



Approved by Archbishop  
24th August 2023

# Aquinas College Strategic Plan 2024 - 2028





# FOREWORD FROM THE ARCHBISHOP OF ADELAIDE

Aquinas College is a Catholic residential college where young people are supported to discover life in all its fullness (cf. John 10:10). It is a work of the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide under the auspices of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools.

The College's Strategic Plan 2024-2028 aligns itself with the vision of the Archdiocese to be a welcoming, Christ-centred community of believers serving others. Our mission includes being agents of transformation in our world.

The strategic priorities outlined in this plan emphasise the College's ongoing commitment to providing an environment where students can flourish academically, spiritually and socially, developing into young people who are characterised by their readiness to discern, achieve, serve and love.

Aquinas College takes great pride in educating the whole person – the academic, social, physical and spiritual dimensions of each individual. It draws on a rich tradition of Catholic education which seeks to shape students who engage meaningfully with the world around them. I am truly excited to see what lies ahead for the College as it celebrates 75 years of providing a faith-filled, nurturing, caring, and welcoming environment for university students to live and grow.

**Archbishop Patrick O'Regan DD**



# FOREWORD FROM THE COUNCIL CHAIR AND RECTOR

## **Aquinas College is proud to present its Strategic Plan 2024-2028.**

This plan is the result of significant collaboration between College Council, the Management Team, Staff, Alumni and current students (the stakeholders). Our stakeholders share a passion and commitment for delivering exceptional educational and leadership opportunities that excite, challenge, and empower young people while they reside at this premier residential College.

Our stakeholders contributed key insights during the strategic planning process by reflecting on their personal experiences and the future needs of the College. This plan is driven by our purpose and vision and is underpinned by our core values of family spirit, academic excellence, respect, faith and justice.

Since its inception in 1950, Aquinas College has been a significant leader in Catholic education, offering an environment where Christ is central, academic excellence is pursued, outreach is integral and relationships are respected and valued.

Our College motto, *Lucere et Ardere* ('to shine and burn') is taken to mean, "to enlighten with knowledge and enliven with faith." This motto, forged by our College founders, continues to inform and guide us. This plan is developed to honour this foundational work and position us to deliver outstanding opportunities for our students as we work towards our 75th Anniversary in 2025 and beyond.

Our Collegiate experience empowers students to be citizens of change, global stewards, and community builders. With this in mind, we have set five significant, overarching priorities - Identity, Students, Community, Sustainability and Offerings - to drive the College. These priorities will be supported by a comprehensive strategy framework including indicators and measurable action plans to keep us on track and accountable for the achievement of our goals.

Aquinas College is an exciting place to be as we forge a path to the future and support our students in the development of their God-given gifts and abilities.

**Joanne Sawyer, Council Chair and Sean Brito-Babapulle, Rector**







## OUR PURPOSE

To inspire, guide and support young people to discover life in all its fullness.



## OUR VISION

Aquinas College is an inclusive family where people flourish and strive for excellence.



## OUR VALUES

Family Spirit. Respect.  
Academic Excellence.  
Faith. Justice.



# 2024 – 2028 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## Aquinas Identity

- Catholic values
- Academic achievement
- Family culture

## Aquinas Students

- College experience
- Pastoral care and wellbeing
- Expanding opportunities

## Aquinas Community

- Strong partnerships
- Archdiocese and Catholic Education
- Staff
- Alumni
- Schools
- Council
- Universities
- Foundation

## Aquinas Sustainability

- Income security
- Environmental impact
- Operational evolution

## Aquinas Offerings

- Quality facilities
- Impactful programs





# AQUINAS IDENTITY

Proudly drawing on the richness of Catholic intellectual tradition and Christian faith, Aquinas College is an educational community characterised by the values of family spirit, academic excellence, respect, faith and justice. Aquinians are supported to achieve their best academically, encouraged to actively engage with faith to shape their worldview, and are embraced in a family culture that sets our community and College apart.

PRIORITY	AMBITION / FOCUS	KEY PROJECTS
Catholic Values	An environment where Catholic values, tradition and practices are observed, and where students are encouraged to engage with the role of faith in shaping their worldview.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outreach program – continue to deliver and strengthen</li><li>• Structured Youth Ministry program – support student exploration of how faith meaningfully impacts life</li><li>• Campus Ministry Team attending to the Sacramental Life of the College - a recognition of the sacredness of each student</li></ul>
Academic Achievement	Continue to support students to strive and fulfil their academic potential and prepare them as successful leaders and contributors to society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Achievement Targets – define and review annually</li><li>• Review and potentially broaden supported subjects in line with demand and capabilities</li><li>• Explore opportunities for 3-4<sup>th</sup> yr / “whole of degree” academic support services</li><li>• Actively communicate news about Aquinians moving into careers</li><li>• Investigate and engage other potential support resources, including from Catholic Education</li></ul>
Family Culture	Sustain and propagate a culture of extended family for all Collegians, where friendship, inclusiveness and a sense of belonging is nurtured.	



# AQUINAS STUDENTS

Aquinas College exists to inspire, guide and support its students. Our commitment is to ensure every student has a positive experience at the College, that their wellbeing is supported and strengthened per the principle of “Cura Personalis”, and that we create opportunities for future students to benefit from being part of the Aquinas community.

PRIORITY	AMBITION / FOCUS	KEY PROJECTS
College Experience	Maintain a safe, enriching, rewarding and enjoyable experience for every student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop and sustain an open and impactful feedback culture per a schedule of feedback generating activities</li><li>• Implement a formalised Student Wellbeing Framework (principles, activities and support structure), annually reviewed and refined</li><li>• Maintain and enhance a Bursaries and Scholarships Plan, reflect an ongoing commitment to Diversity and Inclusion</li><li>• Student retention initiatives – develop and communicate a 3rd year student “value for money” experience enhancement and education program</li><li>• Employ an admissions approach that supports a consistent (predictable) ratio of 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> yr students</li></ul>
Pastoral Care and Wellbeing	All dimensions of student health and wellbeing are considered, supported and strengthened	
Expanding Opportunities	Maximise accessibility for current and future Aquinians from diverse backgrounds	



Aquinas College benefits from deep and strong connections to a diverse and supportive community of partners and stakeholders. Our commitment is to work proactively, collaboratively and effectively with our partner community, to fulfil our core purpose, embody our values, and support the realisation of the College’s Vision for the future.

PRIORITY	AMBITION / FOCUS	KEY PROJECTS
Education Archdiocese and Catholic Education South Australia / South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools	Maintain a clear, strong and effective relationship with the Archdiocese and Catholic Education South Australia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Staff and Council development plans (Council – Governance training appropriate for the College; Staff – budgeted professional development plans)</li><li>Key role succession plans developed</li><li>Foundation and Alumni Community Engagement Plan(s) developed and implemented, supported via a funded function (Foundation and Alumni Development Officer or an outsourced partnership)</li><li>Council effectiveness and efficiency strengthening measures (eg implement Council Portal)</li></ul>
Staff	Develop and support our staff to lead and enable the College into the future.	
Council	Support the development and function of the Council as effective Governors of the College.	
Alumni	Nurture and activate a community of engaged Aquinians for life.	
Universities	Maintain strong connections across the SA university sector.	
Schools	Continue building and consolidating relationships with regional partner schools (current and potential future).	
Foundation	A thriving Foundation securing additional revenues and making investments aligned with the College’s strategic priorities.	





# AQUINAS OFFERINGS

Aquinas College enjoys beautiful grounds in an exceptional location, blending modern facilities and historic buildings. The College offers a diverse suite of programs that support our students’ experience, wellbeing and development. We will continue to invest in appropriate facility improvements and additions to better serve our student community, and we will continually explore evolution and expansion opportunities to ensure our balanced suite of programs continue to meet the needs of contemporary and future tertiary students.

PRIORITY	AMBITION / FOCUS	KEY PROJECTS
Quality Facilities	Realise targeted improvements and additions to College infrastructure that enhance the student experience and the College’s capabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Capacity modelling – define the target student range 2024-28+</li><li>• Capital Master Plan</li><li>• Building and Maintenance Audit</li><li>• Review of common area / space usage and future needs aligned with College Purpose, Values and Vision</li><li>• Food – continual review and improvement / (align with evolving student and community needs)</li></ul>
Impactful Programs	Offer a balanced and evolving suite of contemporary academic, social, sporting, spiritual and pastoral care services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annual calendar and program review</li><li>• Increased focus on 3<sup>rd</sup> / later year offerings (eg internships)</li><li>• Investigate offering specialty faculty spaces</li><li>• Build meaningful relationships with Catholic Office for Youth and Young Adults / wider Youth Ministry Groups</li><li>• Continue and develop immersions program</li></ul>



# AQUINAS SUSTAINABILITY

As we move to and beyond our 75<sup>th</sup> year, Aquinas College is firmly focused on sustaining its ability to inspire, guide and support young people through its residential College community. We are committed to safeguarding the financial health of the college to fund sustainable growth and improvement. We willingly adopt a leadership role in being considerate and proactive custodians of our planet, and we are continually exploring new ways to better meet the evolving needs of our students.

PRIORITY	AMBITION / FOCUS	KEY PROJECTS
Income Security	Ensure adequate, diversified and secured sources of funds to cover current and priority future investments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Foundation strategy</li><li>Identify, plan and secure diversified revenue streams beyond student fees</li></ul>
Environmental Impact	All key decisions and activities at College considered and planned in the context of supporting a sustainable world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop and implement a College Sustainability Plan (ranging from potential major initiatives such as Carbon offsetting and food waste reduction targets, to micro / personal initiatives)</li><li>Sustainability education program</li></ul>
Operational Evolution	Ensure the College maintains pace with modern practices, technologies and learning environment changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Promote the importance and value of face-to-face tertiary learning / belonging to a physically connected educational community</li><li>Annual reviews – technology capabilities and requirements</li><li>Periodically engage in external consultations to understand benchmarks and opportunities (“future game changer” facility development ideas)</li></ul>

# APPLICATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 - 2028

In developing, implementing and governing this Strategic Plan across 2024 – 2028, the Council of Aquinas College, supported by the Management Team and Staff, is committed to positioning Aquinas College as the Residential College of choice in Adelaide, one that truly embodies its Values, works to fulfil its Purpose, and strives to realise a compelling Vision for the future.



This Strategic Plan, shaped by the insights of Aquinas students past and present, student leaders, staff members, management team and College Council, will be employed as a guiding document to inform and direct all operational plans, and be governed by the College Council across the Plan's lifespan.





**AQUINAS COLLEGE**  
*'Lucere et Audere'*

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