

AUSTRALIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

MEMBER SERVICES

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Introduction

The Australian Boarding Schools Association (ABSA) exists to promote the interests of boarding schools by enhancing the well-being of boarders, facilitating the professional development of staff and advancing excellent practice among schools.

In honouring that mission the Association has developed a wide range of member services which can be accessed by all boarding schools. Many of these are included within the membership fee, while others are charged a fee for service. Please feel free to contact the ABSA office to discuss these charges.

At ABSA we strive for excellence, by our own staff, in boarding staff and in the boarding provision itself, and we encourage you to make the most of your membership by utilising the services offered.



Support

SUPPORT AND ADVICE

Phone and email support at any time

The ABSA Office provides support and advice for all levels of boarding staff on a wide range of topics.

CONSULTANCY FOR BOARDING SCHOOLS - reviewing the whole Boarding Service including policies, procedures, marketing, staff performance, etc.

A boarding school review is an excellent way to appraise the programs offered, and can be used to instigate change, develop new processes and ensure the boarding school itself follows excellent practice.

DISCUSSION ON TRENDS AND KEY INDUSTRY INFORMATION

with Principals and Boards, assistance with Heads of Boarding selection process, etc.

As part of our consultancy offering we are more than happy to assist schools with key staff selection, discussion on redevelopments and renovations, and knowledge development for new Principals and Board Members.

SUPPORT FOR THOSE USING THE REACH BOARDING SCHOOL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

ABSA partners with Reach and has a deep understanding of how the program works, as well as collecting ideas for future development.

BUILDING PLAN REVIEWS

The ABSA staff will happily review any future boarding plans with you, to assist in ensuring excellent practice in planning, design, and building.

Training & Accreditation

THE TRAINING ACADEMY

A professional learning pathway developed specifically for boarding staff. We provided over 16,000 hours of professional learning to boarding staff per annum. <https://www.boarding.org.au/our-events>

ACADEMY TRAINING INCLUDES

Introductory

At the introductory level, the ABSA Training Academy offers essential training in the skills required to work in a boarding environment. Including the ABSA Online Induction Program and Duty of Care Certificate Course in Student Residential Care.

Ongoing

ABSA runs a multitude of learning opportunities for staff working in the front line of boarding. A range of webinars are offered throughout each term and a suite of online courses is available through the ABSA website. Including Accidental Counsellor and Active Duty online courses.





Certificate

There is a range of Certificate courses specifically aimed at professionals working in boarding schools. Certificates including Behaviour Management Pillars, Building Chinese Cultural Competence, Creating a Safe Cultural Environment for Indigenous Boarding Students, Cyber Safety, Social Media and Gaming, Understanding, Analysing and Applying Risk in a Boarding School, Understanding, Dealing With and Preventing Addiction and Youth Mental Health and Well Being.

Advanced Certificate

Taking one specific topic already studied at Certificate level, these courses give participants a deeper level of understanding and learning in that area. Advanced Certificates include Advanced Training in Creating a Safe Environment for Indigenous Boarders, Advanced Training in Building Chinese Cultural Competence and Advanced Training in Understanding, Analysing and Applying Risk in a Boarding School.



Diploma

The Diploma in Residential Education is a two-year structured learning program allowing staff to effectively develop their understanding and learning within Residential Education.

Master's

ABSA has partnered with the BSA (UK) and the University of Buckingham to provide a Master's in Residential Education.





ACCREDITED BOARDING PRACTITIONER SCHEME

Boarding Staff can apply for accreditation as a boarding practitioner which will help celebrate their ongoing training and ensure they are recognised as a professional in the industry.



DUTY OF CARE

Workbooks and Workshops

The Premier Training Course for Boarding School staff, 'Duty of Care' is available in workbook form from ABSA. We also host workshops regularly, both face-to-face and virtually, to assist people to work through the topics in the books.

PODCASTS -

On Duty and Study Time

On Duty is a podcast aimed at boarding professionals sharing their stories and practical advice. Study Time is a podcast focused on exploring key concepts and ideas that effect our boarding schools. This is a free service for all staff.



Conferences

ABSA holds a number of conferences to support those working in boarding, including the 'Taking the Reins' Conference for new leaders in boarding, the biennial Boarding Leaders' Conference and on alternate years the International Boarding Conference. An Online Boarding Conference for all boarding staff is also held annually.

Other Activities and Events

INDUSTRY SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Over 70+ Industry Specific Activities including, Nuts and Bolts, Youth Mental Health First Aid Courses, Dealing with Parents, Marketing Boarding Schools Effectively, Cultural Awareness, etc. have been developed to help boarding school staff on their professional learning journey.

PERSONALISED WORKSHOPS

Personalised Workshops including team building, student leadership, social media, active duty, teachers in the day school, etc.

REGIONAL SYMPOSIUMS AND ACTIVITIES

Our Regional Committees host regular gatherings of staff to support them in their work, covering a range of topics.



Standards

DEVELOPMENT OF THE BOARDING STANDARD FOR AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS AND RESIDENCES AND CERTIFICATION SCHEME

Working with Standard Australia, the writing of the Boarding Standard and subsequent development of self-assessment and a certification scheme has been a key part of ABSA's work to ensure excellent practice in boarding schools.





Networking & Mentoring

MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

As part of our New Heads of Boarding and Aspiring Heads of Boarding programs we arrange mentors for staff, connecting our experienced staff with those new to a role.

HEADS OF BOARDING MEETINGS & NETWORKING

Each Region holds regular meetings with Heads of Boarding, and a National Online Catchup is held once each term.

INSTANT HEAD OF BOARDING EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Heads of Boarding have access to a private email group, facilitating conversations around key topics and the collection of policies.

ASPIRING BOARDING LEADERS PROGRAM

The Aspiring Boarding Leaders Program is designed to equip people with tailored leadership and management skillsets coupled with a clear career pathway to take on their next position of leadership in the boarding community.





Staffing

FREE JOB ADVERTISING

The ABSA website has an extensive job advertising page (<https://www.boarding.org.au/positions-vacant/positions-vacant>) which lists all jobs in boarding schools in Australia and many internationally. This page receives approximately 45,000 views a year from candidates interested in boarding roles.

INTERVIEW PANEL SUPPORT

ABSA staff are happy to assist with the selection of boarding staff, including shortlist discussion and being a part of interview panels.

HEADS OF BOARDING

benchmark 360° appraisal system

Through the resources of MMG Education we offer an excellent program to review and appraise Heads of Boarding.

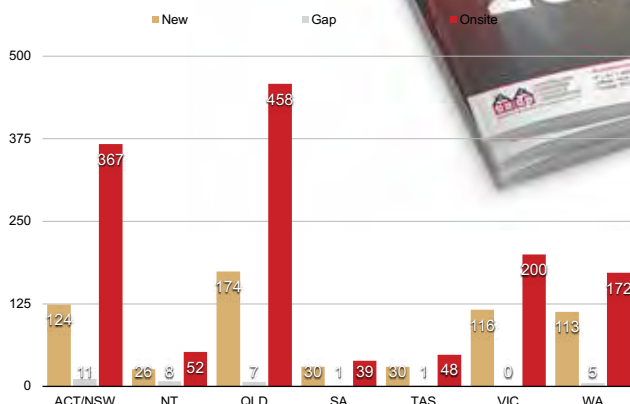
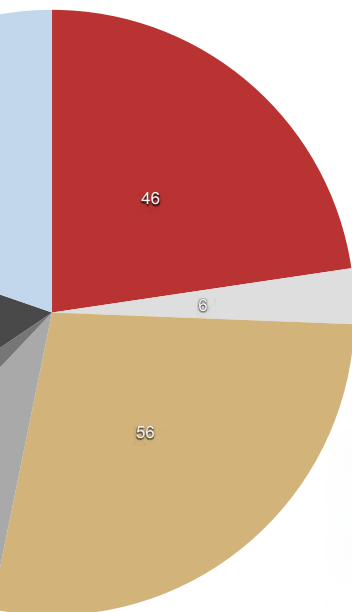
Information Gathering

ABSA SURVEYS

ABSA run multiple surveys during the year consisting of boarding staff structures, salaries, wellbeing, etc.

BOARDING SCHOOL SURVEY TEMPLATE targeting all key stakeholders

ABSA has developed two survey templates for boarding students and boarding parents which schools can access to help gain information about successes and possible areas for development in their boarding programs.





Publications

LIGHTS OUT JOURNAL

Lights Out is the premier boarding school journal in the world and has been published continuously since 1987. The most recent versions can be seen at <https://www.boarding.org.au/our-community/lights-out-journal-1>

At the start of each year ABSA highlights new Boarding School Principals and Heads of Boarding.

ANNUAL CENSUS REPORT

Each year the ABSA office conducts a detailed census of boarding schools, collecting number in a variety of fields relating to boarding. The most recent publication is at <https://www.boarding.org.au/our-community/the-absa-census>



BROCHURES FOR DISTRIBUTION

For Parents 'Let's Talk About Boarding'

This brochure was produced to help parents choose a boarding school, and then to settle in - they are available in bulk to member schools to distribute.

For Staff 'The Warts and All of Boarding'

Produced to help people sensibly choose a boarding role, this brochure gives a clear picture of what it takes to work in boarding.

Online

FIND-A-SCHOOL - WEBSITE

For those searching for a boarding school, this critical section of our website advertises each of our member schools and what they can provide. We receive over 30,000 views a year on the Find-a-School section of the website.

MEMBER SECTION - WEBSITE

policies, procedures, useful information, etc.

A huge range of documents are available for download covering all aspects of boarding schoolwork as a free service for members. Please call the ABSA office to provide you with the password.



Awards

ANNUAL BOARDING SCHOOL AWARDS

Each year ABSA celebrates achievements in three major areas - the Premier Leadership Award recognises someone who has shown exceptional leadership in boarding, the Excellence in Indigenous Boarding Award (in conjunction with Indigenous Education and Boarding Australia) showcases great Indigenous programs, and the Innovation in Boarding Awards commends new and exciting programs in boarding schools.

These are prestigious awards and are only given to one person each year. The awards are judged by a subcommittee of the Board of Directors of ABSA.



Industry Connections

PREFERRED SUPPLIERS

listing with tailored offerings to boarding schools

The ABSA partnership program offers specialised products at excellent value for boarding schools.

INPUT AND REPRESENTATION

with key groups including the ICPA, AHISA, ISA, State and Federal Governments

We work closely with key agencies and groups to gain support for boarding schools across the regions.

KEY MEDIA CONTACTS

ABSA maintains strong relationships with media outlets (TV, Newspaper and Radio) discussing the positive attributes and strengths of boarding schools. In addition, ABSA takes a stance on behalf of the industry when facing political pressure such as regulations introduced by COVID.

Our Partners



Boarders

BOARDERS' CONFERENCE

Each Year ABSA hosts an online conference for Boarding Student Leaders, helping them to navigate the challenges of leading the boarding program from a student's perspective.

'THE ART OF BEING A BOARDER'

Webinar Series

This is a free program offering multiple webinars focused on developing our boarding students.

BOARDERS SECTION - WEBSITE

A wealth of information and useful links for boarders.



Promotion

PROMOTION OF BOARDING - Agricultural shows, newspapers, radio advertisements, etc.

ABSA is developing a scheme to assist schools to promote boarding in a number of areas.

A joint marketing campaign is being developed which allows ABSA to put boarding on the map in terms of marketing and pool together schools' resources at agricultural events all around Australia.

SOCIAL MEDIA offerings including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter

The ABSA Social Media presence celebrates key information sharing and excellent practice in boarding over these key platforms.

NATIONAL BOARDING WEEK

The third week in May sees boarding schools celebrate all aspects of boarding, and includes a National Boarding Staff day and a National Boarding Principals day.





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