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RAPAD CWQ

CUC RAPAD CWQ

# NEWSLETTER

BARCALDINE \* BEDOURIE \* BIRDSVILLE \* BLACKALL \* BOULIA \* LONGREACH \* JUNDALAH \* WINTON



**Welcome to the very first edition of the CUC RAPAD CWQ Newsletter!**

We are CUC RAPAD CWQ, a proud part of the Country Universities Centre network, supporting students throughout Central West Queensland.

Our hubs stretch across nearly 25% of Queensland and you'll find us in Barcaldine, Bedourie, Birdsville, Blackall, Boulia, Longreach, Jundah, and Winton.

We kicked things off on 14 December 2024, when Federal Treasurer The Hon Jim Chalmers and Senator Anthony Chisholm joined us in Longreach to officially launch the CUC RAPAD CWQ network and open our first hub. It was action stations from there, opening and enrolling our first Longreach student on 17 February and our Jundah, Birdsville, and Bedourie hubs soon after.

Of course, no great adventure is without its challenges—cue tech hiccups and an unprecedented weather event. Our Winton and Boulia hubs quickly adapted, opening to stranded students, those sitting exams, and anyone needing a connected space to work. Just five weeks after opening, Jundah was repurposed as a base for the Disaster Recovery team.

By May, the rollout was complete—Boulia led the charge, followed by Winton, Barcaldine, and Blackall. Each hub opened with students already enrolled which shows just how needed these spaces are.

Alongside the hub openings, we've been busy engaging with our communities—hosting a Study and Slice night, attending local shows in Blackall and Longreach, welcoming Heart of Australia medical students, and receiving a \$2,000 QCoal grant for National Science Week.

With all eight hubs now up and running, we're excited to settle into our roles and support students across the Central West on their study journeys. This is only the beginning!

**EDITION #1**  
**Winter 2025**



**STAY.STUDY.SUCCEED.**



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# MEET THE TEAM

**LIZA CAMERON**  
Centre Manager



As a western Queensland girl, returning to Longreach in 2019 marked a shift from my long-standing career in education. With a passion for guiding students toward meaningful careers, I've always believed where you live should never limit what you can achieve. After five years away from the sector, stepping into the Centre Manager role and leading the launch of CUC RAPAD CWQ has been incredibly rewarding—it's a privilege to support students to reach their goals in their own communities.

**JOY McClymont**  
LSA (based in Longreach)



Joy is a primary and secondary school teacher who thrives on motivating students to embrace learning and tackle new challenges. Alongside teaching, she works as a fitness trainer, encouraging people to prioritise self-care and maintain a healthy mind and body. In her role as Learning Support Advisor at CUC Longreach, Joy enjoys welcoming students with a warm smile and friendly chat, helping them feel supported and confident as they navigate their study.

**SOPHIE ELLIOTT**  
LSA (based in Winton)



Sophie's passion for this role stems from her experience growing up on a cattle station near Winton. She completed primary school through Longreach School of Distance Education and attended boarding school for five years. After Year 12, she was often told, "you'll have to go away to uni," though all she wanted was to return home. With few options then to study externally or combine work with tertiary education locally, she sees the CUC as a vital resource—offering real post-school opportunities close to home.

**KRYSTAL NEILSON**  
LSA (based in Boulia)



Krystal grew up in Winton and received the Pearl Duncan Scholarship to study a Bachelor of Primary Education in Townsville and Cairns. She spent twelve years in Boulia as a teacher and principal, later completing a Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Education. Now managing her family's cattle property and raising her children, Krystal is passionate about supporting local students and draws on her own diverse study experiences to help others succeed.

**HELEN ALLEN**  
LSA (based in Barcaldine / Blackall)



Helen is the Learning Support Advisor for Blackall and Barcaldine, bringing a lifetime of experience in education through roles as a governess, Teacher Assistant, special needs Teacher Aide, and Librarian. A long-time resident of the Augathella-Blackall-Tambo region, she now lives just outside Blackall. Helen is passionate about helping people study in place and is proud to support local students as they pursue their goals without having to leave their community.



Not only have we been busy opening hubs, we've also had the pleasure of hosting some special guests. Queensland Governor Dr Jeannette Young visited our Boulia hub, while the Queensland Minister for Education made a stop at our Winton hub—highlighting the growing recognition and support for our work across the region.



“

Thankfully, the introduction of a CUC to Winton has and will continue to allow me a safe place in which I can focus only on studies without the general day-to-day distractions.

CAITLIN, WINTON

”





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“As a mum of 3 small kids, trying to find a quiet space at home to study is impossible, so the CUC has been amazing! I have been able to complete multiple exams and video presentations with zero interruptions, which I would have struggled to do without this space. CHEYENNE, BOULIA

”

# SNAPSHOT TO DATE

**84**  
students



**35**  
different  
institutions



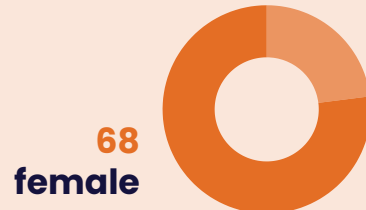
**39**  
are the first in  
their family  
to study

**46%**  
study  
full  
time



**54%**  
study  
part  
time

**27** different  
areas of  
study



**68**  
female

**16**  
male

## TOP Areas of Study

**42%**

Health

**16%**

Education

**10%**

Business  
and  
Management

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Alyssa Williamson, CUC Winton

Meet Alyssa Williamson, a passionate student currently completing her Certificate IV in Education Support through TAFE Queensland.

Alyssa chose this course because of her desire to work with children in a school setting—whether primary or secondary. “What I enjoy the most is that it’s not just theory, but also practice,” she shares. “It’s fully online and gives me the freedom to take as much time as I like.”

Having the Country Universities Centre in Winton has been a game changer for Alyssa. “CUC in Winton is really important, to me and others who want to pursue further education but don’t want to relocate,” she says. “I don’t have to travel for hours to access a dedicated study space. Plus, it’s really accessible and easy to use 24/7.”



**STAY.STUDY.SUCCEED.**



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## THANKS TO UQ ALUMNI BOOK FAIR

In a wonderful show of generosity, the UQ Alumni Book Fair donated over 20 cartons of books to flood-affected communities across the CUC RAPAD CWQ region. With support from Followmont Transport, the books were delivered to Longreach, where our seven Mayors collected boxes for distribution to local schools, libraries, and community hubs.



Our Longreach hub received one of the boxes, inspiring a new 'book swap' shelf in our breakout room. Two students quickly snapped up books—proof that a simple shelf can share knowledge, spark curiosity, and offer a welcome five-minute escape into the world of stories. This donation will have a lasting impact on young readers, students, and lifelong learners across the region.

➡ Diamantina Mayor Francis Murray, handing a box of books over to Joel Blyth.

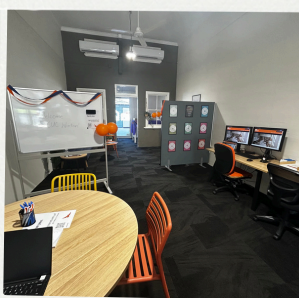
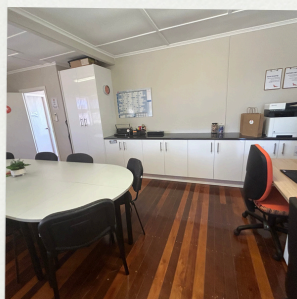


When I first walked in, I thought—wow, look at all those screens! A bookkeeper's dream! Studying at the hub keeps me motivated and helps me separate home from study. I love that I can bring lunch, make a coffee, and relax in the different spaces around the centre during my breaks. – SUSAN, Cert IV in Bookkeeping



*"...one of our values is that we love to repurpose books, never sending any to landfill, if possible."*

GARY LAMBRIDES  
UQ Book Fair  
Coordinator



**Liza Cameron**

**Centre Manager**



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