

Merrimac State High School

SUMMIT

**EXCELLENCE
PROGRAMS**

Merrimac
State High School
Gold Coast, Australia





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OUR PHILOSOPHY

Merrimac State High School strives to build positive relationships, value differences to promote collective wellbeing, encourage lifelong learning, and contribute to the school, family and wider community to make our planet more equal, fair and sustainable.

Our school community has the capacity and disposition to examine issues of local, global and cultural significance; understand and appreciate different perspectives; establish positive interactions with people of different national, ethnic, religious, social or gender backgrounds; and take action toward sustainable development and collective wellbeing.

Education is a shared responsibility promoting a spirit of co-operation and belonging. Our students are prepared for life as literate, informed, resilient, happy, responsible and caring individuals who take 'Pride in Excellence'.

Pride in Excellence



OUR VALUES

We stand for Respect, Responsibility and Reliability.

There is a strong belief that everyone has the right to be respected and the responsibility to respect themselves, each other and this place. It is expected that all members of the Merrimac community are reliable in their commitment to ensuring that their actions have only a positive influence on all. To ensure students and staff can achieve their best within a safe and caring environment, school values have been developed and are exemplified by all members of our school community.

Our core values; Respect, Responsibility and Reliability are embedded in our whole school approach to managing student behaviour.

Respect, Responsibility and Reliability

APPLICATION PROCESS

Our Summit Excellence programs provides Merrimac State High School the opportunity to select students from both within and outside our boundary to participate in our high-performance Summit Excellence Programs. Places are limited, therefore only students with passion, commitment and high levels of performance are selected.

Students may choose from the following options: [Academic Summit](#), [Dance Summit](#), [Sport Summit](#), [STEAM](#), [Music Summit](#), [Triple Threat](#) and [Culinary Summit](#).



Entry into our programs is by a Summit Excellence Application Form. All students will need to provide a portfolio that includes:

- ✓ Completed school Enrolment Application which includes two years of past reports and NAPLAN result
- ✓ Completed Summit Excellence Application Form
- ✓ Birth Certificate

Applications can be submitted to the Administration Office during business hours. No applications will be assessed without all portfolio documentation. Upon completion of the selection process, staff and specialist teachers will decide on the suitability of each applicant. Once all applications have been processed, applicants will be notified by email of their result.

FEES

Upon acceptance in a program, an annual fee is payable, in addition to the student resource scheme every year that the student is part of the program. The fee is \$150 per program. Program fees must be paid prior to the commencement of the school year. If the fees are not paid by the due date, it will be concluded that the student no longer wishes to participate in the program.

Review Process

Students participating in the Summit Excellence Program will be reassessed at the conclusion of each reporting cycle until the end of Year 9 by the Summit Management Board. This review process is to ensure students are meeting the expectations of the program, and to provide additional support for students in order to help them achieve success. Should the student not maintain the standards of the program, they may be at risk of leaving the program and their entrance fees forfeited.



ACADEMIC SUMMIT

About Academic Summit (English, Math, Science, Humanities)

Academic Summit students are the storytellers of our future. The innovative academic curriculum embeds the 21st Century skills to support the students in becoming astute observers of the world, deep thinkers, excellent communicators and collaborators. The curriculum seeks to maximise student learning by fostering a higher order and critical thinking approach to deep learning and accelerate their understanding of the world around them; including social, political and environmental issues. Based in the four key areas of learning (English, Humanities, Science and Maths) learning experiences for Summit Academics promote leadership, self-confidence and problem solving while also developing a student's ability to discerningly interpret and analyse texts and data, solve complex problems and hypothesise and conduct experiments of science in laboratories. Students will be nurtured by our expert teachers as well as supported and encouraged to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities which endeavour to test their skills against their peers in new and different settings. The program provides academically talented students every opportunity to push beyond their perceived boundaries and reach their summit.

Key Aims

- Provide a motivating and supportive environment where students are inspired to learn and grow
- Provide accelerated learning experiences and opportunities for extended, in-depth study of texts, complex problems and scientific thinking
- Develop attitudes and values which will enable students to achieve their aspirations
- Create and mould 21st Century thinkers to be passionate problem solvers
- Build rigour and tenacity in a spirit of healthy teamwork and competition amongst likeminded peers.

The Academic Summit program aims to develop the student into a lifelong learner who is:

- Academic with a proven ability to show expertise across all of the four subject realms
- an individual thinker
- a problem solver
- an investigator
- a discerning communicator
- curious and inquiring
- self-reflective
- an effective collaborator
- not afraid of challenge



Programming

Year 7 programming is based on a broad curriculum framework which focuses on the academic learning areas of English, Math, Science and Humanities. Integral to the Academic Summit curriculum is the inclusion of additional specialised subjects and activities which will develop student intellectual and creative abilities.

Critical thinking is one such subject and involves determining the meaning and significance of what is observed or expressed and determining whether there is adequate justification to accept conclusions as true.

Academic Summit students can expect to study an in-depth (at times accelerated) curriculum where they:

- Actively develop skills in entrepreneurship and problem solving
- Understand sustainability practices and test theories
- Develop knowledge and understandings of global citizenship
- Understand the world around us
- Students cover the Australian curriculum for Year 7 and then enjoy extension content aimed

to develop their content knowledge, power of analysis, problem-solving skills and application in real world contexts.

- Student receive a reporting grade mapped to the Australian curriculum and an extension grade
- Summit students have access to numerous national and international competitions in mathematics, science and computational thinking to further develop these skills. With literary and global opportunities afforded to those wanting to study text rich culture or partake in entrepreneurship
- Our highly skilled teachers differentiate the curriculum to provide high levels of challenge to all students whilst nurturing creativity and critical thinking skills. Summit mathematics and science provides the building blocks for STEM careers. Summit alumni have utilised these skills in a wide variety of post school endeavours such as cyber security, architecture, computer science, data scientist, medicine and actuary science

LEARNING

Learning Activities

Learning activities over the three-year course are based on the Australian Curriculum P-10 recommendations and the provision of external competitions. Participants are provided with an enriching curriculum which is differentiated by pace, level and degree of abstraction. The use of scholastic testing will assist in determining the appropriate entry level for students to commence their study in the specific subjects.

Activities which deal with language and mathematical processes will develop each student's ability to analyse and synthesise information. Those which promote creativity, imagination and intuition will further develop each student's higher order thinking and problem-solving skills.

Learning Opportunities

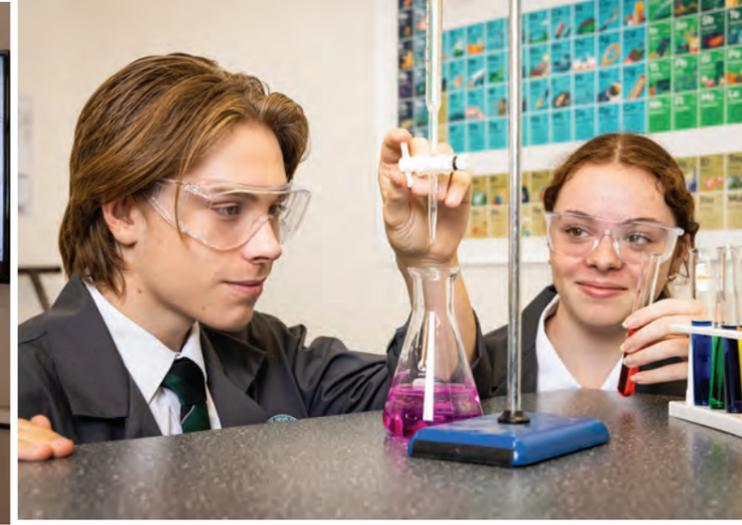
- Bond University Debating and Mooting competitions
- Somerset Storyfest
- Run a stall at the Merrimac Marketta
- Buy Smart competition
- CSIRO crest award
- Extra curricula opportunities with Griffith University
- Gold Coast debate course Bond University
- Somerset Poetry Slam Competition
- Australian History Competition

Teaching Staff

Teaching Staff utilise a wide range of teaching methods incorporating both traditional and online learning techniques. They strive to provide new and challenging educational opportunities centred on inquiry learning to develop personal organisation and critical analysis. Teachers provide a supportive environment which develops student confidence and fosters a love of learning so each individual can achieve their true potential.

FEE

An annual fee of \$150, in addition to the school resource scheme fee, is payable upon acceptance, and for each subsequent year the student remains in the program. Fees must be paid prior to the commencement of the school year.



"I've found that since being in this program I've become more motivated to succeed and more confident in my problem-solving skills."

- Jasmin

DANCE SUMMIT

About Dance Summit

The Selective Entry Dance Summit Program engages students in a dynamic course that focuses on practical activities relating to the dance industry, consequently developing a strong technical foundation across a broad spectrum of dance. Students are challenged and motivated to increase flexibility, technique, fitness conditioning and musicality. The program has an increased emphasis on developing students' choreography skills, industry awareness and professionalism. Across the three-year course, students study a variety of genres of dance including Jazz, Hip Hop, Contemporary, Musical Theatre, Aerial Arts and World dance. In our specially built training studio complete with sprung floor, Summit students are offered workshops with renowned choreographers throughout their course of study.

Key Aims

- Develop kinesthetic intelligence
- Understand the world around us by exploring emotive social issues, subject matter and culture
- Improve analytical thinking, clarity in written and spoken expression, collaboration and creativity
- Create opportunities for self-expression and communication

Teach the values and skills of creativity, problem solving, risk taking and judgement making

- Foster the individual's ability to better interpret interpersonal non-verbal communication
- Develop an understanding and respect for dances of other cultures
- Prepare students for careers in dance and other fields
- Assist individuals to understand their limitations and strengths to better cope with adversity
- Extend individuals beyond current capabilities
- Develop physical fitness, appreciation of the body, concern for sound health practices and effective stress management approaches.

Opportunities

- Participation in a three-year program of extended and specialised training
- Participation in competitions such as Starbound, Gold Coast Eisteddfod and Brisbane Performing Arts Challenge.
- Performing at events such as DANZA, Merrimac Dance Festival and Multicultural Night, Musicals and Dance Ed in the Spotlight
- Participation in workshops on and off campus with industry professionals
- Excursion opportunities to Musical performances and participation in an Aerial Angels workshop
- Extend students ability above and beyond any standard curriculum dance program

Teaching Staff

Dance Summit is taught by trained, specialist Dance Teachers and a Gold Medallist in the National Aerobics.

Joining the Dance Summit Program has improved my technique and helped me to build confidence within myself.

-Kiara



Past Achievements

Brisbane Performing Arts Challenge

- Current 1st place holder for Senior Musical Theatre
- Current 1st place holder for Year 9 Student Choreography
- Current 1st place holder for Year 7, 8, 9 Musical Theatre
- 2nd place for Year 8 Contemporary
- Runner up for Junior Hip Hop
- Runner up for Senior Student Choreography

Starbound

- Current 1st place holder for Junior and Senior Musical Theatre and Year 9 Student Choreography
- 2nd place Year 7 and 8 Jazz
- 3rd place for Year 8 Contemporary, Year 9 and 10 Hip Hop and Senior Student Choreography

Dance X

- State Champions since 2023 for Junior Musical Theatre
- Overall Winner and Most Memorable Performance for Year 9 Student Choreography
- Runner up for Senior Student Choreography, Senior Hip Hop and Junior Jazz.

FEE

An annual fee of \$150, in addition to the school resource scheme fee, is payable upon acceptance, and for each subsequent year the student remains in the program. Fees must be paid prior to the commencement of the school year.

SPORT SUMMIT

About Sport Summit

Is your sporting career on the right pathway for success? Will you reach the top in your sport? No matter what your sport - Rugby League, Soccer, AFL, Netball, Swimming or Triathlon - natural ability will only take you so far. Sport Summit is about developing an attitude and mindset to do the extra that others choose not to. Students will participate in a wide variety of physical performance activities designed to promote improvement of specific physical and mental capacities and attributes, test and improve personal fitness levels and build team work and communication skills.

Key Aims

- Assist students to set clear achievable goals with a whole-life approach to fitness and performance
- Provide a motivating and encouraging environment where students can train and grow through positive change
- Develop attitudes and values which will inspire students to achieve their aspirations
- Treat each student as an individual and enhance their physical, social and mental capacities
- Complement each student's current coaching from their club sport.
- Our Sport Summit challenges students to "Raise the BAR", focussing on the best efforts, accountability and resilience.



My time in Sport Summit has been one of my favourite experiences at school so far. I've really improved not only in my chosen sport, but others that I've never played before.

-Lashae

I would definitely recommend this program to students wanting to work hard, learn new skills and improve in their chosen sport.

-Maia



Merrimac's Sport Summit program will give students a great head start into the exciting world of sport. I am lucky and privileged to have had the opportunity to represent my country as an elite athlete and now as coach, at an Olympic Games level, but never had access to such an exciting program in my schooling years. With access to this type of opportunity, the sky is the limit for all those who choose take part in it.

-Craig Walton, Olympic Triathlete

Learning Activities

Activities over the three-year course focus on a 'Long-Term Athlete Development' (LTAD) program and will cover a wide range of topics to provide students with a total sports education. Some topics such as personalised fitness training, mental health and wellbeing of an athlete, attitude and goal setting will be central themes each year, while other topics will be incorporated into the program at appropriate times.

Where appropriate, collaboration will occur with experts from community sporting organisations to provide the most up-to-date knowledge and learning experiences for students. Activities and areas of study include:

- Strength and Conditioning (S&C) sessions (weekly)
- Team building activities
- Fitness training
- Sport Psychology and performance mindset
- Sports nutrition/hydration
- Anatomy and body systems
- Injury management and recovery strategies
- Ethics and Integrity in sport
- Skills development and leadership
- Biomechanics and performance strategies
- Training principles for performance
- Culturally significant games and sports
- Cross sport skill development
- Excursions and Sport Summit camp

Sport Summit seeks to maximise the opportunities for students to test their skills against their peers in school and club competitions wherever possible. Students will be encouraged to participate in not only their specific sport competitions but also join with fellow students to compete in sports which relate to their personal sport. This will serve to provide additional competition experience and assist in accelerating change in physical and mental skill performance.



Participation

Physical performance activities will utilise facilities within the school and the local community in order to provide exciting challenges for students. Key theoretical concepts relating to the Australian Curriculum will be incorporated into the physical performance activities to promote understanding of the methodology and best practice to optimise performance.

Programming of subjects and time allocation for students will provide three to four hours per week for students to accelerate their personal performance.

Teaching Staff

Expert staff provide students with up-to-date health, fitness and performance methods. Our teachers are passionate and strive to provide new and challenging opportunities to build confidence and an attitude in students which will have them not only questioning how far they can push the limits of what they currently do, but also how fast they can accelerate the rate of change in their sport; to achieve peak performance.

Future Success

Future success is individually determined and for talented athletes, no matter what their sport, this program will give students every opportunity to push through current boundaries and reach the summit of their sport.

FEE

An annual fee of \$150, in addition to the school resource scheme fee, is payable upon acceptance, and for each subsequent year the student remains in the program. Fees must be paid prior to the commencement of the school year.



STEAM SUMMIT

About the STEAM Academy

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) education and skills development play an important role in our educational vision for the future. Fostering learning experiences in these areas, ensures that today's students can generate and test new ideas and contribute to the scientific developments and innovations of tomorrow. Increasing society's capacity in this area will also contribute to job creation and provide solutions to social concerns such as medical, environmental and engineering breakthroughs. Authentic learning is an important foundation of the STEAM Academy and is enhanced by our links with industry and tertiary partners; these real-life contexts will assist students with career choices.

Key Aims

- Work collaboratively to evaluate solutions in relation to a given problem
- Draw conclusions and make recommendations based on investigations
- Organise and present information in modes relevant to the situation –mathematical, written, graphical, oral, multi-modal or by modelling
- Demonstrate literacy through appropriate use of technical vocabulary, symbolic, graphical and research reporting techniques
- Understand the value of cooperation, consultation, perseverance and responsibility in problem solving and learning techniques.

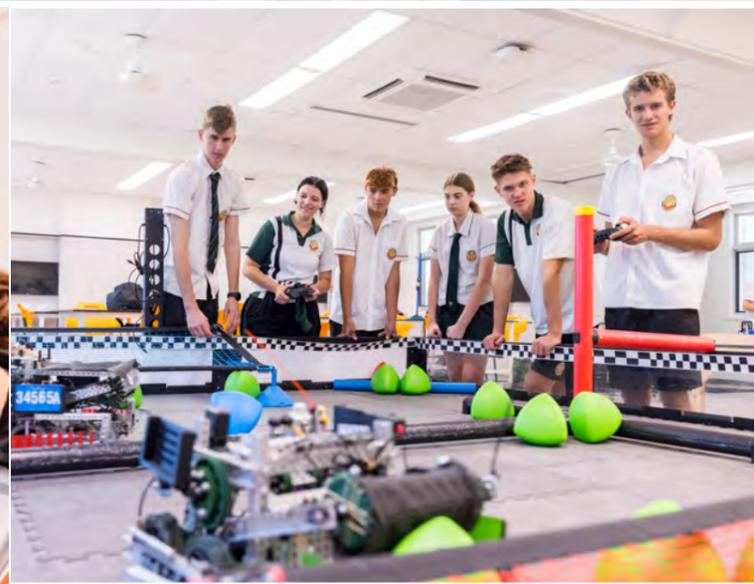
Learning Activities

The STEAM Academy is collaborative, challenging, innovative, and student-focused. The STEAM concept provides students with opportunities to build on their knowledge and understanding by allowing them to design, develop and evaluate their own solutions in a project-based learning environment. This type of learning promotes higher order thinking and promotes the skills of design technologies and digital technologies with the principles of Information Technology, Mathematics and Science for problem solving. Robotics and ICT resources are also integrated into this academic and technology-focused teaching and learning program.

Our STEAM Academy students compete in Engineering, Robotics, Cyber Security and Science Challenges, and receive learning and co-curricular opportunities which develop their creativity, higher order thinking and entrepreneurship.

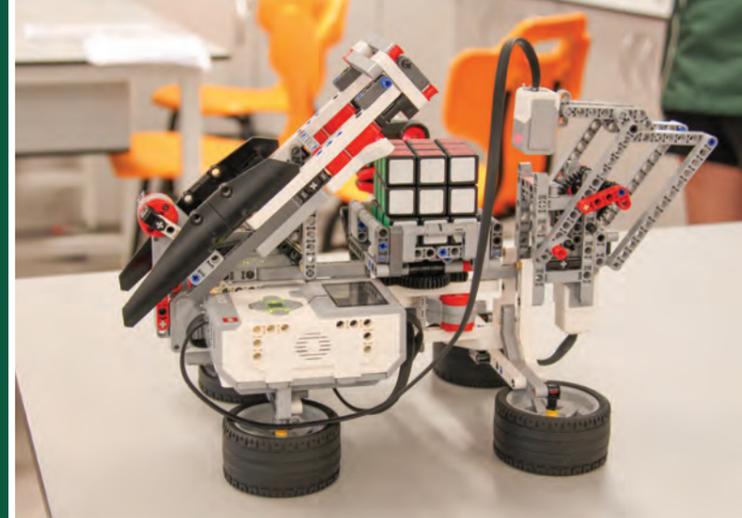
The STEAM Academy shapes students into mature, resilient, young adults, prepared for the future - no matter what may be thrown their way.

-Siaan



The STEAM Academy approach is such that students rise to the challenge to demonstrate high adaptability and creativity when dealing with multiple problems at once.

- Maya



"STEAM represents a paradigm shift from traditional education philosophy, based on standardised test scores, to a modern ideal which focuses on valuing the learning process as much as the results. In essence, we dare our students to be wrong, to try multiple ideas, listen to alternate opinions and create a knowledge base that is applicable to real life as opposed to simply an exam."

- Deron Cameron, Director of HR Principal/Teacher STEAM The Leader in Me PBL



The Spark

Our specialised STEAM building, 'The Spark' offers students unique learning experiences by providing industry standard manufacturing tools. 3D printers, soldering stations, robotics kits and a laser cutter are just some of the technologies available for use in The Spark, transforming learning from a traditional theoretical approach, to an innovative interactive experience.

Past Achievements

Australian Computer Society

- First Place Dream IT Job Challenge
- First Place Team Project Challenge
- Australian Cybersecurity Challenge

CyberTaipan

- 3 Teams placed in top 10 of Australia
- Fifth Place in Australia

Mayor's Technology and Innovation Award

- First Place with "Hydro-Vision"
- Third Place with "Simulcon"

Bebras Challenge

- High Distinction putting them in top 1%

Griffith University Science and Engineering Challenge

- First Place

First Lego League Robotics

- Northern NSW and Gold Coast Champions Award
- Northern NSW and Gold Coast Engineering Award
- Northern NSW and Gold Coast Innovative Solution Award
- Second Place at National Championship

VEX VS

- Four teams invited to Nationals
- Second Place in Qualifiers at Nationals
- QLD Champions

VEX IQ

- Four teams invited to Nationals
- Northern NSW and Gold Coast Design Award
- Northern NSW and Gold Coast Teamwork Champions
- Northern NSW and Gold Coast Excellence Award

MAYORS TECHNOLOGY AWARDS

- Finalists

Teaching Staff

Incorporating both traditional and online learning techniques, experienced and talented academy staff provide new and challenging educational opportunities centred on inquiry learning to develop students' personal organisation and critical analysis. The STEAM Academy staff are experienced in engineering, computer programming and electronics. We have an existing partnership with Griffith University to link students with further STEAM study, as well as links to the Gold Coast Tech Space group, which is a local Makerspace group. Teachers provide a supportive environment which develops student confidence, helps them to foster a love of learning and enables them to reach their fullest potential.

Future Success

The STEAM Academy seeks to maximise the deep learning opportunities for students and accelerate their learning. Students are supported and encouraged to participate in a variety of extra-curricular challenges to test their skills against their peers and gain experience in applying their knowledge and skills in new and different settings. Learning experiences continually promote leadership, self-confidence and problem-solving skills.

The STEAM Academy teachers constantly strive for optimum performance and therefore, have high expectations of students gaining a place in this program. Student behaviour and progress will be closely monitored with regular academic reviews by the Summit Management Board at the end of each reporting cycle.

FEE

An annual fee of \$150, in addition to the school resource scheme fee, is payable upon acceptance, and for each subsequent year the student remains in the program. Fees must be paid prior to the commencement of the school year.

MUSIC SUMMIT

Music Summit is an inspiring program for young people with a demonstrated passion and commitment to Music. Leveraging the talent of each individual, Summit music students are extended in their skills and repertoire, exploring units of study including; **20th Century music**, **Music in Film & Video Games** and **Popular Music production** whilst also forming a critical part of the ensembles of Instrumental Music. Extension programs and extracurricular activities within this realm also facilitate students the opportunity to stretch their talents and link with recognised Music professionals and artists. Summit Music balances talent and passion within an environment of academia and high expectations.

Our strong Instrumental Music programme with Orchestra and Band benefits from a once a year learning experience from our Music Patron, renowned Australian conductor, composer and orchestrator, George Ellis.



Key Aims

Our music curriculum is designed to deepen student knowledge and understanding of music in order to extend their capacity and application in the dimensions of performance, composition and analysis of music. The course will prepare students for a music pathway to senior schooling and beyond.

Learning Activities

Music Excellence students are expected to participate in at least one of the school's many instrumental or choral ensembles in preparation for Music Extension Studies senior years.

Teaching Staff

Dedicated and passionate teaching staff who are trained performers and composers with wide community music connections to bring in real musician experiences/co-operations.

FEES

Upon acceptance in a program an annual fee is payable, in addition to the student resource scheme every year that the student is part of the program. The fee is \$150 per program. Program fees must be paid prior to the commencement of the school year. If the fees are not paid by the due date, it will be concluded that the student no longer wishes to participate in the program.



TRIPLE THREAT SUMMIT

The Selective Entry Triple Threat Summit Program engages students in a dynamic course that focuses on practical activities relating to the musical theatre industry, consequently allowing students to develop a strong technical foundation across a broad spectrum of performance genres and styles.

This production course prepares students for industry opportunities as they are **trained in the three discipline areas of dance, drama and singing**. Students are challenged and motivated to extend their skills in these three performance areas as they learn to work as an ensemble creating and directing various musical theatre performances throughout the course.

They will learn the technical craft of backstage and production skills also with an emphasis on developing their industry awareness and professionalism. Across the three-year course, students study a variety of genres of musical theatre ranging from modern adaptations to traditional styles. The Triple Threat Summit students will be offered workshops with renowned choreographers and directors throughout their course of study and will have the opportunity to travel and see live productions in action.

Key Aims

- Improve analytical thinking, clarity in written and spoken expression, collaboration and creativity
- Create opportunities for self-expression and communication
- Teach the values and skills of creativity, problem solving, risk taking and judgement making
- Foster the individual's ability to better interpret interpersonal non-verbal communication
- Develop an understanding and respect for each other
- Prepare students for careers in the industry of musical theatre and production
- Assist individuals to understand their limitations and strengths to better cope with adversity
- Extend individuals beyond current capabilities
- Engage with industry professionals learning about all aspects of productions (direct pathway to senior study)

Opportunities

- Participation in a program of extended and specialised training
- Participation in competitions such as Starbound, Gold Coast Eisteddfod and Brisbane Performing Arts Challenge.
- Performing at events such as Merrimac Triple Threat showcase, Merrimac Dance Festival, full school Musicals
- Participation in workshops on and off campus with industry professionals
- Excursion opportunities to Musical performances and participation in vocal workshops

An annual fee of \$150, in addition to the school resource scheme fee, is payable upon acceptance, and for each subsequent year the student remains in the program. Fees must be paid prior to the commencement of the school year.



CULINARY SUMMIT

About Culinary Summit

The Culinary Excellence Program is a hands-on, immersive learning pathway for high school students with a passion for food, creativity, and teamwork. Students train like emerging chefs, developing essential skills in knife work, cooking methods, pâtisserie, food styling, and professional service. Learning is enriched through authentic industry experiences, including excursions, incursions, and collaboration with professional chefs and hospitality partners.

Across Years 7–9, students' progress through carefully designed units that build technical skill, creativity, and industry awareness. From tropical produce and global flavours to baking, food photography, and large-scale service events, students connect classroom learning with real-world experiences and future pathways in food and hospitality.

Key Aims

The Culinary Summit program aims to develop the student into future-oriented food and hospitality learners, with a focus on with a focus on developing the key skills of:

- Knife Skills & Precision cutting
- Food Styling & Presentation
- Baking & Patisserie Craft
- Flavour Profiles & Textures
- Event Planning & Service Etiquette
- Cooking Methods & Heat Control
- Mise En Place & Workflow
- Teamwork & Organisation

Learning Opportunities

- Tropical Fruit World
- Mystery Box Challenges
- Food Styling excursions and incursions
- The Star Casino Hospitality Experience
- TAFE Baking & Patisserie and Desserts Guided Tours
- Bread Social Baking Excursion
- Italian Pasta Chef Incursion
- Sam Parish Food Photography Incursion
- Gold Coast Coffee Roasters Tour & Tasting

Teaching Staff

- Delivered by highly qualified teachers with industry and education credentials, our Culinary Excellence program blends hands-on kitchen practice with rich online learning. Students benefit from expert instruction, contemporary techniques, and guest presenters from the food industry, ensuring authentic, engaging pathways into further study and careers for students.

Fee

- An annual fee of \$150, in addition to the school resource scheme fee, is payable upon acceptance, and for each subsequent year the student remains in the program. Fees must be paid prior to the commencement of the school year.

