

LYNEHAM HIGH SCHOOL

# Band Program Review

Semester 2 2015



## **Introduction**

In 2015 Lyneham High School undertook a number of reviews of specialist programs. Reviews were undertaken by Professional Learning Committees (PLC). The Lyneham High School Band Program (Band Program) was reviewed in semester 2 2015 by a PLC comprising of six teachers. Three of the teachers worked in the Band Program with one teacher being the SLC responsible for the program. The other PLC members worked in the faculties of Science, Maths and Languages/English and therefore brought different perspectives to the review process. An independent consultant assisted the PLC. The Band Program is offered to all students as part of enrolment into Lyneham High School prior to commencement of year 7. There are limited opportunities for students to join the program after initial year 7 enrolment. The Lyneham High School Band Program is a well-established and popular part of music at Lyneham. It is a unique instrumental program in that the students elect to do band as a subject.

## **History**

Over 18 years the Band Program has grown from modest numbers to the noteworthy enrolments of 2015. It is a strong contributor to the school's overall growth to full capacity. In 1998 the program was selective in that students had to be at a certain level to be accepted into the Band Program. Under the leadership of Ms Debbie Masling, the policy changed to an entirely inclusive program. This overall vision, started in 1999 was 'to develop a program that is entirely inclusive without compromising the quality of the music'. Although some of the wider music community thought that this couldn't be done or sustained it is clear that it can be done and sustained over many years. The current model of testing the year 6 students using the Selmer Music Guidance Survey was already in place, to support the move towards inclusive decisions about the allocation of instruments according to student strengths, rather than using the results for pass/fail – accept/decline was implemented.

In 1998 there were three concert bands, no jazz or rock bands and about 60 students in total. Staff increased from 1.6 teachers in 1998/9 to two teachers in 2000 and in 2001 four teachers. In 1998 an extra-curricular jazz band was introduced and in 1999 a second jazz band – the birth of the current Intermediate (year 7 & 8) and Senior (years 9 & 10) Jazz Bands. In 1998 major changes were implemented to the music library in order to comply with copyright regulations. Compliance is a huge and time consuming administrative duty. Also in 1999 the massed bands faculty concert was introduced to showcase the whole program.

The Advanced Year 7 Concert Band and the Year 8 Concert Band learned the same repertoire because neither band could perform as a stand-alone band. In 2000 the numbers and quality had grown enough for each band to learn separate repertoire and perform as separate bands. In 2012 the name of 'Advanced Year 7 Concert Band' changed to 'Year 7 Concert Band' to fit better with the new ethos of inclusivity. Originally players were benched, meaning that the first trumpeters always played the first, interesting parts and consequently those on the third parts were locked in. This policy was changed in 1999 so that the parts were played by evenly

weighted teams of players that included strong, medium and weak players. The parts were then rotated using a spreadsheet with all players having equal turns at the parts.

By 2004 the senior band that included students from years 9 and 10 had grown from a band of about 40 players to 140 players so the decision was made to split the bands into separate year 9 and year 10 bands.

Originally only the Senior Concert Band toured – Queensland and Melbourne in alternate years. The Year 8 band tour to Sydney was introduced in 2000, and in 2001 the Advanced Year 7 Concert Band toured to the South Coast with the Beginner Concert Band doing a day performance tour to schools in various outlying towns such as Bungendore and Gundaroo. In 2005 when the Senior Concert Band finally split the current touring format was reached whereby the year 9s went to Melbourne and the year 10s to Queensland. This was also the year when the beginners started touring to the coast.

In 2001 Ms Masling received the first of three large hire purchase agreements (2 x \$25,000 and 1 x \$30,000) and was able to inject funds into buying large quantities of instruments to fit the growing clientele and also some of the more expensive luxury instruments such as bass clarinets that enhanced the quality of sound.

In 2005 Lyneham High School Band Program was identified as fostering musical excellence and was chosen as one of 20 schools for a site visit and review for the *National Review of School Music Education*. The review noted that “Lyneham was remarkable for its participation rate, the quality of the music achieved, and the student-centred approach taken by the teachers. Lyneham High is an excellent example of a public school that can match the musical experience offered by wealthier independent schools.” Robin Pascoe, who conducted the visit, stated in the review that “The school buildings are unremarkable looking, like many other Australian suburban high schools. There are clusters of students in clattering corridors of lockers with utilitarian finishes; and music is housed in classrooms converted from former purposes. Yet there are students involved with music everywhere along the music section of the school.” The review provided the impetus for the grant application and the subsequent opening of the Lyneham High School Performing Arts Centre (LPAC) has fostered continued growth, both in the quality of opportunity for students, as well as enrolments to the programs. In that same year the school won a Flame Award for excellence in music education.

Opened in 2010, LPAC is an acoustically engineered, state of the art building that houses the day-to-day operations of everything musical at Lyneham, as well as providing a school and community rehearsal and performance facility. Of importance is that LPAC resulted from an independent application to ACT Government which was approved prior to the Building the Education Revolution school hall projects. The architectural team worked closely with staff from the school to produce a design that married current school practice with scope for the further development of the performing arts in the school and its community. In 2013 an instrument and equipment database was developed to better track the huge number of instruments and maintain them and hire them to students.

## **The Band Program in 2015**

In 2015 there are five concert bands, catering for beginning through to advanced level. The Band Program brings enrolments from outside the priority enrolment area to Lyneham High School. In 2015, 460 or 44% of the total school population of 1046 students participate in the Band Program, many of whom participate in more than one performance group (750 students,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the student body, participate in music courses and extra-curricular activities at Lyneham). It is staffed by seven full time equivalent teachers. The Music Faculty has a strong focus on providing quality equipment for the Band Program. The Band Program currently has 891 items of musical equipment.

All students are offered the opportunity to play a musical instrument, regardless of their socio-economic background or academic ability. Students with specifically identified physical disabilities and those from Lyneham High Learning Centre gain valuable skills through participation in the program. It also provides the opportunity for students from the LEAP (academically gifted program) to mix with a cross-section of the school community, as well as fostering their creativity.

The music faculty at Lyneham High have been leaders in the development of music curriculum in the ACT, supporting music teachers in other schools, including within the cluster, to understand the process and how it could work in their school/s. In 2014/15 Lyneham High music faculty wrote the relevant Australian Curriculum course documents. After a successful trial implementation phase in 2015 the school will move to assessing against the Achievement Standard in 2016.

Students are encouraged to attain the highest possible standard of excellence without sacrificing their enjoyment of music. They do this in a supportive community with a focus on teamwork and participation. The music staff aim to create a culture of inclusion, camaraderie, teamwork and fun. If students are having fun learning music, a high standard will follow. Student voice is valued and acted upon in classes. Examples of student voice in band classes include input into repertoire choice, the design of concert presentations, 50% input to assessment and evaluations of performances.

The Lyneham High bands are very active in the community performing at numerous festivals and eisteddfodau, as well as school, community and charity events. Professional feedback from adjudicators is a valuable experience for students. The bands perform with distinction at the Australian National Eisteddfod, the Melbourne School Bands Festival, the Prestige Music Festival (Brisbane) and the ACT School Bands Festival. Their success is acknowledged in the community and the numerous trophies are displayed in the LPAC foyer.

Touring is an integral part of the program with each band undertaking an annual interstate performance tour. The tours start simply with overnight stays for the Beginner Concert Band in

Bateman's Bay and Merimbula for the Year 7 Concert Band. The Year 8 Concert Band tours Sydney for three days; the Year 9 Concert Band tours Melbourne for six days and the Year 10 Concert Band tours Brisbane and the Gold Coast for seven days.

In order to provide an extension to their work in the concert bands, students are offered the opportunity to play in the Intermediate Jazz Band in years 7 and 8, and the Senior Jazz Band in years 9 and 10. These jazz bands operate out of school hours and are a very popular extra-curricular activity.

The Ginninderra Wind Orchestra and Twilight Jazz Band are Lyneham High School's alumni bands and rehearse on Wednesday evenings in LPAC. The purpose of these bands is to provide opportunities for ex-students to continue their music-making after leaving Lyneham High School. The bands offer strong support when students are transitioning from high school to college. Intrinsic to the success of the Band Program is the support it receives from the school community. Ms Masling states;

*"The program has developed a momentum that is valued and nurtured by students and their parents, the school's staff and executive team, and the wider Canberra community."*

On November 12 2015 460 students playing initially as separate bands and then as one whole massed band of musicians performed reinforcing to the students and their families that they really are a part of something much larger than themselves. The program has been somewhat aptly described as the 'Lyneham machine'!

### The structure of band and music

As an elective subject, year 7 students have one half line of Band as part of their academic program. Students are expected to participate in Band for a minimum of one year. There are two Year 7 bands – the Beginner and Year 7 Concert Bands. Beginner Concert Band is for year 7 students who do not play a band instrument or are requesting to change their instrument. Year 7 Concert Band is for students with at least one year's experience on their chosen instrument, or by audition. Year 7 students who do not participate in either the Year 7 or Beginner Concert Band undertake a short course of Performance Music.

Year 8 Concert Band is a full elective subject. Students who have participated in either the Beginner or Year 7 Concert Band are eligible for this band.

Year 9 Concert Band is a full elective subject. Students who have participated in the Year 8 Concert Band are eligible for this band. By this stage, students will have reached a high standard of performance.

Year 10 Concert Band is a full elective subject. Students who have participated in the Year 9 Concert Band are eligible for this band. By this stage student will have reached a very high standard of performance. In addition to class time, band members are expected to be available for one lunchtime rehearsal per week when scheduled. The Intermediate and Senior

Jazz Bands are extra-curricular activities and rehearse outside of school hours for an hour and a half per week. They are available to students enrolled in a concert band.

The Band Program is not the sole music program offered at Lyneham High School, Vocal Group is an extra-curricular activity available to all students in the school. Performance Music is a semester elective subject in Years 8, 9 and 10, the School Musical Production is an extra-curricular activity run as a first semester course for Years 9 & 10. Production Masterclass is a semester course for Year 10 students. Live Production is a VET course that trains students in the technical aspects of theatre, including lights and sound, and gives the students the opportunity to complete competencies towards Certificate 2 and 3 industry qualifications. In 2015 it is expected that our first student will graduate with a full Certificate 2. Lyneham High School also runs a Northside Cluster Schools Spectacular in second semester.

### **Approach to the Band Program Review**

The 2015 Band Handbook describes the benefits of joining the Band Program and the philosophy of music education.

#### **Benefits**

1. Gain a lifetime skill
2. Enhance self-discipline
3. Belong to a respected group within the school
4. Vocational value

#### **Philosophy**

- The making of music in bands and ensembles fosters a spirit of co-operation, self-discipline, self-respect and a sense of responsibility.
- Students should be encouraged to attain the highest possible standard of excellence, without sacrificing their enjoyment of music. Music is a performing art. Performances and tours are an integral part of the Band Program of this school.
- Above all, music making must be an activity that provides joy and satisfaction to the participants and contributes to the feeling of worthiness in the individual.

The PLC decided the parameters of the review through examining the above benefits and philosophy. Surveys were chosen as the primary data source for the following groups

- Current Band students from each year level
- Parents/carers of current Band students
- A sample of non-Band students from years 7, 8,9 and 10
- Non –Band staff
- A sample of former Band students

The external consultant conducted interviews with current Band teachers.

Anecdotal data from surveys and interviews was analysed using a thematic approach to ascertain the highest response categories.

## Student responses

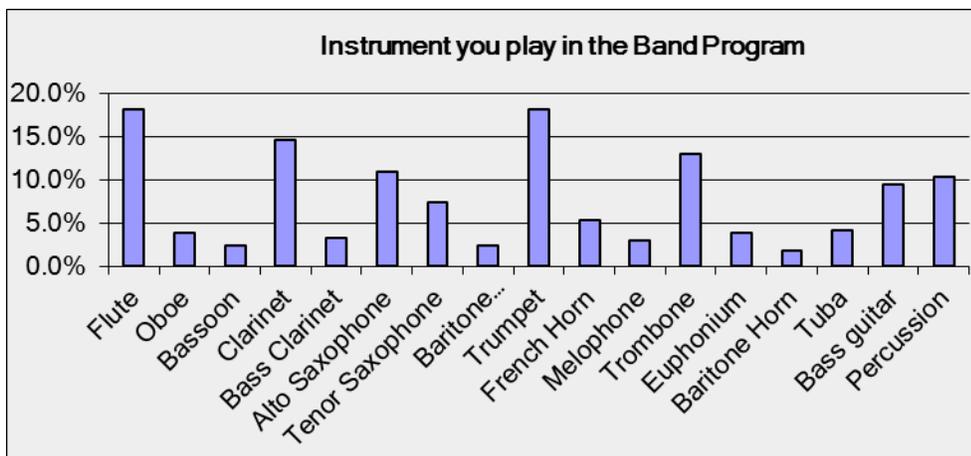
In line with the philosophy of Lyneham High School, student voice is a significant element in this review and is reflected in articulate comments from both band and non –band students.

### 1. Current Band students

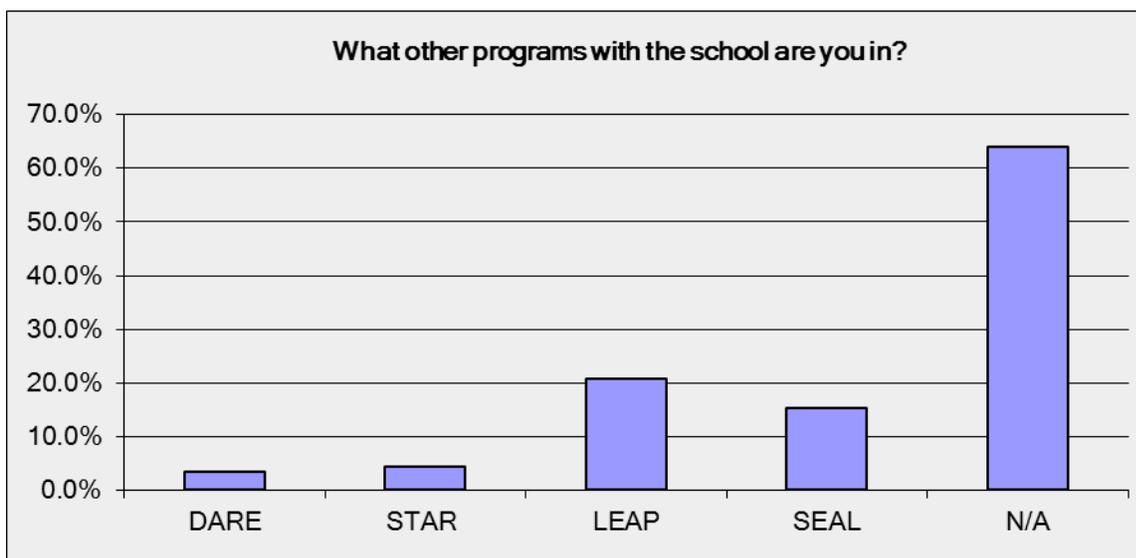
73% of the current Band Program students (336 of 460) completed the survey with years 7 and 8 being the higher percentage of respondents. Strong support for the program was registered by the student respondents.

Year 7 - 29.0%	Year 8 - 30.5%
Year 9 - 24.3%	Year 10 – 16.2%

The diversity of instruments offered by the program is recorded in the graph below, however in addition to these instruments 56.8% of respondents also play additional instruments not in the Band Program.



Of the student respondents over 20% were also in the LEAP program and 15% were in SEAL with less significant numbers being members of DARE and STAR.



A key element of the Band Program is inclusivity and this was strongly recognised by students. When asked if the Band Program embraces the **diversity of students** from different backgrounds and learning needs, 87% answered strongly agreed or agreed.

The vast majority of students, 84% strongly agreed or agreed that their participation in Band Program was **enjoyable and rewarding**. A similar response was received from students in regards to valuing the **high standards** set by the Band Program with 86% strongly agreed or agreed. It is interesting to note that although the Band Program is highly regarded there was an even response from student as to whether the Band Program was the **main reason for wanting to attend** Lyneham High School, with 50% strongly agreeing or agreeing and 50% strongly disagreeing or disagreeing.

As stated in the philosophy of the Band Program, performances and tours are an integral part of the Band Program. Responses both through the survey questions and comments demonstrated strong student support for both of these elements. 93% either strongly agreed or agreed that **the touring component** of the Band Program is valuable and I enjoy the **performance opportunities** and exposure to **different audiences**. An analysis of student comments reinforced this with playing/performing the highest aspect of the Band Program valued by students with band tours and camps second.

When asked to respond to being in the Band Program helps develop **self-discipline** 72% of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed. Similar results were recorded for the Band Program contributes to my **self-worth and self-esteem** with 74% strongly agreed or agreed. Students responded very positively with 88% either agreed or strongly agreed, to the **time commitment** in band being achievable. Engagement with school is a high determinant of success at high school and 82% of students either agree or strongly agreed that being a band member enhances my **sense of belonging**, making me feel that I am part of the school. Comments reinforced the survey responses with friendships and interactions within the band being the third highest comment response category followed fourth by the sense of belonging and teamwork;

*“The feeling of being part of a big group”*

*“The sense of belonging and the happiness I feel to do a performance well”*

*“A sense that I belong in the school”*

*“The sense of family”*

*“The sense of unity”*

*“The friendships I have formed”*

*“Playing music with friends”*

*“The friendship you make”*

Students appear to be relatively satisfied that the assessment procedure in the Band Program evaluates **musical progress** accurately, with 79% positive responses and 21% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Students expressed similar satisfaction levels with the band uniform

recording a 73% positive response to being proud of the **band uniform** because it gives them a sense of identity.

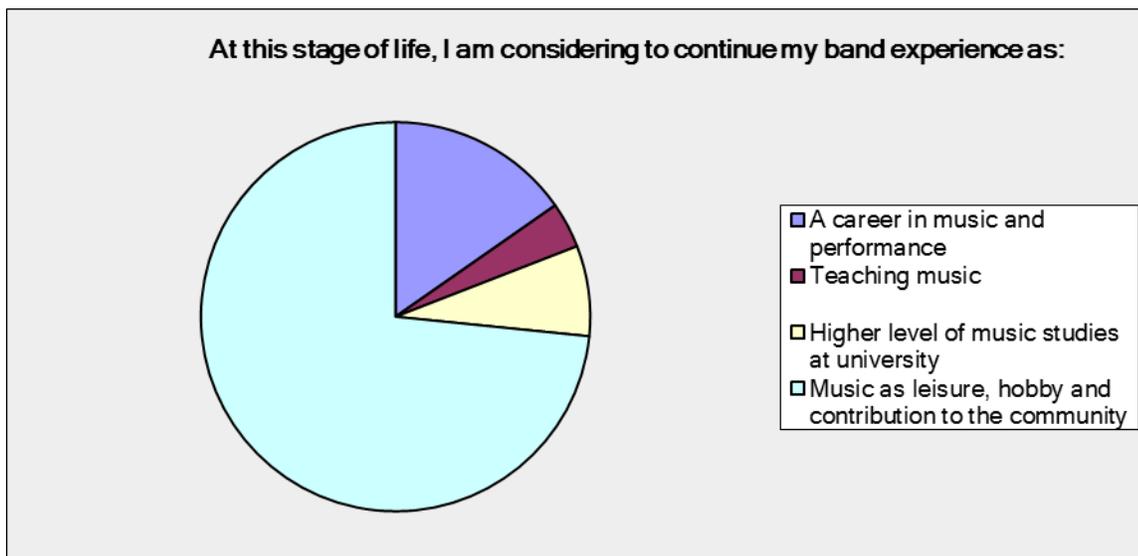
In terms of whether Band students **feel valued and respected** by the teachers and students in the school the majority of band students agree, with a total agreement response of 79%.

Student response to the **support provided by Band Program staff** was high at 82%. This was reinforced by 13 students recording specific positive comments about staff, recognising their *passion* for the program, their *support, help and care* and how they *treat students equally and fairly*.

The Band Program **Handbook** received the lowest survey rating from students with 65% registering a positive response to it being informative and useful. The Band Program **newsletter** received a higher satisfaction rating with 79% finding it helpful in providing information about band activities.

Band student comments about something that could improve the Band Program elicited a wide range of ideas. Many comments were very specific to instruments, sectionals, solos and complexity of pieces and may be of interest to the Band Program staff. A considerable number of comments addressed more student choice in repertoire.

The Band Program values the contribution the program makes in encouraging lifelong involvement in music and to the development of the whole student. Student intent to continue music in some capacity is demonstrated in the student response graph below.



## 2. Non – Band students

Eighty-nine students from a range of classes and year levels completed the non –Band student survey providing a perspective on their knowledge and feelings about the program. A quarter of the respondents were ex- band members however only 28% (8 respondents) responded that they regretted leaving the program. They represented the 4 year levels as per below.

Year 7	35.2%
Year 8	20.5%
Year 9	33.0%
Year 10	11.4%

There were not many comments about why students left the band however the following comment is a noteworthy perspective.

*“My decision to quit the band was based solely on the fact that there are only 2 elective lines, and I wanted to continue languages while having a chance to try a range of electives. I continue to play in community bands. The band program at this school is very strong and successful, and it would be good to see it stay this way.”*

78% of the students surveyed felt that the Band Program made **valuable contributions** to the school and the community, however it was very affirming to note that 92% (agreed or strongly agreed) of the respondents strongly acknowledged that the **band students contribute positively** to Lyneham High School. This was supported by 87% of non-band students acknowledging the program is **highly regarded** and has a reputation for **high expectations** of excellence and high standards of achievements. Generally, 78% (agreed or strongly agreed) that the non- band students felt proud of the **achievements of the bands** and 80% **enjoyed watching and listening** to band performances.

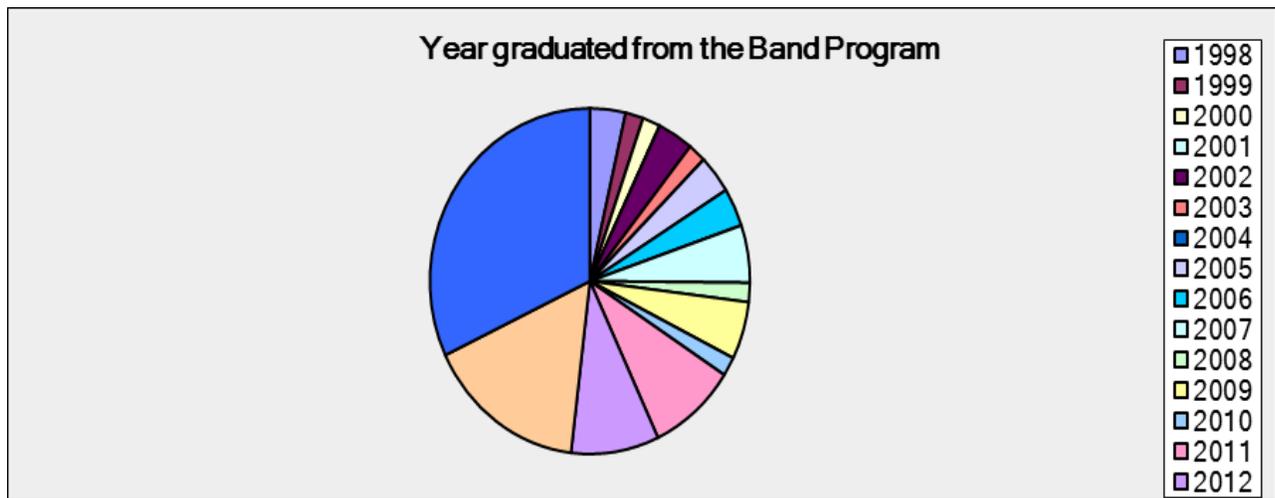
As with the students in the Band Program, the non – band students also recognised, 87% agreed or strongly agreed, that the program embraces the **diversity of students** from different backgrounds and different learning styles. Non- band students surveyed strongly identified (92% agreed or strongly agreed) that in addition to the Band Program there are other **opportunities to be involved in music** at Lyneham High School, however surprisingly only 62% of the respondents said they knew how **to be part of the Band Program**.

Students were asked to comment as to what held them back from **joining the Band Program in year 7**. The majority of comments indicated that the students had no interest in the program or music; however some responses indicated a lack of knowledge about the program and selection. Some respondents were not at Lyneham High in year 7 which makes joining the program difficult. Comments included, not knowing how to play an instrument, feeling they were not talented enough and not knowing when the testing was conducted. Non – band students were also asked if they had any ideas for **improving the band**. Ideas included more performances and more diversity of instruments. There was a suggestion that students be allowed to join at the beginning of any year and another idea of letting everyone have a go in the band for a day.

### 3. Former Band students

It was possible to survey 60 former students who had been part of the Band Program from 1998 to 2012. For 78% (strongly agreed or agreed) of this group the Band Program was very

significant in their **decision to attend** Lyneham High School. Responses from the group surveyed were overwhelmingly positive. All respondents agreed that the Band Program has been a positive influence on their life **post high school** and that they had found the program **enjoyable and rewarding**.



93% of respondents thought the program helped to develop their **self-confidence** and contribute to their **self-worth and self – esteem** and 98% either agreed or strongly agreed that they valued the **high standards of achievement** set by the Band Program. In line with the response from current Band students, former Band students, answered very positively 97% either agreed or strongly agreed, in respect to the program reflecting the **diversity of students** from different backgrounds and learning needs. Again the response to feeling **valued and respected** as a Band member by teachers and students at the school was very high at 98%. This high positive response rate was the same when the former students were asked whether being a Band member enhanced their **sense of belonging** at the school.

As stated earlier in the report the exposure to different audiences that is provided through the touring component of the Band Program is considered very important and 100% of the former students supported this. All surveyed students felt that the band **commitments** had been achievable for them and that they had been well **supported by the Band Program staff**. 90% of the group either agreed or strongly agree with the Band **uniform** providing a sense of identity and 80% either agreed or strongly agree, with the usefulness of the Band Program **newsletter**.

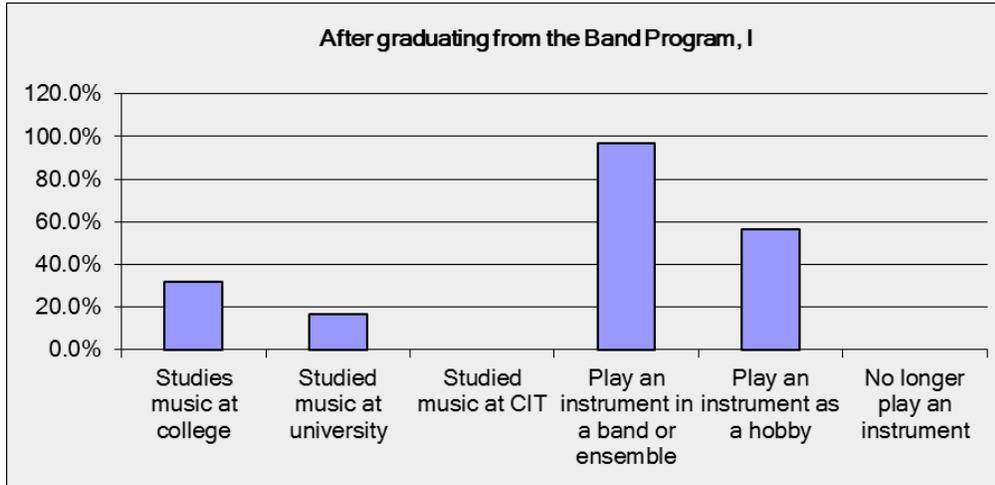
Comments from former students strongly acknowledged the friendships, sense of community and belonging that the Band Program provided for them. Teachers were also remembered fondly.

*“The teachers and how including and supportive they were”*

*“The teachers and their enthusiasm and commitment, they all really made me want to be there.”*

Areas for improvement recorded by former band students provided a range of comments including more instruments, more individual tuition and more student input into repertoire.

There was a 100% positive response in respect to whether they were **still playing the instrument** they played in the Lyneham High School Band, with 37.3% taking up an additional instrument since that time. A significant number of these former students continued with music studies at college.



### Parent/carer responses

One hundred and thirty parents/carers of students in the Band Program responded to the survey and expressed very strong support for the program. 43.8% of respondents were parents/carers of year 7 Band members with year 8 parents/carers 30.8%, year 9 17.7% and year 10 20%. For 73 % (agreed or strongly agree) of the respondents the Band Program was one of the main reasons for wanting their child/children to **attend Lyneham High School**. Feedback on the **costs** of the Band Program being reasonable was positive with 96% of parent/carers agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were. Question responses and comments demonstrated that there is strong support and valuing of the priorities of the Band Program:

*“This is the program my son really loves, and which provides motivation and a sense of belonging at school. His enthusiasm for band has helped his focus and self-discipline in the core academic subject areas.”*

*“The wonderful opportunity to be immersed in music over four years of high school and great teaching”*

*“Feeling part of a team, taking responsibility, opportunities for leadership and independence”*

*“The whole is greater than the parts – being part of a successful team”*

*“Achievement and community”*

Parents/carers strongly acknowledged through survey responses and comments, the role that Band membership played in their child’s sense of belonging, self-esteem and being part of a team and a school community of likeminded students.

There was strong agreement (94% agreed or strongly agreed) on the Band Program helping to develop **self-discipline** and similarly very strong agreement, 96% (agreed or strongly agreed) that it contributed to the **self-esteem** of their children. Parent/carers expressed that they

valued, 98% (agreed or strongly agreed) the **high standards of achievement** set by the Band Program and felt overwhelmingly, 94% (agreed or strongly agreed) that the musical abilities of their children have improved through participation in the program. The **time commitment** of the Band was considered achievable by 98% (agreed or strongly agreed) of the parent/carer respondents.

The importance of the **touring component** providing valuable performance opportunities and exposure to different audiences was also strongly recognised by the parents and carers with 95% (either agree or strongly agree) positive response.

Only a very small percentage, 3% of parents/carers did not know which **staff member to contact** for information or with any concerns about the Band Program. Although 14 respondents made comments concerning communication and or the Handbook and newsletter, there was very strong support for both of these **communication mechanisms**, 97% for support for the newsletter and 91% for the Band Handbook. Comments on improving communication varied from parents/carers not recalling seeing the Handbook or newsletters, use of confusing acronyms, earlier reminders re tour payments, clearer information on dates and tours and more streamlined newsletter communication. A few parents/carers expressed that their children can feel lost in the band due to the size of the bands. An interesting suggestion which might be possible to follow up on was musical collaborations with the Indigenous community.

## **Staff Responses**

### **1. Band teachers**

As there is a small cohort of teachers in the Band Program individual interviews were used as an effective mechanism for their input into the review. The following questions were used as a stimulus for teacher input and opportunity was also provided for additional comments.

Questions:

What are the student outcomes you value most in the band program?

What are the biggest challenges for you in teaching band at LHS?

What gives you the greatest professional satisfaction as a band teacher at LHS?

Do you have any concerns about meeting the assessment and administrative load for the band program?

Do you think the band program is valued by the teaching and leadership team at LHS?

If you could change something about the band program what would that be?

The Band teachers strongly **valued** how the program created a sense of community, belonging and inclusivity. Other value descriptors used by Band teachers included; teamwork, making music with new friends, 'learning through doing' approach and the resultant curriculum outcomes such as performance, manipulating the concepts of music, relationships, discipline, participation and wellbeing. One teacher expressed it as

*“music and the Band Program being a unique way to bring students together changing the culture of the school through teamwork”*

Creating a love of music to enrich the lives of the students, the chance to experience music in a band and the opportunity to play in a formal setting were spoken of as very important. The support of many teams of music teachers over the years, all working towards the common goal was acknowledged as intrinsic to the program’s success.

Some teachers spoke of the **challenges** of working with large numbers of students, acquiring the required knowledge to teach a large concert band, getting to know them all and keeping track of them. It was commented that the participatory focus of the program (and its sheer size) means that it doesn't cater well to students on either end of the bell-curve. Building relationships with large numbers can be hard however; having time with students on tours assisted this. All Band teachers rated the administrative work load and the extracurricular commitments, including time away due to tours of the Band as their greatest challenge. Elements of this included tour organisation including note preparation follow up with students and parents, compliance requirements, evening performances and tour commitments and annual stock take at which all instruments are recorded and serviced by band teachers and reissued for the following year. The commitment of the music staff to this saves the school tens of thousands of dollars in servicing and maintenance costs. It was acknowledged that this was a huge workload relying on strong teamwork and the good will of staff.

Band teachers all spoke of the high level of **professional satisfaction** they experience working in the program. They cited as examples; the performances, seeing the outcome of hard work by students and teachers, working with a group of students who share the same instrument specialty as the teacher, the effort students put in to respond as a group to the challenge of new pieces, the facilities and culture of the program, knowing the program can be sustained and being within a musical environment as key factors in their satisfaction.

The **assessment process** was acknowledged by Band teachers as intensive as it involves individual video assessments however it was generally regarded as reasonable and effective. It was pointed out that assessment and reporting time is busy for all teachers however Band teachers are often also involved in a number of performances for special events at the same time.

Band teachers valued the support, trust and feedback they received from members of the school leadership teams both past and present and generally felt that teachers in other faculties were supportive of the program.

In addressing **areas for change** within the Band Program additional administrative support featured highly. In 2015 a new system of notes with payment going to the front office was introduced. The development and extension of support of this nature including data entry and spreadsheet development would free teachers to concentrate more on teaching, performance and assessment tasks. Other suggestions included: composition workshops in smaller classes, smaller size bands, greater utilisation of teachers on leave/casual teachers who know the school to assist with some classes and provide release for band teachers during peak administrative times, involving the students more in each other’s band performances as very

few students attend other concerts and this could enrich the band community, and publicising events more effectively.

## 2. Non Band teacher response

Over half of the teaching staff 56/90 completed the survey for non-Band staff. Support from this cohort was very strong with 95% either agreeing or strongly agreeing that the Band program is **highly regarded** and has a reputation for **high expectations** of excellence and high standards of achievement (3 respondents or 5% strongly disagreed with the statement). A similar number of non-band teachers, 93%, thought that Band students **contribute positively** to the school. Although still very high, teachers responded slightly lower, 84% (agree or strongly agree) than the other groups surveyed in respect to the **diversity of students** from different backgrounds and different learning needs and to feeling proud of **the achievements of the bands**, 86%.

A significant number of teachers, 43%, felt they require more information about the Band Program so they can **answer basic inquiries** from parents, students and new staff and 33% were unsure of the member of the music faculty to direct inquiries to if they had question about the Band Program.

Teachers again had a range of responses when asked if band students used their band commitments as an excuse for not meeting deadlines 33 answered sometimes, 8 never, 12 mostly and 1 always with 2 N/A.

There was a varied response from non-band teachers in regard to whether they provided band students with catch up work they might miss when on tour or performing.

I provide band students with catch up work they might miss when on tour or performing outside the school.							
Answer Options	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Never	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	11	17	16	7	5	2.63	56
<i>skipped question</i>							0

In comments about what non- band teachers value most about the program, there were acknowledgements of the band teachers, the sense of community and belonging engendered by the program and the positive contribution it makes to the school’s reputation. When asked to comment on an improvement to the Band Program there were some comments around the interruption to classes by band tours and wanting greater communication about when the tours were scheduled. Some teachers were keen to learn more about the program and others wanted more strategies to assist students with work students miss when touring.

## **Other considerations and limitations of the review**

All reviews of this type are limited by the extent that target groups opt into providing input through the surveys provided. This review did not examine the academic outcomes of students in the Band Program or their attendance.

## **Conclusion**

The review has provided an excellent opportunity to collect some of the rich history of the Band Program and the current configuration of the program. Importantly it provided the opportunity to collect and analysis data on a Band Program that was established over 18 years ago and that has evolved into a large program with an inclusive philosophy and a high reputation. The responses from all contributing groups demonstrated that the benefits and philosophy on which the Band Program operates are being strongly delivered. The review acknowledges the importance of leadership teams at Lyneham High School over the years of the Band Program in supporting the development of the program. The Band Program review PLC team acknowledges that the success of the program is reliant on the talent and commitment of the many teachers who work in the program and to the sustained commitment, expertise, vision and leadership provided to the program by Ms Debbie Masling.

## **Recommendations**

### **Major recommendation**

That the Lyneham High School Band Program is; commended for the opportunities it provides to students and the high standard it has achieved, and that the program continues to be resourced and supported by the school community.

### **Supporting recommendations**

That as a component of annual staff induction at Lyneham High School; presentations on the specialist programs at Lyneham High School are delivered to all staff and strategies are shared on how teachers can support students with their class work and assessments when they are involved in tours and performance commitments.

That the administrative load of Band Program teachers be monitored with the view that when efficient, non-teaching staff assist with duties such as tour organisation and other administration associated with the program.

That the Band Program regularly reviews mechanisms for effective student voice within the program. That the repertoire continues to be discussed with students to increase their understanding of why pieces have been chosen and to provide student input when appropriate.

That the Band Program continue the practice of reviewing the most effective means to communicate with and meet the information needs of diverse groups such as prospective students and families, current students and families and staff. That a wider sharing of the term Band Newsletter to all staff be incorporated into communication about the Band Program.