and strategic decisions

At this point (Term 3 Week 7) the review has considered ARC, Clubs and Hub. The other considerations listed above will be discussed during term 4. As they don't affect student subject selections, the timeline for these elements wasn't as urgent.

The below is from the letter sent to families and outlines the decision and considerations that went into that decision, for each of the main areas.

### 4.1 ARC

ARC offers a selection of Grade 9 and 10 students a self-directed and inquiry-based way of learning. Our feedback indicated that it is popular with a section of students and their families, who may benefit from the different learning styles. The feedback also highlighted the separateness of ARC from mainstream classes, with a perceived difference in expectations and behaviour between

the two. ARC is more resource-intensive than mainstream classes, as class sizes are smaller. This leads to compromises elsewhere in the school around staffing, class sizes, support, etc.

In 2026, KHS will not be running the ARC program. This decision was not made lightly, and I recognise there will be many members of our community who are disappointed by this decision. I have spoken with the ARC students this morning, to share the decision and the reasons behind it.

Alongside the range of feedback received, we considered the impact on students of not being offered the entire curriculum. While ARC's program covers the inquiry strands of Science and HASS, it doesn't cover all of the knowledge strands. This means, for example, that Grade 9 students in ARC don't currently learn about World War 1 in HASS, or sexual and asexual reproduction in Science, unless the individual student chooses that as a topic. The Australian Curriculum is designed to level the playing field across our entire country, and to have that uneven access within our own school doesn't align with our requirements as a public school in Tasmania.

One noted strength of ARC was the connection it provides students to the workplace, either through work placements or other forms of career planning. We will be taking this significant strength and offering it to all of our Grades 9 and 10 students.

We will also be running an ILT option for years 9 and 10. This will allow students to pursue extension in a particular area, while maintaining alignment to the curriculum. Our course guide will be coming out early in week 9, so please see that for more information.

## 4.2 Clubs

Clubs is an interest-based, vertically aligned (meaning Years 7 to 10 are mixed within the groups) offering that occurs one period a week. Options range from Book Club and Board Games to Mountain Biking and Basketball.

The feedback on Clubs ranged from passionately supportive to dead-against, with everything in between. For students and staff who are well aligned to their Club, it can be a highlight of the week. For many students, however, it is seen as a less serious time of the week when normal expectations around attendance and effort don't apply. Unfortunately, this is reflected in our behaviour and attendance data for that time of the week.

In 2026, KHS will not be running Clubs as a timetabled period of the week. We have a very strong range of options available to our students, that are both interest-based and rigorously curriculum-aligned, and these will be maintained. We will also look to run certain clubs at lunch times, to increase connections across our student body and provide a range of interest-based activities. Clubs that would work well in this format include Chess, Pride Group, and many others.

Many students, in particular, will be upset by this decision, and I am very sorry that those students will be missing something they love about coming to KHS. However, I think our duty of care can't be sacrificed for that enjoyment, and that our primary responsibility is the safety and learning of our students. I hope all of our students look forward to the course guide coming out in the next couple of weeks so that they can choose the options that best suit their interests.

## 4.3 Hub

Hub is our Tier 2 program that offers small groups of students experience in the garden, café or construction. Students spend one or two lessons a week in Hub, to focus on whatever goal is suitable for their growth and then return to their mainstream lessons. The program aims to increase engagement in school and build life skills.

The feedback for Hub was very positive. There are certainly elements of the feedback that can be used to inform improvements, but overall, the program is well-regarded by students, staff and families.

As a school aiming to increase our culture of inclusion, while maintaining connection to mainstream education, KHS will be keeping a strong focus on Hub in 2026. This is not a separate part of the school, but rather a key element in our broader school culture.

In 2026, KHS will also be exploring the Tier 3 space, to give support to those students who need that little bit extra to maintain engagement to school and learning. The focus on strategic use of resources will allow this extra focus. I look forward to sharing more about this program early next year.