

# Emmanuel College Culture Review

## ROADMAP



Emmanuel  
College

EST. 1911

The University of Queensland



# Message From The Principal/CEO

Dear Emmanuel College Community,

I am pleased to present this first progress report on our collective efforts to implement the 16 recommendations outlined in the 2023 Culture Review conducted by Cam Bestwick. The review provided us with an invaluable snapshot of life at Emmanuel College; it highlighted our strengths and areas of pride, while also offering candid insights into aspects of our community that needed attention and improvement. This report marks a significant milestone in our journey towards creating an even more vibrant, inclusive, and supportive environment at Emmanuel College.

The 16 recommendations that emerged from this review have since become our roadmap for positive change, guiding our actions and decisions over the past months.

I am deeply committed to fostering a culture where every member of our college community feels valued, heard, and empowered to thrive. The Senior Management Team and I have embraced these recommendations wholeheartedly, as opportunities for growth and enhancement of the Emmanuel College experience.

This first progress report is a testament to the dedication and work of everyone involved – our staff and residents. It reflects the collaborative spirit that defines Emmanuel College, showcasing how we've come together to address challenges and implement positive changes.

In the pages that follow, you'll find information about the steps we've taken, the initiatives we've launched, and the outcomes we've achieved thus far. You'll also see that some recommendations are slated for action in future years; we very strongly believe this is a marathon, not a sprint, and that the steps we take will have enduring benefits.

I want to express my gratitude to everyone who has contributed to this process. Your response during the review and openness to change, your innovative ideas, and your unwavering commitment to making Emmanuel College an even better place are what will drive this programme. Together, I hope we can build on our strong foundations to continue to provide an environment that nurtures academic excellence, personal growth, and a sense of belonging for all.

As we move forward, I encourage you to engage with this report, share your thoughts, and continue to participate actively in our ongoing efforts. Your voices and perspectives are crucial as we work towards realising the full potential of these recommendations.

I look forward to our continued collaboration and the positive changes we will achieve together.

Warm regards,



Stephen Peake  
Principal/CEO  
Emmanuel College

## Comment from the reviewer

“ I am so pleased to see Emmanuel College continue its values of transparency and engagement with its community as it embarks on the implementation of the recommendations from my report. The College’s dedication to enacting meaningful change and fostering a positive culture sets an example for others in the sector. I’m sure that Emmanuel College’s conviction and leadership in this regard will give it a significant advantage over others in strengthening the environment it provides for its students.

At the College’s invitation, I have agreed to assist with the implementation process – particularly in areas where my knowledge and perspective as the reviewer can be most beneficial for the community. I have been delighted to remain involved with the process as I believe that, together, we can ensure that these recommendations lead to substantial and lasting improvements for the College community, and that we can extend the frontiers of what is considered leading practice for residential colleges in Australia. ”

Cam Bestwick



# The Emmanuel College Culture Review on one page:

## The mission of Emmanuel College is:

*To provide a world-class collegiate experience that gives Emmanuel residents the greatest chance of success in their chosen careers while also developing well-rounded and respected citizens of the world.*

## The purpose of the culture review was:

*To ensure that as a community we are relevant, forward looking, pursuing best practice, and ensuring the wellbeing of the community*

## The scope of the review included:

- Collecting information from interviews, focus groups, submissions, survey, observation, and document reviews.
- Evaluating the Awareness, Opportunities, Motivations, and Capabilities affecting people's propensity to live desired values and behaviours at the College.

## Some core values of the community appear to be:

Respect | Integrity | Inclusivity | Excellence | Humility | Mutual Support

## Some guiding principles for culture reform are:

- Respect must be permanent and universal.
- Traditions must be tested "wisely and well".
- Fellow Collegians are colleagues who are credible and worthwhile collaborators.
- Reforms should be co-designed and co-produced by students and non-students.

## Some elements of the culture to protect are:

- Fostering a strong sense of community.
- Helping people to form lifelong bonds.
- Believing in and supporting one another.
- Encouraging roundedness in people.
- Accumulating prestige indirectly, through quiet distinction.
- Maintaining a spirit of voluntarism and stewardship.

## Some elements of the culture to renew are:

- Clarifying the College's core values.
- Developing an overall student experience framework.
- Embedding an inviolable ethical framework for traditions.
- Developing a RACI matrix for consultative decision-making.
- Reforming the alcohol culture via a student-led taskforce.
- Crafting a standing set of event management guidelines.
- Providing event management training to student leaders.
- Creating ally programs to decentralise advocacy.
- Establishing a contestable student experience innovation fund.
- Creating new avenues to openly discuss ambitious, long-term ideas.
- Diversifying the ways residents build relationships outside their wing.
- Arranging mentors for the leaders of the Students' Club Executive.
- Making staff more visible in the everyday life of the College.
- Reviewing the role of Wing Leaders to resolve tensions between duties.
- Increasing student leaders' input into board-level decisions.
- Raising the awareness and participation rates for exit surveys.

*November 2023*

By Cam Bestwick

# Overview

Since receiving the final report in November 2023, the College has been thoughtfully planning an approach to implementing all 16 recommendations in a way that will maximise their effectiveness. Recognising that certain recommendations will set the foundation for others, the College has decided to develop and follow a three-year **Roadmap** to guide the process.

The roadmap will be steered by the three principals of change outlined in the final report. These are:

- Working as Colleagues
- Working on Reform
- Working on Alignment

This staged approach will give the College continuity and momentum throughout the multi-year change process. By prioritising the foundational elements first and focusing on only a few recommendations at a time, the College will be able to achieve more than if it spread its efforts across all 16 recommendations simultaneously.

In **2024**, the College has concentrated on implementing approximately half the recommendations. These are a combination of actions which can be resolved relatively easily and in the normal course of the College's existing operations; as well as some crucial initiatives that will lay the groundwork for the subsequent initiatives.

Finally, the College identified some recommendations as being **Ongoing Efforts** which can start immediately but have no clear end point. These initiatives will be continuously and progressively pursued over the entire three years and beyond, if necessary.



# Roadmap



## Roadmap summary

| 2024  | 2025   | 2026  | ONGOING EFFORT  |
|---|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing an overall student experience framework.</li> <li>- Developing a RACI matrix for consultative decision-making.</li> <li>- Embedding an inviolable ethical framework for traditions.</li> <li>- Reviewing the role of Wing Leaders to resolve tensions between duties.</li> <li>- Raising the awareness and participation rates for exit surveys</li> <li>- Increasing student leaders' input into board-level decisions.</li> <li>- Reforming the alcohol culture via a student-led taskforce.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arranging mentors for the leaders of the Students' Club Executive.</li> <li>- Crafting a standing set of event management guidelines.</li> <li>- Providing event management training to student leaders.</li> <li>- Creating ally programs to decentralise responsibility for inclusion.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clarifying the College's core values.</li> <li>- Establishing a contestable student experience innovation fund.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creating new avenues to openly discuss ambitious, long-term ideas.</li> <li>- Making staff more visible in the everyday life of the College.</li> <li>- Diversifying the ways residents build relationships outside their wing.</li> </ul> |

# Progress Report

| ONGOING culture change initiatives   |   |                       |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| Recommendation   | College Response  | Key Principle         |
| <p><b>16</b> <b>Creating new avenues to openly discuss ambitious, long-term ideas.</b></p> <p>The College's Senior Management Team (SMT) should search for ways to spark open discussion of ambitious and long-term ideas for the future of the College, possibly by making such discussions lower stakes, or with creative approaches to facilitation (for example: holding an 'innovation day' in addition to a planning day each year).</p> | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and is <b>being implemented.</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> An external facilitator is working with the SMT to further improve its thinking and discussion of long-range matters.</p>  | Working on Alignment  |
| <p><b>4</b> <b>Making staff more visible in the everyday life of the College.</b></p> <p>College staff, including the Senior Management Team, should more visibly display their care for students by being more involved in the everyday life of the College, verbalise their appreciation of students' stewardship of the College often, and get to know students individually as much as possible.</p>                                       | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and is <b>being implemented.</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> SMT have been discussing the different staff roles and fractions with students to better communicate the division of responsibilities across the organisation.</p> | Working as Colleagues |
| <p><b>7</b> <b>Diversifying the ways residents build relationships outside their wing.</b></p> <p>The College should diversify the strategies it uses to help residents form new friendships outside their wing. Those strategies should be evaluated and regularly refined.</p>   | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and is <b>being implemented.</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> The objective, to 'de-silo' the College community, is being injected into all conversations about program and event planning – by both students and SMT.</p>       | Working on Reform     |

## CURRENT culture change initiatives

| Recommendation   | College Response  | Key Principle                |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| <p><b>3 Developing an overall student experience framework.</b></p> <p>The College should develop an agreed-upon framework that articulates a Theory of Change (ToC) for how attending the College affects students. It should determine the goals, outcomes; activities, inputs, and assumptions involved in producing a College experience. Such frameworks can be very effective at achieving alignment when the work of an organisation’s members is specialised and/or decentralised.</p> | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and is being implemented in <b>2024.</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> A facilitated workshop for students and staff to co-develop an initial Theory of Change (ToC) for the College has been scheduled for Semester 2, <b>2024.</b></p>  | <p>Working as Colleagues</p> |
| <p><b>1 Developing a RACI matrix for consultative decision-making.</b></p> <p>The College should consider creating a RACI matrix covering all stakeholders. This would stabilise people’s expectations about how much consultation should occur and who the final decision rests with. Such a matrix should be developed collaboratively to maximise its own credibility.</p>  | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and is being implemented in <b>2024.</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> A workshop was held in Semester 1 with both student leaders and staff to co-develop a RACI matrix, with the draft matrix under development with aim to implement in Semester 2, <b>2024.</b></p>   | <p>Working as Colleagues</p> |
| <p><b>11 Embedding an inviolable ethical framework for traditions.</b></p> <p>The students at the College, with the assistance of staff expertise, should adopt an ethical framework for traditions. The framework should be easily verbalised and memorised, and known to everyone at the College, so it can be used by any member of the community to initiate authentic discussions about adhering to it. The framework should be frequently challenged and refined.</p>                    | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and is being implemented in <b>2024.</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> The College has scheduled a closed session where the reviewer, Cam, will assist student leaders to start such a framework. The Emmanuel College Students’ Club has committed to releasing a discussion draft to the student community.</p> | <p>Working on Reform</p>     |
| <p><b>8 Reviewing the role of Wing Leaders to resolve tensions between duties.</b></p> <p>The College should review the role of Wing Leader with the aim of professionalising it and privileging the wellbeing/pastoral care function of the role.</p>   | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and implementation is <b>complete.</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> The Wing Leader role description was reviewed in December/January 2023 to further clarify expectations around duties, time commitments, reporting and communication.</p>   | <p>Working on Reform</p>     |



## CURRENT culture change initiatives (cont.)

| Recommendation   | College Response   | Key Principle            |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| <p><b>10 Raising the awareness and participation rates for exit surveys.</b></p> <p>The College should re-institute its exit survey for non-returning residents and raise awareness of the availability of exit interviews to gather more data and a deeper understanding of the buildup to instances of hazing, bullying, or any other unacceptable peer-to-peer behaviour.</p>   | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and implementation will be complete at the end of <b>2024</b>.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> An exit survey has been reinstated and the opportunity to request an exit interview will be made available to students in the updated departure process in <b>2024</b>.</p> | <p>Working on Reform</p> |
| <p><b>9 Reforming the alcohol culture via a student-led taskforce.</b></p> <p>The students should develop an alcohol culture taskforce (and an ensuing strategy) to embed genuinely optional and healthy enjoyment of alcohol as a social norm at the College. While such a taskforce could easily be coordinated by the administration, the role of staff should be contained to an advisory one for as long as possible, to keep the ownership of the strategy as student-led as possible.</p> | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and is being implemented in <b>2024</b>.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Discussions between staff and students have commenced.</p>  | <p>Working on Reform</p> |

## FUTURE culture change initiatives

| Recommendation   | College Response   | Key Principle                |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| <p><b>2 Increasing student leaders' input into board-level decisions.</b><br/>The Board should experiment with different formats of involving the students in decision-making that provides them with visibility over the nature of upcoming decisions and a realistic opportunity to contribute. Students should give honest, on-time feedback on the effectiveness of each iteration and offer to co-design each subsequent iteration.</p> | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and will begin implementation in <b>2025</b>.</p>    | <p>Working as Colleagues</p> |
| <p><b>5 Arranging mentors for the leaders of the Students' Club Executive.</b><br/>The College should arrange mentors for the leaders of the Students' Club Executive from outside the College. This gives the leaders access to advice about how to professionally engage in disagreements with Senior Management and the Board.</p>  | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and scheduled for implementation in <b>2025</b>.</p> | <p>Working as Colleagues</p> |
| <p><b>13 Crafting a standing set of event management guidelines.</b><br/>The College should create a standing set of event guidelines which provides the criteria for event approval and the reasons for those criteria. The guidelines must be available to residents to assist with the planning process and guidelines should be updated continuously as lessons are learned.</p>   | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and scheduled for implementation in <b>2025</b>.</p> | <p>Working on Reform</p>     |
| <p><b>14 Providing event management training to student leaders.</b><br/>The College should source some appropriate event management training for the incoming Executive each year.</p>  | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and scheduled for implementation in <b>2025</b>.</p> | <p>Working on Reform</p>     |

## FUTURE culture change initiatives (cont.)

| Recommendation   | College Response   | Key Principle            |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| <p><b>12 Creating ally programs to decentralise responsibility for inclusion.</b><br/>The College should consider introducing ally programs to have more people generating more moments of everyday advocacy for respect and inclusivity. The programs should be open to any resident to complete. This will also give ordinary residents a gateway leadership experience, widening the pipeline of potential Wing Leaders and Executives for the future.</p>  | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and scheduled for implementation in <b>2025</b>.</p> | <p>Working on Reform</p> |
| <p><b>6 Clarifying the College's core values.</b><br/>The College should embark on a comprehensive process to clarify its values. The process of discovering and affirming the values should attract broad participation and reflect the current, enacted values of the community as much as possible.</p>   | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and scheduled for implementation in <b>2026</b>.</p> | <p>Working on Reform</p> |
| <p><b>15 Establishing a contestable student experience innovation fund.</b><br/>The College should consider quarantining some amount of funds for a contestable 'student experience innovation' fund where any student, regardless of position, could seek funding to run a new event. To the extent there are practical barriers to a non-leader organising an event, they should be provided with coaching and other support in addition to the funding.</p> | <p><b>Status:</b> Recommendation accepted and scheduled for implementation in <b>2026</b>.</p> | <p>Working on Reform</p> |

## Measuring our Progress

Emmanuel College will regularly publish our progress in how we are addressing the Review's recommendations, until our changes are fully embedded. Our Board will oversee this progress.

If you have any questions about the actions detailed in this document, we warmly welcome you contact the College on [enquiries@emmanuel.uq.edu.au](mailto:enquiries@emmanuel.uq.edu.au) or reach out directly to Principal/CEO Stephen Peake on (07) 3871 9100.

Emmanuel College acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which the College is located, the people of the Turrbal nation and Jagera/Yaggera nation. The College pays respect to Elders, past and present.

Emmanuel College endeavours to promote reconciliation through education, respect and engagement.

