

CHAPTER THREE

Coffs Harbour Education Campus – a joint development

Chapter Three is focused on CHEC as a joint development or partnership between three sectors, DSE, TAFE and SCU. A brief demographic study on Coffs Harbour supports the notion that, as a rural regional centre with a rapidly growing population and high unemployment rates, a joint educational precinct would strengthen relationships between high schools, TAFE and universities. This chapter discusses how CHEC was conceived as a joint development, supported by a planning study and another project evaluation carried out by TAFE. Finally, an informal planning and operation workshop and CHEC's strategic plan (detailed in *Appendix A*) have contributed to the overall concept of CHEC as a physical presence.

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS – COFFS HARBOUR

Coffs Harbour, as part of the North Coast region, is experiencing sustained high population growth rates and is one of the major centres on the North Coast, along with Tweed Heads and Port Macquarie. The region's overall population is anticipated to grow by more than 60% over the next 25 years. It is predicted by the Department of Planning (1994) that the population in Coffs Harbour in 1991 of 50,900 is to reach approximately 80,000 by the year 2011.

Age Distribution

Coffs Harbour has an increasing ageing population, as is reflected in national trends. A comparison with the age distribution for NSW and Australia, shows that Coffs Harbour has a higher proportion of people aged 0-14 and that those in the 35-39 year age range are higher in Coffs Harbour than in NSW or the country as a whole. The proportion of people aged 60-74 is also higher than the State or national average. and Coffs Harbour has a lower proportion of people aged 15-29 than either the State or national average (ABS census, quoted in Coffs Harbour City Council Population Profile, 1994).

Employment and Unemployment

Employment and unemployment are measured by the ABS Monthly Population Survey. The unemployment rate (ie unemployed people as a proportion of the labour force which is employed plus unemployed) and the participation rate (ie the labour force as a proportion of all people aged 15 and over) for the NSW North Coast includes Coffs Harbour (North Coast) as part of the statistical divisions of Richmond-Tweed and Mid-North Coast. In Table 2, ABS census figures show that the number of employed people on the NSW North Coast has increased between 1991 and 1995, from 153,000 to 166,000.

The unemployment rate has varied but, overall, unemployment has been slightly higher than the state average, and participation in the workforce has been slightly lower (Regional Coordination Pilot Program [RCPP], 1996). The local perception is that Coffs Harbour is labelled a welfare town, with chronic unemployment problems affecting both youth and the mature age group. A large proportion of the community receives some type of Social Security payment.

Table 2. Labour Force Status, NSW North Coast and NSW, 1991–1995 (in thousands)

	Employed	Unemployed	Labour Force	Not in Labour Force	Unemployment rate	Participation Rate
NSW North Coast	(,000)	(,000)	(,000)	(,000)	%	%
August 1994	153.6	23.8	177.4	154.1	13.4	53.5
November 1994	165.5	19.3	184.8	157.8	10.5	53.9
May 1995	162.2	21.3	183.6	154.7	11.6	54.3
August 1995	166.3	13.5	179.8	155.9	7.5	53.6
New South Wales						
August 1994	2,634.4	255.1	2,889.5	1,861.6	8.8	60.8
November 1994	2,684.9	242.0	2,926.9	1,836.4	8.3	61.4
May 1995	2,746.5	226.6	2,973.1	1,819.3	7.6	62.0
August 1995	2,751.5	226.6	2,978.1	1,828.2	7.6	62.0

Note : NSW North Coast equals Richmond-Tweed & Mid-North Coast
 Labour force: Employed plus Unemployed
 Unemployment rate: Unemployed as a percentage of the Labour force
 Participation rate: Labour force as a percentage of the population aged 15+

Source: RCPP 1996, ABS Publication Catalogue No. 6201.1, The Labour Force, NSW & ACT

In Coffs Harbour, the 1991 census showed that the wholesale and retail trade sectors employed the highest number of people in the workforce (23.3%). Community services followed with (15.5%); recreation, personal and other services (12%) and finally, finance, business and professional services (10.5%). The recreation, personal and other services (42%) demonstrated the highest growth area and reflects the tourist-related employment area in Coffs Harbour. Community services also showed a growth of 30.3% during the 1981–1991 period (ABS census, 1991). Unemployment remains a constant problem, economically and socially, in Coffs Harbour and on the North Coast in general.

Education – Table 3 indicates the changes in educational qualifications for the region. There has been an increase in all areas of qualifications, with an emphasis on skilled vocational qualifications (12.4% in 1991) more than higher diploma or degree qualifications (5.1% in 1991). There appears to be a significantly high number of residents with no qualifications (61.8% in 1991). Since 1991, the population figures have increased and actual statistics for the most recent census are not available for comparison in 1997. However, figures for TAFE enrolments in 1994 are recorded as 4,193 for Coffs Harbour, which does not include Macksville, some 30 kms south of Coffs Harbour (North Coast Institute of TAFE).

There is, therefore, an improvement in the level of qualifications for people living in Coffs Harbour and the North Coast region as a whole. However, Coffs Harbour is significantly below the NSW figures for percentage of population with degree or higher degree qualifications (for example, 1991: Coffs Harbour 4.7%; NSW, 7.9% ABS Census). There is a higher proportion of people with vocational skills, but there still remains a segment of the population in Coffs Harbour with no qualifications, which is proportionately higher than for NSW as a whole.

It is therefore not surprising that, given the rapid growth and unemployment factors in Coffs Harbour, it was considered an appropriate move to establish an education Campus to meet both local and regional needs which would also address government directives for shared facilities and intrasectoral and intersectoral education links.

Students' perceptions of their experiences at CHEC reinforce the strategic location of this education complex, as reference is made by students interviewed to the potential benefits for them as local residents. It is, therefore, seen as an integral part of the framework that underpins the study of this unique joint development.

**Table 3. Highest Qualification – Coffs Harbour Residents (15+ or more)
1986 – 1991**

	1986		1991	
Highest Qualification Received	No.	%	No.	%
Degree or higher diploma	1001	3.1	1824	4.7
Diploma	1157	3.6	1991	5.1
Skilled vocational	3768	11.6	4860	12.4
Other	4247	13.0	2016	5.1
Not qualified	19,381	59.7	24,176	61.8
Not stated	2,926	9.0	4,244	10.9

Source : ABS Census figures in Coffs Harbour City Council Population Profile, 1994, p. 13

**Photograph 1. AERIAL VIEW OF COFFS HARBOUR
EDUCATION CAMPUS 1995**



COFFS HARBOUR EDUCATION CAMPUS

The Mission Statement was formulated to reflect the ideals and philosophy of the joint development. The Campus opened in February, 1995 and the history of its inception is briefly discussed.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Campus is to maximise the educational and training outcomes for students by promoting the most effective relationships between the partners that will enable the campus to focus on articulation, credit transfer, joint development of curriculum and flexibility in teaching and learning.

The partners on the campus will focus on excellence in teaching, research and innovation, the development of programmes which meet the needs of the community, the State and the nation, and of graduates who possess skills that meet industry and professional requirements and individual expectations.

On June 4, 1990 Dr Terry Metherell, the then Minister for Education, issued a press release and gave approval for TAFE NSW and DSE to enter into joint negotiations, along with the then proposed partner, University of New England (UNE). His press release emphasised the political impetus behind the concept of joint developments: 'I am very keen to see the Department of School Education and TAFE develop a specialist technology high school which would take advantage of technology available through TAFE' (Metherell, 1990).

What has emerged in 1995 is a joint development at Coffs Harbour, the Coffs Harbour Education Campus (CHEC), which is a partnership between the Department of School Education, (DSE) in the form of a Senior College – Years 11–12, North Coast Institute of TAFE Campus (TAFE) and Southern Cross University (SCU). There is still another Campus of TAFE in Coffs Harbour, located at Glenreagh Street, on the original TAFE site. The 141 hectare rural site of CHEC is three kilometres south of Coffs Harbour and three kilometres north of the town of Sawtell. It is located on Hogbin Drive which links the two towns. It is close to the CBD of Coffs Harbour, amongst residential estates and situated approximately 500m from the regional airport. Photograph 1 is the view of Stage One into which all sectors moved in January, 1995 when the Campus opened.

Planning Stage

Whilst it is not the purpose of this study to closely examine the planning issues of the Campus, it is necessary to briefly outline this aspect as it impacts on how the Campus is currently operating in regard to the level of integration. The end result from this planning phase is that all facilities are for joint use and no facilities are owned by any sector. Figure 1 provides the reader with an idea of what proportion of land was acquired by each of the partners at Hogbin drive.

Negotiations were held on August 5, 1990 whereby the Coffs Harbour Ex-Services Club voted to transfer 141 ha site to the City Council for the purpose of the education precinct. The Council then sold the 5.7 ha to DSE, 29.9 ha to TAFE NSW and donated the remaining portion of 105 ha to UNE. This was on the condition that Council would take the land back if the University did not develop a campus and spend at least \$15 m in the period 1991–2001. Fletcher makes note that little consideration was given to the fact that ‘all three be located on the one site vested in UNE. TAFE and DSE ensured they had ownership of individual sites’. Apparently, it was not until 1993 that the Steering Committee met with Council concerning the title of the land and agreed that the three titles be amalgamated under the Crown by legislation. It is not clear whether this has actually happened (Fletcher 1994, 18). This historical background is briefly referred to because it may explain the notions of ‘ownership’ that appear to arise during the current operation of the Campus.

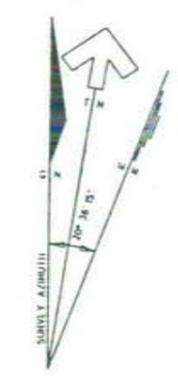
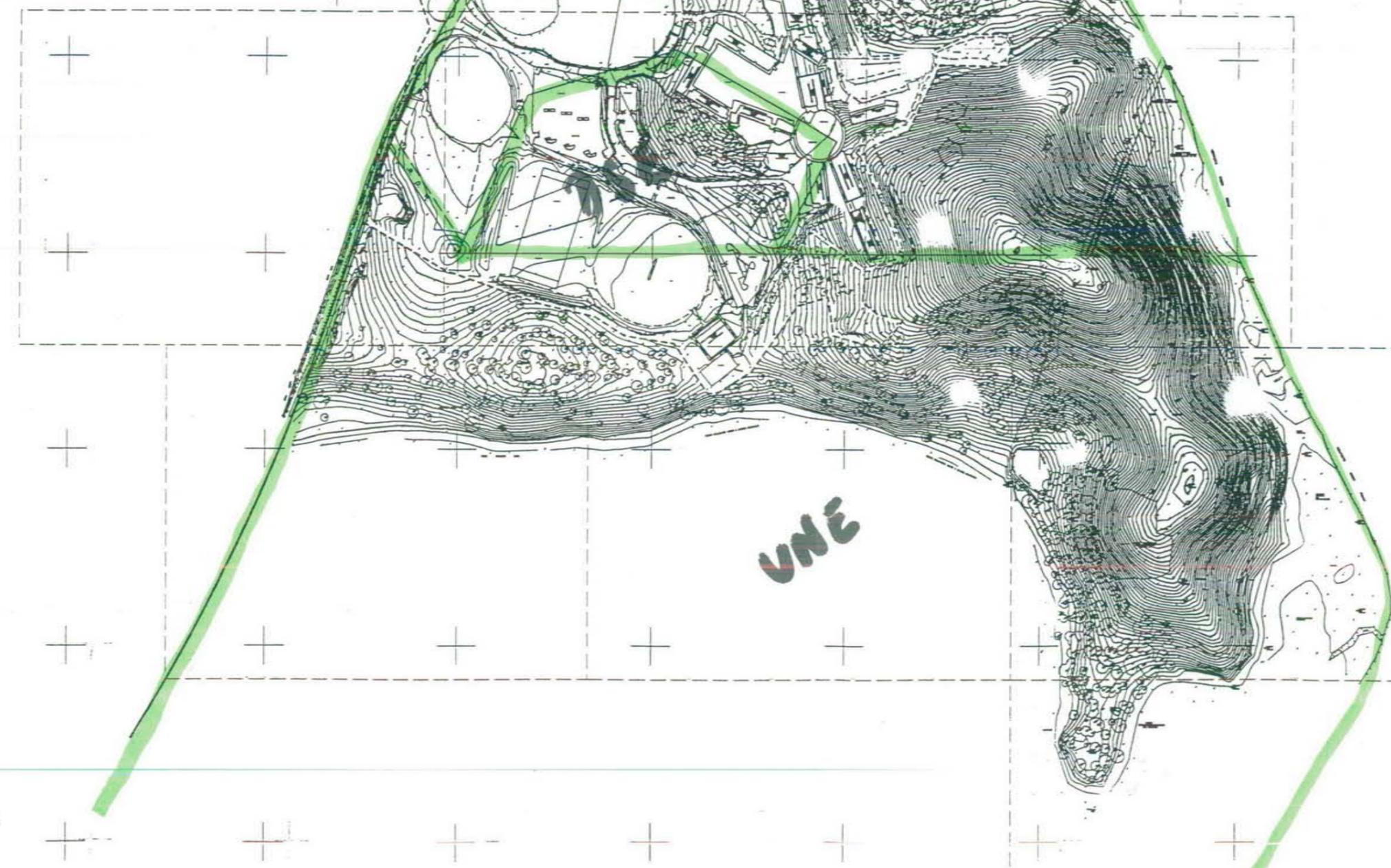
In September 1990, the three sectors sent representatives consisting of Ministry staff, Deputy Vice Chancellor (UNE), Public Works, central and regional staff from TAFE and DSE to be the committee to commence initial planning for the ‘educational precinct’; terminology used prior to the inception of CHEC. In May, 1991, the committee formed a steering committee which was supported by a working party. The steering committee had various roles which included site investigations, site development and acquisition, options for joint use and sharing of resources, site master planning and ‘coordinate, oversee and review planning for site development’ (Fletcher 1994, 20). The working party’s main role was to establish the educational relationships between the partners, relate educational plans to the timing of facilities development and develop proposals for joint use and sharing of the facilities. TAFE and DSE were still represented by

'central office', but the working party was more 'local' than the steering committee. It appeared that all partners were at different stages of planning and at various stages in their capital works program funding.

**Figure 1. Site Plan showing land purchased by
TAFE, SCU and DSE**

SURVEY STATION CO-ORDINATE SCHEDULE

STATION	EASTING	NORTHING	HEIGHT	DESCRIPTION
1	1909 01	5066 78	3 55	SIN IN PATH
2	2348 21	5201 87	12 57	DUMPY
3	2415 61	5080 28	28 30	DUMPY
4	2655 19	5185 98	23 28	DUMPY
5	2645 62	4983 89	21 46	DUMPY
6	2284 97	4913 39	7 89	CONC NAIL
7	2204 86	5070 87	6 63	CONC NAIL
40A	2291 38	5161 03	16 76	CONC NAIL
PM 12214	2228 439	5367 470	12 746	
SSM 12273	1878 629	4971 315	18 845	



SHEET LAYOUT DIAGRAM



NOTE
 DETAIL WITHIN THE AREA BOUNDED BY THE BOLDEN LINE (---) HAS BEEN SURVEYED BY SURVEYOR W. M. B. IN 1988. THE W. M. B. SURVEY DATA EXCEPTS SHEETS 1, 2 & 3. THE NEW SURVEY DATA HAS BEEN COMBINED WITH THE ORIGINAL SURVEY TO PROVIDE A W. M. B. SURVEY FOR THE WHOLE SITE.

Service Details
 01. FROM 1988 TO 1995 TO BE USED AS SHOWN
 02. CHECKED AND CORRECTED BY W. M. B. (1988)
 03. SCHEDULE OF SURVEYING WORKS SHOWN
 04. SCHEDULE OF SURVEYING WORKS SHOWN
 05. SCHEDULE OF SURVEYING WORKS SHOWN
 06. SCHEDULE OF SURVEYING WORKS SHOWN

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CAUTION:
 THIS PLAN HAS BEEN PREPARED AT A SCALE OF 1:2000 FOR THE PURPOSE OF BUILDING LOCATION AND SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE.
 DISTANCES SCALED FROM THIS PLAN MAY NOT BE ACCURATE.
 LOCALITY: BAMBEE
 PARISH: COFFS HARBOUR
 RANGING: SERRILLS
 COUNTY: GALESDON

DATUM: AHD
 ORIGIN OF LEVELS:
 PM 12214 - 47 12 746

ADJUSTED OF SURVEY:
 PM 12214 - SSM 12273 122114.151 - 321 145

SURVEY INSTRUCTION NO. 1234
 PLOTTED FROM:
 DATE OF SURVEY: DECEMBER 1988
 SURVEYED BY: C. CONNOR/ASTON/ W. M. B. (1988)

PREPARED BY:
 TRACED:
 CHECKED:
 SURVEYOR

PRINCIPAL SURVEYOR & MANAGER
 NEW SOUTH WALES PUBLIC WORKS
 DEPT. PERSONNEL DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PUBLIC WORKS

**COFFS HARBOUR
 EDUCATION CAMPUS**

COMPILATION PLAN
 SHEET NUMBER: 1 NUMBER OF SHEETS: 10
 SCALE: 1:2000 PAGE: 10 OF 10



It was at the end of 1991 that planning involved three sectors: UNE, TAFE and a Technology High School. Fletcher notes that:

The lack of integration was evidenced by the fact that each sector were preparing separate accommodation requirements. TAFE NSW had completed an accommodation schedule ...DSE decided to construct a standard 1000 pupil code Technology High School ...UNE anticipated a university campus... (1994, 22)

The issue of integration has been problematic for the Campus since the planning stage. In March 1992, Mr John Fahey, the Minister then responsible for TAFE, announced the development of an integrated facility at Coffs Harbour. The Chief Executive Officers of DSE, TAFE and UNE proposed an independent management structure should be established for the Campus, rather than independent sectors. The structure was to plan, implement and employ staff and operate the Campus. After this announcement, representatives from all sectors and the Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs finalised the steering committee; it also included the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) which was involved in capital funding provisions for the higher education part of the project (Fletcher, 1994).

The committee's role was broad, ranging from advising the Minister on legislative frameworks, development of an Education Plan and brief, to identifying an appropriate name for the educational precinct. By October, 1992 the master plan for an integrated facility was lodged with Council. In October, 1993, Southern Cross University came into operation after deamalgamating as a campus of UNE and was then represented on the committee in place of UNE. After the Memorandum of Understanding for the Coffs Harbour Education Campus was signed by the Chief Executive Officers of each sector on March 29, 1994, the Campus was considered operational from that date as a partnership between three sectors, and a Governing Board took over the role of the committee.

Case study

The case study provided by Fletcher (1994) was a dissertation focusing on urban and regional planning issues. The paper highlights planning issues in joint developments and examines funding aspects, historical background and detailed analysis of building

and design of CHEC. Although educational issues are only briefly discussed in the case study, some useful background information on CHEC is provided.

Fletcher (1994) comments on the policy directives since the 1980s which attempt to provide pathways between Sectors by credit transfer and articulation. Joint developments are the reality of these directives; the formation of educational precincts where more than one sector is located on a site and where a level of integration is achieved primarily through shared infrastructure and resources. Post occupancy is not evaluated, but the paper addresses major issues of the planning phase and provides insight into the complexities of an integrated approach to joint educational developments.

The methodology in the case study involved document analysis, questionnaires and interviews with key players in the planning of CHEC. These were, the Department of School Education (DSE), TAFE staff and Southern Cross University (SCU) Higher Education staff, the Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs, Coffs Harbour Shire Council and Client Services Public Works. The questionnaire contained seventeen open ended questions and responses were compared to develop common themes and conclusions presented in Fletcher's paper. An overview of joint educational developments in NSW was examined, outlining which sectors have combined and how the funding and enterprise agreements were negotiated. Ourimbah Campus (TAFE/University of Newcastle) was the first attempt to integrate TAFE and University facilities, within a joint management structure, on a greenfields site which allowed a higher level of integration.

Policy Evolution

The growing economic rationalist approach toward education since the 1980s by both State and Commonwealth Governments has placed restraints on public funding for education. Joint developments are seen to generate savings and achieve economic benefits. Dawkins (1987) commented that 'higher public returns on the investment in higher education could be achieved by innovative approaches by institutions to the use of their capital resources' and, on a State level, 'TAFE should seek to strengthen its interface and relations with DSE through resource-sharing, increased joint planning of curriculum and resources, expansion of cooperation and development of initiatives in

the JSST (Joint Secondary School/TAFE) program and shared career service guidelines' (NSW Education Portfolio, 1990).

Vocationalism of Education

Changes at Commonwealth level are apparent in Dawkins's comment:

Following the 1987 Federal election I accepted my present portfolio on the understanding that its originally proposed name be arranged so that the word 'employment' was placed first. I did this in order to emphasise that policies in education and training must be subordinate to the national economic imperative of achieving the ultimate employment of our people. (Dawkins, 1988)

The vocationalism of education is evident across both the School and TAFE sector as closer links with technical education and industry are essential elements of reform strategies for schools (Dawkins, 1988). The Finn Report (1991) also aims to expand options for young people by linking different education and training pathways. Policy and practice in relation to integration between schools, TAFE and Universities are being reviewed to maximise credit transfer and articulation between sectors. This concept is accepted by the Australian Education Council and embraced by TAFE, with the aim of creating a 'seamless web' of multiple entry and exit points in education. Universities have expressed concern about maintaining the integrity of individual institutions. The development of such pathways is now reflected in capital works at State and Commonwealth level, with a priority of funding for joint developments (Fletcher, 1994).

Funding issues

The Tertiary Institution Committee in Coffs Harbour encouraged the establishment of higher education facilities but, with little likelihood of funding, a close association with a TAFE college was needed. A new high school was planned in west Coffs Harbour, but Dr Metherell, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, suggested DSE and TAFE work together for a site in Coffs Harbour. By 1989, it was evident that DSE, UNE (University of New England) and TAFE were considering new sites and thus the potential to establish an educational precinct was evident. In 1991 the terms of reference for the working party were to establish the educational relationships between the various

participants in the development, relate educational plans and relationships to the timing of facilities development and develop proposals for joint use and sharing options of the facilities. By 1993 the UNE's involvement had diminished, and Southern Cross University, after its establishment as a separate entity in Lismore following de-amalgamation from UNE, became one of the partners at the Campus.

The campus was to offer a full range of educational qualifications of the three sectors with students viewed as students of the campus rather than as DSE, TAFE or university students. It was thought that students would benefit from additional access to more student amenities and use of facilities. Virginia Chadwick, the new State Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, estimated that more than 2000 students would be enrolled at the campus in 1995 and that the figure would double by the year 2000.

Management

The Executive Director is the operational manager and responsible for ensuring the educational programs fit together. The Memorandum of Understanding states that the Executive Director is responsible for the development, maintenance and overseeing of effective organisation systems and joint project management in areas of administrative support, student services, resources, the delivery of courses of the partner institutions and for the effective and efficient shared use of the joint project facilities. A Director of University studies, a Director of TAFE Studies and a Director of Senior Secondary Studies are appointed by their respective institutions with dual responsibility to their own institution for academic matters and to the Executive Director for administrative matters (Fletcher, 1994).

Industrial issues and enterprise agreements are complicated and some 24 unions are involved in the staffing issues. Student facilities and issues concerning membership and funding of student union fees were contentious and made planning complex. The library system and management of the library also involved lengthy negotiations. However, the economic benefits were acknowledged by interviewees in Fletcher's study, as costs were saved in ancillary staffing and use of facilities. Staffing was envisaged as a recurrent saving, and a higher quality, better utilised student amenities building was provided.

Student Facilities

A committee was formed to advise the original steering committee on many aspects concerning the facilities which included identifying the needs of student support services, membership and funding of student associations and management of student services. One issue of contention was compulsory or voluntary student fees and whether DSE and TAFE should match the capital levy of the University. Both UNE and SCU wanted a licensed premises, but TAFE was opposed to the idea. The then University Student Union was opposed to the presence of other sector's students on site, as they feared loss of academic autonomy.

Community Support

Historically, there has been strong support for the presence of a University in Coffs Harbour, with a separate identity and separate facilities to TAFE or DSE. Because of the funding arrangements, the campus was seen as a way of providing this presence; there has since been a sustained and strong publicity campaign to sell the concept of the joint Campus to the community. The complex was seen as a buffer against fluctuations in building and local industry within the region.

Publicity

The publicity surrounding the Campus is a positive selling campaign designed to arouse community support for the Campus as a whole, and steer away from the intended presence of an independent university for Coffs Harbour. *Appendix B* is an example of recent publicity for CHEC which is a regular supplement in the daily newspaper. The local newspaper is an important source of community perception and there is a regular supplement that ensures public awareness of the benefits of education and significant events at CHEC. This is vital at enrollment times and when canvassing the local area for students. The paper provides an ongoing positive campaign to promote pride and awareness of the joint development. However, all partners should receive an equal share of the Campus publicity. There is no single marketing person for CHEC, as each sector provides different operational and funding arrangements for this role. Because the local newspaper has such a significant impact on community attitudes toward the Campus it is, therefore, a consideration for CHEC

that publicity fosters participation in each sector, but also reflects the notion of equality and integration of all partners.

Educational Advantages

Students have access to a broader range of educational and vocational experiences and opportunities. Articulation arrangements are easier to organise within closely situated sectors and alternative pathways to gain specific credentials and cross transfer can be developed. School students witness higher education on a daily basis and can access course information to make appropriate choices. Students are part of an innovative environment where curriculum sharing and program development will take place. Research and development potential of joint projects is increased and sharing of staff across educational boundaries can bring new expertise and enhance the quality of educational delivery. The impact on the local community will result in economic and social benefits, in that local industry can be involved and students will not have to travel distances to other Universities to obtain their tertiary education.

Critical Success Factors

Apart from the potential benefits outlined in Fletcher's 1994 study, there are several factors critical for the success of CHEC. Three of these presently impact upon CHEC.

- ◆ Shared educational vision and commitment – debate regarding the level of integration and the need for sector autonomy has complicated the vision. Systemic and institutional baggage has narrowed the broader view of how the Campus can best service its clients
- ◆ Enterprise agreement – industrial issues not present in a fully integrated greenfields site arrangement are not being resolved at CHEC. This affects cross sectoral teaching arrangements, as a single management structure is required for fully integrated institutions
- ◆ Chief Executive Officer – requires an early appointment and the late appointment at CHEC (April 1995) has led to unresolved issues affecting its success. The role of the CEO is confusing, as no one defined what is 'administrative' or what is 'educational'.

The study is interesting in that it outlines how the Campus was originally set up and what occurred in the early process of the planning phase. The Campus is now operational since the study was conducted and many of Fletcher's comments are

supported by the current state of operation of CHEC. A more recent evaluation of joint developments was carried out by the TAFE National Physical Resources Group as a project of the National TAFE Chief Executives Committee.

Project Evaluation of CHEC

CHEC was chosen as one of the sites to be included in the research study by Tamburro, 1994. The overview of the project was the general background of the Campus which noted that Senior School (Years 11 and 12), TAFE and University level courses would provide a 'well co-ordinated curriculum offering to students. All facilities will be fully shared' (Tamburro 1994, 60). The report on the Campus noted that eight people were interviewed and not all agreed on the emphasis or importance of the issues discussed. They did however, agree that the project would achieve its aims of 'comprehensively serving students. Nevertheless, many expressed the view that the planning and implementation process could be much improved upon' (Tamburro 1994, 61).

The expected project benefits included provision of articulated educational pathways for students from senior school to University levels. It was also anticipated that the integrated campus would provide easier access for mature age students to return to study. Obviously a benefit is that facilities could be provided at one location which may not be provided at separate locations. The case study outlined the management and organisation roles and specifically mentioned the negative aspects of a late appointment of a Chief Executive Officer at the site. Industrial issues prevented staff being employed by the Campus as a separate entity and accommodation was a contentious issue. Administration matters were also briefly discussed as to the purchasing and operational matters affecting the Campus.

The most notable comment from the appraisal was that pertaining to the joint development relationship issue. There was a decision at ministerial level to make the Campus an integrated one and it is noted that at the time of that report (December 1994) it appeared that this was not the local view. The lack of local involvement was seen by some as too limited and by others as not of importance. Comments were made that the Campus was driven by facilities and not by educational programs or curriculum; one view was that the partners had not established an educational framework or time

frame which would allow the subsequent development of a trusting and cooperative relationship. It appeared that the operational issues affecting the Campus were entrenched in the existing traditions and procedures of both the University and TAFE, whereas DSE were beginning with a new staff and a new school. Had parties started from scratch without past history and started a new organisation, a greater degree of integration may have been obtained.

The report by Tamburro (1994) suggests that more attention to local needs may have established an ethos for the Campus and, that no matter how successful the Campus would be, the planning process could have been better. Factors such as the ministerial push for integration, the key players on the Governing Board and the late appointment of a CEO has implications that there is a focus on capital assets instead of developing an intellectual, cultural and corporate spirit at the Campus. There was, again, limited and general references to educational advantages mentioned in the case study.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS – November, 1996

On Monday, 18 November 1996, an external facilitator conducted a reflective workshop for TAFE personnel from Facilities and Asset Management Services who were compiling a study on CHEC. The process was termed a reflective workshop aimed at providing material for their study and to create opportunities for improvements at CHEC and other joint development projects. It was strongly emphasised that the workshop was not a post-occupancy evaluation of CHEC, but a workshop designed to investigate the operational aspects of the Campus. Many of the foundation members of the original working parties and steering committees were present and asked to present their views on the initial planning stages of the Campus

Amongst those present were personnel who were non locals, that is, state and regional representatives and included Education Planning Managers, Project Managers, Public Works, Board Members and other personnel from DSE, TAFE and SCU. The locals present (those currently involved at the Campus) were the CEO, the three Directors of SCU, TAFE and DSE respectively, the Administration Manager and the Mayor of Coffs Harbour. The Director of TAFE invited the researcher to the workshop as the Director was supportive of this study on student experiences at the Campus. Both TAFE personnel were enthusiastic that someone was doing a study on the students'

participation and introduced the researcher to the group. However, as the agenda commenced, there was no opportunity to present the student views at the workshop.

What emerged instead, was a very high powered debate on what was originally planned for the Campus and what eventually happened. Work groups were formed to discuss various aspects of the Campus and the researcher joined the 'educational outcomes' group, of which none were 'locals'. It was interesting that no teachers, students or lay administration personnel were present and that there was limited input from the locals about the progress of the Campus. The DSE Director was the most informed about CHEC as he had been involved since the planning stage as a Project Manager and later as the Director of DSE.

In addition, not only had the CEO been a significantly late appointment after the Campus commenced operations, there had been two Directors of SCU and some four Directors of TAFE. This was all in the space of a two year period since the inception of the Campus in 1995 and may have explained the lack of local contribution to the workshop. The Mayor had little to say except to comment on how the Campus had impacted on the community. It was interesting that amongst some twenty people, only one female planner was present. The power base for major decision making is still predominantly male in this area of educational planning and development.

The reflective workshop (Aimes, 1997) was aimed at providing information for present and future joint developments, to review the functionality of the concept, to draw conclusions about joint development, to consolidate an overview of the operational experience, cost/benefit concepts, to clarify the rationale for the joint development precinct projects and determine the level of achievement of the originally forecast benefits for each Sector as well as the whole Campus. In reading the two case studies of joint developments and CHEC (Tamburro, 1994 & Fletcher, 1994), it appears that an important factor in joint developments is the concept that 'the whole is greater than the sum of the parts'. This was reiterated at the outset of the workshop when objectives were outlined. It seems that there is an overwhelming desire to ensure that CHEC is a joint development and not three separate sectors operating in co-location.

During the session, various members of the group were asked to recall their experience of the early planning stages of the Campus. It was mentioned that there were three objectives to be met:

1. **Maximise cost-effectiveness** – greater than individual sectors could provide
2. **Model for regional education** – curriculum integrated across sectors, courses articulated, joint teaching (categories of different students in one class), challenges in industrial relations
3. **Management of campus** – single award or narrowing

The facilities were seen to be equitable and curriculum development was referred to as complex and challenging as DSE, TAFE and SCU had different educational concepts and frameworks. For example, SCU saw itself as having more direct control over the curriculum and delivery than the other sectors. As part of the proposed curriculum development, course areas were to be identified amongst the three sectors, and multi-sectoral involvement would occur. The management of the Campus, the role of the CEO, was to be seamless amalgamations but separating management from educational management. Community acceptance of the idea was important and the concept had to be sold to the public and to meet community demands. The response to removing institutional boundaries was such that the educational vision of full integration failed and had to be modified.

There was limited discussion about student groups and teaching groups; it was only briefly mentioned that some people from both groups were antagonistic and that perceptions of commitment of staff were different. The group then moved rapidly into discussion on funding allocations and the thirteen drafts of academic management and integration that emerged during the planning stage and clarification of the three sources of funding from each sector. One member mentioned the political pressure emanating from Metherell and Virginia Chadwick as Ministers of Education, and that there was pressure for integrated facilities with no constraints imposed by the Government. However, the planning had been left to individual bureaucracies to determine what facilities should be built, but with John Fahey pushing for total integration of the Campus.

Mention was made of the integration issue, that some sectors may be against it and, if the three partners want full integration, then the issue becomes a local one. It was seen as too early (22 months after occupancy) to develop this concept and that it was about creating relationships. The Campus was seen as an opportunity to try to create something different and what could become an education model. The original vision was reduced when the Campus started to operate. After more debate and discussions on what was envisaged for the Campus and what had actually occurred, the working group made a number of observations about the Campus, bearing in mind previous comments about the majority of non-local members of this group. The issues as produced by each working group are outlined in Tables 4 to 8, and categorised into the positive and negative aspects of the Campus.

Table 4 COFFS HARBOUR EDUCATION CAMPUS

ISSUE: MANAGEMENT OF ALL OPERATIONS

POSITIVES	NEGATIVES (termed 'Concerns' rather than 'Negatives')
Good level of co operation view Executive Committee	Different awards/industrial
Need an Executive Director	Matching CHEC programs to each partner's broader responsibility
Executive Director – Executive Board role	Austudy restrictions in funding joint awards
Expectation of partner cooperation	Reliant on goodwill and commitment
Personalities critical component of sector/CHEC management	Problems with differential funding allocations to each partner
CHEC working – user reactions are positive	Ongoing commitment to funding concept – problems with mainstreaming operations within individual partners
Wilmot model – internal outsourcing of servicing	Split TAFE Campus in Coffs Harbour
Goodwill at staff level – cooperation	
Sum of whole is larger than sum of individual members/partners	
Worked around different financial management systems via remittances	
Good operative level management and commitment to integration	
Operational managers responsible to Executive Director for cross sectoral responsibility	
Senior sector involvement in board management	

Table 5 COFFS HARBOUR EDUCATION CAMPUS

ISSUE: FACILITIES

POSITIVES	NEGATIVES
Award winning design and workmanship	Classroom acoustics too reverberent
Joint facilities – library, administration, student amenities and services	Main courtyard needs more visual interest
Divisible lecture theatre – excellent for both educational and community use	Student services originally not suitable in design and acoustic separation
Location of Campus creates a strong identity for campus	Insufficient insulation under low roofs
Services to classrooms are good	Lack of duress alarms in student counselling
Flexibility of design is good allowing minimal cost reconfiguration	No provision for changing lights in lecture theatre
Joint development has led to selection of optimum standards for campus	Disabled access to Lecture Theatre from bus arrival point
Increased utilisation of facilities	Problems with design of Tourism & Hospital loading facilities
Facilities that would not normally be available to all partners	Disabled access – generally
Ability to attract ‘forward thinking’ staff and students	Placement of drink vending machines
Good advantage taken of environmental aspects (outlook)	Gathering space is too hot – greater use of shade needed
Good potential for future development and zoning for special use development	High wind funneling in courtyards and stairs
	Restriction of designed air-conditioning has resulted in a proliferation of package a/c units
	Lack of seating/protection during rainstorms
	Location and amount of car parking

**Table 6 COFFS HARBOUR EDUCATION CAMPUS
ISSUE: COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS**

POSITIVES	NEGATIVES
Benefit to the community – opportunities for higher education for local students, students who leave the community do not return – retention of these students creation of employment added sporting team to local competitors better public transport service	Coffs Harbour is not a wealthy city and some may perceive CHEC as 'elitist'
Use of facilities – Osprey restaurant lecture theatre gymnasium playing fields NCAS/ Regional Arts Council	Not a concerted marketing of CHEC for community use
Impact – Senior College as an added choice for students Senior College students continuing their education in Coffs Harbour community pride and awareness of the facility employment population increase- housing/rental	Congestion of traffic on Hogbin Drive
	Local restaurants concerned about popularity of "Osprey" training restaurant

**Table 7 COFFS HARBOUR EDUCATION CAMPUS
ISSUE: EDUCATION OUTCOMES**

POSITIVES	NEGATIVES
Benefits from systemic traditions	Limitation of joint learning materials development
Two joint degree/diploma/certificate courses	Limitation of cross sectoral staff collaboration on delivery
Capacity for accelerated learning	Independence of faculties within overall structure
10(?) joint curriculum project working parties	Clarity lacking in overall future vision educationally
Leading to lifelong learning opportunities (DSE)	Institutional 'baggage'
Cross sectoral teaching	
Clear articulation	
Agribusiness joint degree 1997 cross sector and multi level classes	
DSE curriculum development experience	
Demonstrated synergy	
Access for adults to HSC	

**Table 8 COFFS HARBOUR EDUCATION CAMPUS
KEY LEARNING.(FROM WORKSHOP)**

This campus has generated progress in accelerated learning opportunities
Generation of articulated courses between sectors
Unique cross sectoral delivery programs being developed – multi-level learning opportunities
Number of opportunities still to be exploited
Time to take stock and set strategic goals
The whole is greater than the sum of the parts (educationally and physically) and is enhanced by the sum of the parts
Single source funding is needed
Institutional institutions are alive and well
Need to explore means to consolidate industrial awards
Need to explore means to make Austudy more flexible
Student policies differ between sectors
There is an emerging need to ensure new appointments are compatible with the Joint Campus ethos
The split TAFE campus in Coffs Harbour needs addressing
The whole concept needs to evolve on site (continuing)
As much input as possible from users – especially students
The Campus to maintain accessibility in the wider sense
Need to improve marketing
Essential to involve community
Three groups of students have different cultures/identities
Amalgamation of funds has led to provision of more extensive facilities and services
The 'big things' are right – details need further work (facilities)
There is a link between the built environment and the educational (community and student services) objectives for the campus which must be furthered

At the conclusion of the workshop the facilitator noted that, from the issues that had been raised, much could be learned from CHEC as a joint development. Participants indicated that key learning issues (Table 8) had emerged from their discussion of this Campus.

Tables 4, 5, 6, and 7 are self-explanatory in that they cover issues that the workshop representatives considered were significant in how the Campus was operating. It is not the purpose of this study to critically examine these outcomes, but instead to use them as part of the framework that underpins the data collected from the 'users', that is, what the students perceived and experienced in their participation at the Campus. Table 8 is a brief outline of what was decided as the most relevant aspects of the existing

Campus and what would be of assistance to future planning projects as well as the operations of CHEC itself.

The TAFE personnel conducting the study and who organised the workshop were most supportive about an investigation into the student experiences. However, there was no opportunity to discuss student responses, nor did it fit into the organised agenda for the workshop, but the opportunity and invitation to attend were much appreciated by the researcher.

Strategic Plan for CHEC

The Chief Executive Officer, Warren Grimshaw, recently produced a draft strategic plan for the Campus as part of a planning process that commenced in mid-1995. His comments are that, from his perspective, the process 'has not been an easy one, because staff, until recently, were uncertain about the direction of Coffs Harbour Education Campus (CHEC) and what it could offer their students'. Mr Grimshaw pointed out that staff could comment on the strategic plan and that it had been necessary during the drafting process that 'the nature of the partnership was respected and the plan drafted in such a way as to avoid impinging planning being undertaken separately by the partners in their own right' (W. Grimshaw July, 1996).

These considerations were seen to have slightly delayed the development of the plan, but that it may well lead to a better and more meaningful outcome. 'From empirical observation it seems that the partners are now more confident of the processes of CHEC and its outcomes, as are staff and students'. This comment is supported by the following statement:

Developing performance indicators is never an easy task and their performance is particularly difficult in an environment where there are no precedents. Moreover, we did not know the possibilities in curriculum, the articulation of pathways and the nature and type of linkages which may be developed between the sectors. These are only now becoming apparent in the particular environment of CHEC and, of course, these developments must at all times maintain the integrity of each of the sectors provided for in the Memorandum of Understanding. All of this is still evolving as are the programmes to be offered on campus by the partners. Much has been achieved and this plan will provide some future direction to the ongoing development of the campus and the establishment of its goals.

The purpose of the plan as I see it is as follows:

- I. Provide the partners with information on the goals of the Campus overall and establish measures of performance for endorsement by the partners and the Board of Governors.*
- II. Seek to establish objectives designed to maximise educational outcomes.*
- III. Act as a basis for planning and communication on the campus and beyond.*
- IV. Provide an environment for improvement of performance, especially in the area of corporate services.*

A plan has been prepared against a background of growth and has assumed the following growth patterns in terms of EFTSU

1996	2000
SCU: 637	1000+
TAFE: 700	1100+
DSE (Senior College): 350	400

The plan recognises the structural changes being undertaken by SCU and the curriculum profile being developed for SCU on this campus. The changing patterns, the funding of TAFE following restructuring and the development of a more competitive environment for this sector are also key factors in the development of this plan, as are the changing patterns of provision in Years 11 and 12. The future direction of the Senior College and its place in the overall provision of education in Coffs Harbour are also matters to be addressed.

(W. Grimshaw, 11 July, 1996)

Senior sectoral staff received the plan and Directors would have received the corporate budget attached as an appendix. The plan is attached as *Appendix A* in this study, and sets out a range of issues concerning the Campus which are briefly outlined as:

Program development is designed to enhance the range of opportunities/pathways for students of the Senior College, TAFE and SCU by promoting maximum collaboration between the sectors in the delivery and development of programs and by facilitating best teaching practice. A range of proposed curriculum developments are included,

such as curriculum links with the partners and identifying educational areas of study across sectors, maximising pathway opportunities and credit transfers, establishing flexible delivery, meeting the requirements of accreditation through the appropriate sectoral boards and to ensure that Senior College and TAFE collaborate in provision of curriculum in the most economical way.

Corporate Management is aimed at developing corporate management systems that are economical, effective, meet the needs of the Campus partners and facilitate the attainment of the educational objectives of the partners. This involves costs per student and other financial concerns such as meeting the needs of students and staff in various sectors, developing budgets, reviewing structures so they are responsive to Campus needs and are economical and cost efficient and negotiate a site agreement for ancillary, support and teaching staff employed by DSE and TAFE which reflects the needs of the staff and Campus.

Access and Equity Policy and Practices which develop, in collaboration with the partners, appropriate access and equity policies and practices for the campus. This includes concerns such as access for disabled persons, Aboriginals and NESB groups, gender equity, harassment and other issues.

Industry and Community Links are designed to promote Coffs Harbour Education Campus by building on links with industry at local, State and national levels and, as appropriate, utilise the physical and human resources of the campus in a commercial way as agreed by the partners. This involves industry forums and the Chamber of Commerce, local government and agencies, establishing relationships with State and national organisations and government departments including DETEC, DEET, ANTA, and Higher Education councils, and promotion of strategic alliances, both commercial and educational.

Accommodation which is designed to enhance the overall facilities of the Campus through the commencement of Stage Two buildings and the commencement of student residential accommodation (Figure 2). The accommodation needs are geared toward the Year 2000 and plans are to establish residential facilities on campus.

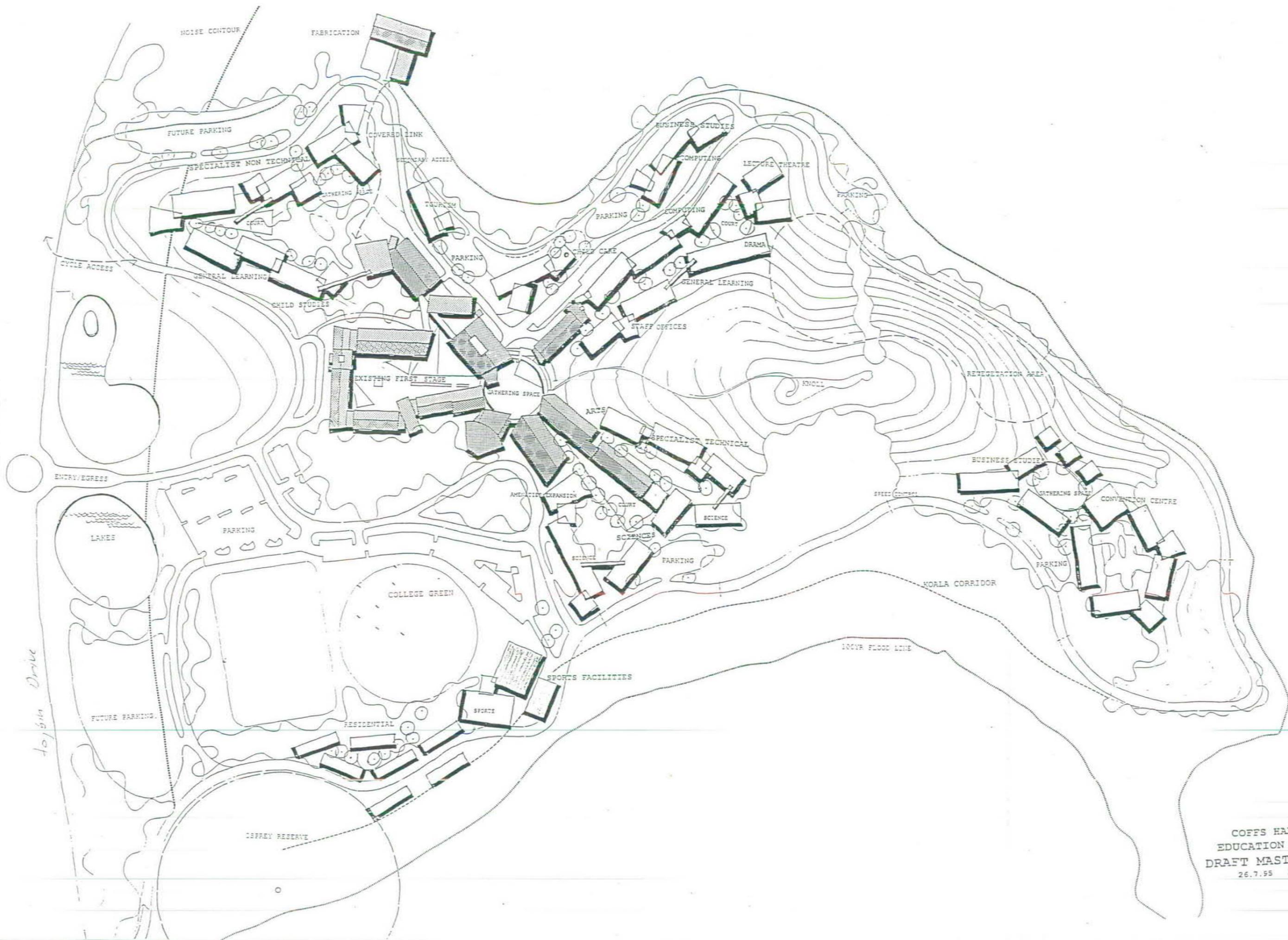
International Marketing aims to enhance an effective overseas marketing strategy that will build upon the strengths of the partners and the campus and the uniqueness of the joint arrangements on Campus. This includes the establishment (presently established in September, 1996) of an English Language Centre (ELICOS) in partnership with Insearch, a subsidiary of University of Technology (UTS), marketing of CHEC as a destination for overseas students and establish ongoing liaisons with the Australian Education Foundation.

Student Support enhances provision for students on campus and support student activities. The plan is to ensure effective working of the Student Advisory Group and enhance student facilities, including adequate provision for students from all sectors and to promote student activities on campus

The strategic plan for the Campus is therefore an attempt to provide an educational framework to work across the sectors and be further developed to provide potential benefits for students, but was not presented in this initial form until July, 1996.

As students are the focus of this study, some discussion on participation issues is considered integral to this research.

Figure 2. Proposed Future Development Plans



COFFS HARBOUR
 EDUCATION CAMPUS
 DRAFT MASTER PLAN
 26.7.95 1:1000

Participation Issues

In participation studies on adults, demographic and socioeconomic variables exert influence. Early studies in the United States (Johnstone & Rivera, 1965) characterised adult participants as both men and women, with an above average income, working full time in mostly white collar occupations, married with children and living in an urbanised area, more likely a suburb than a city. There was little change to this profile in studies conducted in 1984 by the National Centre for Education Statistics. It found that 64% of participants undertook adult education to get a new job or advance in their present job, and 35% participated for non-job related reasons. Business courses were most popular for both men and women (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). Studies that concentrate on sociodemographic and socioeconomic variables such as age, sex, race, income and education, do not adequately explain why adults participate in education.

In the academic credit learning activities, adult learners are found to be a privileged group when compared to the general population, but disadvantaged when compared to younger, full time students and the upwardly mobile (working class backgrounds) learners (Cross, 1981). It was found that older students came from lower socio-economic backgrounds and had lower educational aspirations than younger college students. Most studies however, reveal rapid growth in the numbers of women participants in adult education, possibly influenced by the social roles previously mentioned, and an increased commitment by government and institutions to provide equal opportunity for women (Cross, 1981).

What is also evident in these studies is that people living in suburban areas are more likely to participate in adult education and consequently suggests those in isolated or rural areas are disadvantaged in provision. People on higher incomes are more likely to participate than disadvantaged groups such as blacks and the poorly educated. Although participants may have less formal schooling than younger people, they are usually successful working adults, which results in a predominately middle-class (or upwardly mobile working class) bias in adult education.

Cross (1981) notes that in organised learning activities (industry, credit and non-credit) the variables on interest and education are greatly influenced by the participant's amount of formal schooling. Anderson and Darkenwald (1979) found that educational

attainment exerts a powerful impact on adult education and was relatively independent of socio-economic status. This view is supported by Reissman (1962 quoted in Cross, 1981) who notes that an initial barrier for the poorly educated is their lack of interest. Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) draw attention to the disparate educational profiles of participants in literacy and university programs. In examining the relationship of education and work satisfaction, Johnstone and Rivera (1965) found that low levels of job satisfaction were positively related to participation in supplementary education, especially among those low in status (quoted in Cross, 1981). There is evidence in these studies that suggests that education and prior formal schooling are pivotal factors affecting participation.

Barriers to Participation

Merriam and Caffarella (1991) question why more adults, especially those who need it most, are not involved in adult education. The two most often cited reasons are lack of time and lack of money (Johnstone & Rivera 1965, quoted in Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). However, other reasons for non participation were:

1. Not enough time to participate in educational activities
2. Individual and personal problems (including cost)
3. Too difficult to succeed in educational services
4. Against social norms to participate
5. Negative feelings toward the institution
6. Negative experiences with educational activities
7. Results of educational activities not valued
8. Indifference to educational activities
9. Unawareness of educational activities available.

The findings were that the cluster of reasons 1 and 9 were the main reasons for not participating, followed by cluster 7, then 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8 (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991).

If the continuing pressure for educational institutions is to generate income from fee paying students, then this potential group of students in Coffs Harbour and surrounding regions will be less likely to participate in any educational program at the Campus. It is important that the three sectors consider the implications of cost of education to students when canvassing for enrolments. It was found that the price of the educational

activity was a more important consideration for women than men, and women paid less for education than men but 'for both sexes, the price and income variables were found to be less important than other personal characteristics in determining the probability of enrolment' (Hawk 1988, quoted in Merriam & Caffarella 1991, 88).

Of further concern for CHEC providers is that studies in participation have highlighted that potential barriers to participation vary and are different for certain age groups. For example, Cross grouped non participation into three categories of barriers, situational, relating to a person's situation at a given time, institutional barriers consisting of all those practices and procedures that exclude or discourage working adults from participating in learning activities and dispositional barriers that arise from a person's attitude toward self and learning (1981, 98). Other findings were that 'older adults cited more dispositional barriers while younger people and women were more constrained by situation barriers ...the researchers noted that persons of lower socio-economic circumstances face both kinds of obstacles' (Johnstone & Rivera 1965, 221). Cross (1981) has synthesised a model of participation based on other studies and this can be used as a basis for an attempt to explain why students choose to enrol in a course.

Cross's (1981) Chain of Response Model

Adult motivation and participation is complex and it is unlikely that one discipline or theory can explain the phenomenon. Some general observations and conclusions can be drawn from Miller's (1967) force field analysis in that educational interests are related to differences in social classes and what they hope to achieve. Age and life cycle positions will influence the strength of force for different socioeconomic status groups in that there is a strong motivation of lower middle classes for job related education and marketing alone may do little to attract lower classes to education. Strengthening organisational ties and working through membership groups toward appropriate forms of education, for example, community centres, will provide more access to education for these lower groups. This concept incorporates basic sociological research in identifying positive and negative forces in the environment and integrates research findings on participation.

Rubenson's Expectancy Valance Paradigm (1975) combines both the positive and negative forces existing in the individual and the environment. For example,

expectations of personal success and positive consequences from participation will influence the decision to participate or continue to participate. Consequently, if an individual does not perceive himself as able to participate successfully, or sees no reward, then his motivation is zero according to measured components of the paradigm.

Boshier (1973) proposes that the magnitude of discrepancy between the participant's self concept and key aspects (people and institutions) of the education environment explains both dropout and participation. If there are additive incongruencies between the self, the ideal self, self and other students, self and teacher, and self and institution, then the greater the sum, the more likelihood of dropout or non participation. Thus, proper matching of adults to educational environment is important. However, Tough (1979) claims that the learner's conscious anticipation of reward is more important than subconscious or environmental forces and examines five stages of the self directed learner in the learning activity. These are: applying the knowledge, retaining the knowledge, gaining material reward and gaining symbolic reward (for example, an award).

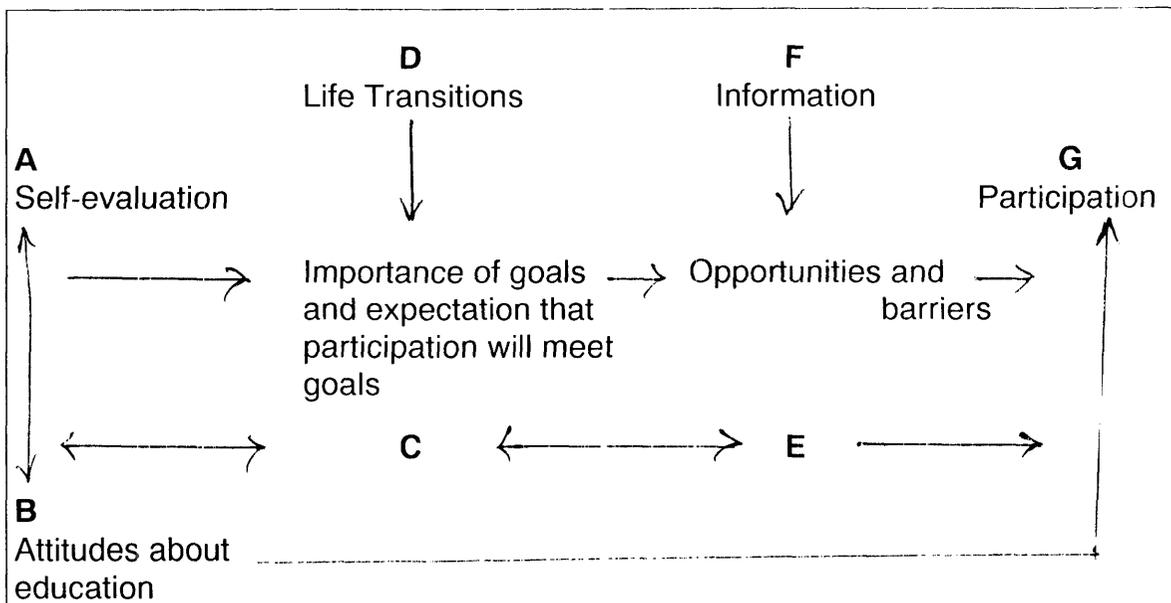
Boshier, Rubenson and Miller commonly believe that motivation for learning is a function of the interaction between internal psychological factors and external environmental factors and existing theories have the following characteristics:

1. All three theorists are interactionists in that participation is understood through an analysis of the individual and the environment.
2. Field force analysis is applicable to these theories in that the individual's perception of positive and negative forces influences participation.
3. Theorists are cognitivists in that they believe individuals control their own destiny.
4. Rubenson and Boshier hypothesise that certain personalities are difficult to attract to education – those with low self esteem (and in Miller's social class analysis) lack achievement motivation.
5. Reference group theory is used – Miller and Rubenson recommend that under educated adults be recruited by membership groups rather than market orientated strategies.
6. All use the concept of incongruence and dissonance (Boshier, congruence model, Miller, compatibility of values of social classes, Rubenson, expectancy and valence paradigms) to assume congruence between participation and anticipated outcomes.

7. Maslow's needs hierarchy is a base for determining higher order needs for achievement and self-actualisation.
8. Rubenson has further developed the role of expectancy, but all assume individual's expectation of reward is an important variable in motivation for adult learning.

Cross's Chain of Response model is a conceptual framework (synthesising the above characteristics) designed to identify the relevant variables and hypothesise their interrelationships, and organises existing knowledge for research projects. It assumes that participation in a learning activity (whether organised or self directed learning) is not a single act, but the result of a chain of responses, each based upon the evaluation of the position of the individual in their environment. Figure 3 presents the variables in this model.

**Figure 3 Chain of Response (COR) Model
Model for Understanding Participation in
Adult Learning Activities**



Source: Chain of Response Model, Cross 1981, 124

Represented in the model Figure 3, are the points A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. If a potential student can move through the different points of the model, then participation will occur at G. This is a flow-on effect, that begins with an individual and then becomes increasingly involved with external forces. It must be remembered, however, that in any interaction, forces can flow in both directions.

A Self evaluation – relatively stable personality characteristics play an important role in motivation for achievement. A lack of confidence in own abilities and a failure threatened person is unlikely to volunteer in learning – this is the point where participation begins.

B Attitudes toward education – these can arise indirectly from attitudes of reference groups, fellow workers and past experiences of friends and significant others. If the link between these two variables is positive, then the individual may seek out experiences for growth. This is linked to Houle's learning-orientated adult.

C Goals and expectations that goals will be met – Lewin (1947), and, more recently, Rubenson (1975), propose that expectations of success through further education means that motivation at this point is strong. If the goal is not important or unsuccessful expectations exist, then motivation decreases.

D Life Transitions – any period of change, adjustments to new phases of the life cycle, or 'triggering' events such as divorce, loss of job, etc. may lead to the desire for education. Havighurst (1965) calls this the 'teachable moment', that is, the right time to teach adults.

E Opportunities and Barriers – Once the individual is motivated to participate, barriers and special opportunities for adult learning is critical. At this point, the force of motivation will encourage some learners to seek out opportunities to overcome modest barriers, but for others these barriers may prevent participation or continuing participation.

F Information – This point in the model is critical in that information provided can link motivated learners to appropriate opportunities – without accurate information, opportunities are not discovered and major barriers are created.

G Participation – Providing the points in the chain are positive toward participation, in that the person will participate in education. Conversely, weakness in any point can deter people from enrolling in courses.

The conceptual framework used by Cross (1981) relies on the evaluation of the position of the individual in the environment. Participation begins at the self evaluation stage and, if a positive view of self is encouraged, then this will start the chain of response toward a positive attitude to education, which arises from reference groups, past experiences of friends and significant others. If expectations of their goals are not met, then motivation in the prospective student decreases. Periods of change and triggering events also lead adults to participate, and at this point, opportunities and barriers to adult learning are critical at the institution. If motivated learners are then linked or accessed to the right information, participation is likely to happen; without this accurate information, opportunities are missed and major barriers are created.

This model is selected as it includes both opportunities and barriers to participation and includes institutional barriers. However, it is not used within this study as a framework to analyse the data, but simply as a contributing issue to the broad discussion of students' perceptions of CHEC.

Summary

The background of the planning process and operational aspects of CHEC are significant issues to consider within this study. However, what planners and administrators envisaged for the joint development and the philosophy of the mission statement, is not the overriding concern for this research, as students' perceptions of the Campus are paramount. CHEC has indeed had an interesting beginning, and a number of complexities have arisen that were not foreseen in the original planning phase. It is evident that Coffs Harbour was considered a suitable site for a greenfields campus, but there were many negotiations and difficulties to overcome to achieve the

actual reality of the campus. However, it exists as a manifestation of these plans and committee directions, in spite of the large turnover of staff involved from the original concept and foundation committees.

The opportunity to attend the workshop provided much insight into the planning processes that took place in the early stages of CHEC's existence. From the researcher's presence within the workshop, there suddenly appeared to be several roles for the researcher: as a researcher (unbiased and objective - conducting a study involving students at a joint development), a teacher at the new Campus, a TAFE employee (transferred from another Campus), a senior staff member (acting TAFE section head), a colleague of not only TAFE personnel, but also SCU and DSE staff. The researcher's observation of this gathering of strategic planners and managers was that very different perspectives emerge from a person's role within the organisation. The role of researcher, collecting and analysing student data, was perhaps a rather different perspective from other participants in the workshop. Experiences as a teacher at the new Campus, participation at a senior staff level and the relationships with colleagues from other sectors impacted on the simplistic approach the researcher had previously attached to the study of students' perceptions. There are more complex issues as to whether a joint development can meet the needs of students.

Participation issues are significant, in that consideration has to be given to why students enrol, or continue to participate in education. The institutional and other barriers to participation are relevant to CHEC and to the concept of joint developments which attempt to offer potential educational benefits for their organisations and students as users of the Campus. Overall, it is the student voice that this study articulates, regardless of planners, administrators and government directives. Critical success factors and strategic planning, proposed curriculum and educational frameworks are not what is being presented. It is, therefore, the students' perceptions of their participation that directs this study; Chapter Four is a discussion of the methodology employed to conduct this exploration.

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodology

This Chapter describes the process of data collection from the students at CHEC and why a qualitative approach was used rather than a quantitative one. Outlined in this Chapter are theoretical frameworks for qualitative research upon which the study is based. Also described is the way the data was collected and the difficulties, together with the positive learning experiences associated with interactive research. A preliminary investigation was carried out to select participants for an in-depth interview, which was tape recorded and transcribed. The data collection and analysis is based on Huberman and Miles's (1994) guidelines for data management, and transcripts were encoded to elicit a range of themes and sub-themes from the students. The themes that emerged, then formed the framework for the study.

Process

It was my initial intention to present a neat, statistical interpretation of what I considered to be the most important aspects of the students' participation at CHEC. This would consist of a structured questionnaire which could measure responses to the different aspects of the Campus and direct students toward either favourable or unfavourable responses on particular issues. It could then be presented to providers as an empirical study that would encapsulate the present operation of the Campus.

A pilot study was conducted at the end of 1995, after CHEC's first year of operation. Three students were chosen as 'experimental' ones, that is, to try out the predetermined questions and set up a further and more comprehensive empirical study. What emerged was a dismal failure. Students were guarded and suspicious of the questions and saw themselves as being evaluated by a teacher at CHEC. This, of course, was not the aim of the study. The time and effort involved in conducting the pilot study was not wasted; by June 1996 a preliminary investigation of 30 students to choose 15 to participate in in-depth interviews was under way. The whole approach to the study had to be a qualitative one, whereby the researcher could incorporate the

process of using in-depth interviews to explore and determine what students themselves perceived about their participation. It was recognised that, as a researcher, the rapport and relationship between people are reciprocal and that students were far more willing to respond and to involve themselves in an interview process which did not require either party to fill in forms or numerically rate any specific questions.

Recent debate over the exclusive use of quantitative research has centred on the issue that quantitative research relies on statistical data collected by using instruments such as standardized tests or questionnaires which are collected in a foreign task environment. Even though the materials and language have been carefully selected and are familiar to participants, Lancy proposes that 'humans use one set of reasoning strategies for everyday problem solving situations and another for critical test situations' in which situations participants often perform poorly (Lancy 1993, 24).

Further, quantitative research may also present a complex situation in a simplistic form. Although researchers such as Barr and Dreeben (1993, quoted in Lancy 1993, 25) have moved quantitative educational research from simple univariate or bivariate designs to complex multivariate, non-linear models, variables are still scored and numerically rated, 'whereas the qualitative researcher insists that not all of the reality that constitutes education is in fact reducible to variables' (Lancy 1993, 25). Often such measuring and statistical procedures can obscure what is actually being investigated.

Therefore, the qualitative approach and the process of in-depth interviewing was the turning point of this research; it allowed the student perspective to emerge in rich descriptions throughout a supportive and informal conversation. Two people interacting was the priority rather than establishing a relationship between a researcher and student participant.

The methodology selected for this study is commonly used in the study of adult education. The research design for this study is qualitative and uses a strategy of inquiry, conducted through interviewing participants about their experiences at the Campus. Qualitative or descriptive research involves collecting data that describes an existing phenomenon, identification of problems or justification of current conditions, practice or project evaluation, and comparison of experience between groups (Merriam

& Simpson, 1984). This qualitative approach interprets and analyses the meanings that the participants under study, bring to their life experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). This exploration revealed aspects and issues that would never have emerged, had the original concept of using a quantitative approach evolved.

There would have been little value in presenting such a study for a reader as aspects of participation at CHEC would be presented to the student to assess, rather than emerge from, the data. It is through these in-depth interviews that so much has been learned by the researcher about the students. Students reacted very positively to the process, as they really wanted to present their views of the Campus to what they perceived to be an impartial person. The change in students' perception of me as a teacher, to being an interested researcher, was a direct result of the interaction and rapport gained in the interview process, rather than presenting a questionnaire which was perceived by them to be a formal test situation or evaluation. It also gave me a chance to meet DSE students on a one to one level which was often difficult as I was not a member of DSE staff and had limited contact with these students.

The data collection described an existing phenomenon and identified problems and aspects concerning student participation at CHEC. The central focus was to examine these experiences, attitudes and opinions through the use of a preliminary study and then develop them through in-depth interviews. The first stage in this investigation was to obtain permission from the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Warren Grimshaw, who readily agreed to support any study conducted on the Campus. I then designed a student consent form (Appendix C) and approached students across the three Sectors and across courses for the preliminary investigation.

Data Collection

The data collection for this study commenced in February 1996 with the preliminary stage of interviewing thirty students at the Campus. In March/April, the fifteen participants for the in-depth interview were contacted and agreed to be part of the study. Consent forms were signed and interviewing commenced in early June and concluded on 20th August, 1996. Participants were both male and female and ranged in age from 16 to 51 years old. The only common factor was their participation in courses at the Campus.

Preliminary Investigation

The researcher visited two DSE classes, three TAFE classes and two University tutorial groups and spoke briefly to students about the study and explained that this was the initial stage of the study and that I wanted to interview individual students at a later stage. The experience of walking into a high school classroom can only be described as positively traumatic; the researcher worked with adults as an educator and could not imagine how to relate to a large group of teenagers. Fortunately, acquaintances were developed with DSE teachers at CHEC which enabled the researcher to visit classes for 10 minutes. This was the access the researcher needed, as the students did not know anyone outside their DSE teachers and were really enthusiastic about participating in the study; however, one mentioned that it meant a bit of free time! The researcher asked questions of the whole group, taking notes on why they were there and what they thought of the Campus. Ten minutes turned into one enjoyable hour and finally, five students were selected from the DSE groups to participate in the in-depth interviews. Selecting students from the other sectors was easier, as the mature age students are a group of people with whom the researcher did feel comfortable and who also wanted to express their views on CHEC.

Details of the initial group of thirty are as follows -

NO OF STUDENTS	SECTOR	COURSE	PARTICIPATION AT CAMPUS
10	DSE	HSC Year 12	Since inception 1995
3	TAFE	Associate Diploma Welfare	Since inception 1995
2	TAFE	Welding	February 1996
4	TAFE	Tertiary Preparation Certificate	February 1996
1	TAFE	Tertiary Preparation Certificate	Since inception - previous TAFE course 1995 - currently TPC student 1996
6	SCU	B. Social Science	Since inception 1995
4	SCU	B. Arts	Since inception 1995

TOTAL - 30 students

Three open ended questions were used as a means of translating the research objectives into the specific purpose of the research, that is, to motivate students to share their knowledge of student life at CHEC and to provide insight into their perceptions of this participation. The questions were experience/behaviour type, 'aimed at eliciting descriptions of experiences, behaviours, actions and activities...' (Denzin, 1970 quoted in Lancy 1993, 78). The language used was clear to the respondent and intended to 'reflect the respondent's world view' (Denzin, 1970 quoted in Lancy 1993, 79). Students were happy with the simplistic approach during this stage, and it provided field notes for me to form a background for the in-depth interviews. The questions are:

Q 1 What made you decide to enrol in this course?

Q 2 Do you have any plans about what you might do after you finish this course?

Q 3 Is there any particular reason why you chose this Campus?

Their responses were generally categorised and responses to the third question enabled selection of fifteen students from the initial group of thirty, from three sectors,

who were keen and enthusiastic about being included in a study on CHEC, as they saw it as an opportunity to speak as students at the new institution. The research problem and research aims were generated from the preliminary stage of questions to focus on their perceptions of their participation. Students were selected based on their response to question three as some did not have any particular interest in discussing the Campus. What emerged from this preliminary stage, was characteristic of participation in adult education. There were various reasons for participating in education and many of the responses fitted into motivational factors associated with participation studies. This feedback was valuable as it highlighted the adult learner's needs and also provided a genuine sample of adult learners and their needs which could be further explored. It also provided a pool of students who really wanted to be involved in the study and the establishment of initial rapport with students. This proved invaluable as it carried over into the in-depth interview interaction. Times were subsequently arranged that suited both parties and which did not interfere with student workloads.

The Interview

The in-depth interview for the final fifteen participants was semi-structured in that not much was known about the past and present experiences of students to ask any specific questions about CHEC. Without predetermined questions, the interview became exploratory to develop a framework of the students' perceptions of these experiences. It is understood that both parties bring bias, predisposition and attitude to the interaction of the interview, but every effort was made to be non judgmental, sensitive and to respect the student responses and the students as people.

Further, a neutral stance could be adopted as no prior information had been forthcoming regarding the students' actual perceptions of their participation at the Campus. In qualitative research, semi-structured interviews are considered to yield more reliable data than a written questionnaire. A personal, face-to-face interview is recommended to gain rapport and gain the widest range of data' (Merriam & Simpson 1984, 62). Since there were no preconceived appropriate answers to a general question about perceptions, it meant that variations in response required more intensive work in the analysis and categorisation of responses. An initial probing question was used - *Tell me about your experiences at this Campus*, from which point students spoke about everything that pertained to their participation at CHEC. There

was no organisation within the answers and no attempt was made to categorise aspects during the interview. It observed that 'there is no single interview style that fits every occasion or all respondents' (Converse and Schuman 1974, quoted in Fontana and Frey 1994, 364) which means that the interviewer must be flexible about respondent differences and unexpected responses. The interview was, therefore, used to give an understanding of the individual student's perspective, and was both the method and object of the inquiry.

The interviews were conducted in a room at the Campus, at times convenient to the participants. Timing of interviews ranged from 15 minutes minimum to 50 minutes maximum and were tape recorded. The taped interviews were transcribed verbatim and included any additional probe questions as 'ideally, verbatim transcription of recorded interviews provides the best data base for analysis' (Lancy 1993, 82).

The students were enthusiastic about participating in the interviews. They had not been given an opportunity, apart from a small email computer survey, to voice their opinions as to how the Campus was operating for them and what issues they would like to discuss. These students were chosen from the larger group because:

- the DSE students participating in this study had experienced the Senior College since its inception and had different experiences to the new DSE students enrolling in 1996 as Year 11 students. The original group enrolled without prior knowledge of the Campus and its operations;
- the TAFE students had enrolled in courses that would lead to further education at TAFE or University level at the Campus and were considered adult students,
- the SCU students from three faculties had experienced the Campus since its inception and had completed the Tertiary Preparation Certificate at the former TAFE Campus. These students had already moved into the next stage of further education and were continuing students in adult education, and
- all participants had made the decision to participate in adult education and were keen to discuss the Campus experience.

The final group consisted of five DSE Year 12 students, five SCU students and five TAFE students; making a total of fifteen students. Characteristics of students who participated in the in-depth interview are as follows:

SECTOR	COURSE	AGE	TIME	GENDER
DSE	HSC YEAR 12	18	20 MINS	MALE
DSE	HSC YEAR 12	19	22 MINS	MALE
DSE	HSC YEAR 12	18	24 MINS	MALE
DSE	HSC YEAR 12	18	28 MINS	FEMALE
DSE	HSC YEAR 12	18	35 MINS	FEMALE
SCU	B. SOCIAL SCIENCE	28	25 MINS	MALE
SCU	B. SOCIAL SCIENCE	42	45 MINS	FEMALE
SCU	ASS. DEGREE PARALEGAL STUDIES	44	68 MINS	MALE
SCU	B. ARTS	51	25 MINS	MALE
SCU	B. ARTS	42	50 MINS	FEMALE
TAFE	ASS. DIP. COMMUNITY WELFARE	44	35 MINS	FEMALE
TAFE	TERTIARY PREPARATION	45	50 MINS	FEMALE
TAFE	TERTIARY PREPARATION	33	35 MINS	MALE
TAFE	TERTIARY PREPARATION	36	30 MINS	MALE
TAFE	APPRENTICE WELDER	16	15 MINS	MALE

Total respondents = 15

Based on their responses to Question 3 of the preliminary investigation, the fifteen students were considered an appropriate representative sample of the sectors at CHEC. I was the single researcher involved in 'a long and complex social interaction' (Minichiello *et al.* 1995, 168), and time constraints and the research time frame impact significantly upon the in-depth interview process and the amount of data that can be handled effectively. Another advantage of this methodology is that it allows hypotheses to emerge within analytical categories and frameworks. The research is interactive, by

using the researcher to collect data. The narrative or descriptive format is designed to prevent research bias interfering with the subjective reality of the study. The preliminary investigation, followed by an in-depth interview allowed me to select the students who wished to express their views. The interview, therefore, provided latitude for responsive, broad opinions and allowed the framework to emerge from the student responses.

The objective of these in-depth interviews was to identify the range of possibilities which students bring to their participation at CHEC. Students selected were guided by the search for contrasts 'which are needed to clarify the analysis and identify emergent concepts or themes' (Minichiello *et al.* 1995). Data collection in the preliminary investigation represented theoretical sampling suggested by Strauss 1987, (quoted in Minichiello *et al.* 1995) in that the data evolves to present a framework relevant to the broad aims of the study. These aims are:

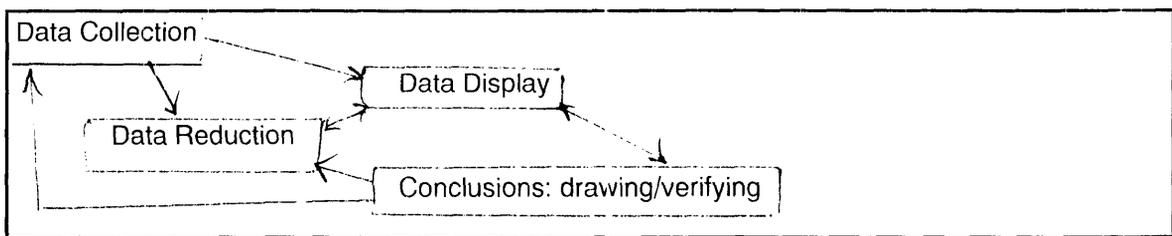
1. To determine how CHEC, as a joint development impacts upon students as the customers or users of the institution.
2. To identify the major themes and sub-themes of students participation within the context of a joint development.
3. To understand and explore the perceptions of their participation.

The interview itself provided valuable insights into the consciousness of being a student at the Campus. From my position as educator, it was significant that students are often overlooked in the daily life of CHEC. One gets caught up in administrative issues, classwork and time constraints often prevent the informal conversation between people who are an integral part of the community at CHEC. Students provide an immense source of feedback on their perception of education and their educational needs. The interview gave me an opportunity to interact with students from other sectors and to listen to their accounts of student life at CHEC. Had it not been for this research, the essence of student participation would have eluded me during my work as an adult educator. When it was apparent to students that my purpose was to simply find out what they thought about the Campus and no threat or consequence for participation could eventuate, everyone relaxed and a positive environment was created. Overall, it was seen as a opportunity to shed light on how CHEC affected students.

The researcher thought it interesting when interviewing the DSE students that they had a language and culture so different to adults. Their enthusiasm and motivation were infectious; they had such wonderful ideals about the Campus and what life held in store. No one had, at any previous institution, bothered to ask their opinion about anything, and it was difficult to end the interviews – all students wanted a return visit and feedback on the finished research. It was also amusing to the researcher that the male students would only attend together to be interviewed, and yet the female students were quite comfortable sitting alone with the researcher in the room. However, it was the male students who sorted out the tape recorders and managed to fix the technical hitches that seemingly gravitate toward this part of the research process. Some important relationships were formed during the interviews, and resulted in a changed perception of young people and high school students.

Data Management

The management of data in this study involved a systematic collection and analysis of data based on the work of Huberman and Miles (1994). The components of the data analysis are outlined in the following diagram:



Source: Components of Data Analysis: Interactive Model, Huberman & Miles, Handbook of Qualitative Research, Denzin & Lincoln (eds) 1994

The processes occurred at all stages of the data, that is, before collection, during collection for early analyses and after the data are collected. Data reduction involved working with a conceptual framework involving the research question and aims of the study. The preliminary stage student responses were summarised and categorised before the taping of in-depth interviews. The data display component was the ‘compressed’ collection of information that led to drawing conclusions from the data and ‘thinking about its meanings’ (Huberman & Miles 1994, 429). There are many aspects to this analysis, which Gherardi and Turner (1987 quoted in Huberman & Miles 1994, 429) refer to as ‘data transformation’, as information is condensed, clustered,

sorted, and linked over time'. This study was guided by Huberman and Miles's (1994) model of data management and analysis as outlined below:

Data Management and Analysis

1. **Raw material:** field notes, tapes, site documents
2. **Partially processed data:** write-ups, transcriptions. Ideally, these should appear in their initial version, and in subsequent corrected, cleaned, 'commented on' versions. Write-ups may profitably include marginal or reflective remarks made by the researcher during or after data collection.
3. **Coded data:** write-ups with specific codes attached
4. **The coding scheme or thesaurus:** in its successive iterations.
5. **Memos or other analytic material:** the researcher's reflections on the conceptual meaning of the data.
6. **Search and retrieval records:** information showing which coded chunks or data segments the researcher looked for during analysis, and the retrieved material; records of links made among segments.
7. **Data displays:** matrices, charts, or networks used to display retrieved information in a more compressed organized form, along with the associated analytic text. Typically, there are several revised versions of these.
8. **Analysis episodes:** documentation of what the researcher did, step by step, to assemble the displays and write the analytic text.
9. **Report text:** successive drafts of what is written on the design, methods, and findings of the study.
10. **General chronological log or documentation:** of data collection and analysis work.
11. **Index:** of all the above material.

Source: Table 27.1 What to Store, Retrieve From, and Retain, Huberman & Miles 1994 in Handbook of Qualitative Research Denzin & Lincoln (eds). 1994, 431.

This study is also based on Denzin's (1989) bracketing steps which involve locating key phrases, statements or self-stories that relate directly to the phenomenon, the researcher interpreting the meanings of these phrases, inspection of the meanings to reveal essential recurring features of the study and offer 'a tentative statement or definition of the phenomenon in terms of the essential recurring features' (Denzin 1989, 215). This process allows for categorisation grouping and clustering of the data. The students told stories about themselves, their personal goals and obstacles, and how they perceived CHEC on both a personal level and educational level. It was within

these stories that main themes and sub-themes emerged and became the integral part of the research design.

Interview Transcripts

All fifteen taped interviews were transcribed through a dictaphone and on to computer discs and printed. Broad margins were left on the page so that coding and notes could be made on the original transcript. For the most part the transcripts were records of the actual words spoken, and I have included the comments and asides, but could not express the tone, loudness or laughter that occurred in the two-way communication process.

Coding Scheme

The transcripts were coded using main categories, clusters and themes as they emerged from the interviews. The classification was fundamentally descriptive. Within each transcript, many issues were discussed and the only initial solution to sorting this data, was to colour code the main themes, and then subsequently break those down into sub-themes or smaller categories. For example, when a student spoke about social aspects, this section was coloured green for the initial code. The main themes were then in colours and were collated together as clusters of quotes from different students, relevant to that theme. The theme was then broken down into sub-themes by using letters to indicate that particular sub-theme. For example SAS was a sub-theme of the main theme 'social' coded green, and indicated comments of 'students attitudes toward other students'. As the research continued, main themes and sub-themes were modified and new ones emerged from the data.

From this point, the data was clustered into a computer file for each theme and divided into sub-themes, by opening different files on the disc and cutting sections from each transcript to produce a comprehensive and detailed category of all student responses to particular themes or sub-themes. Once the verbatim interviews were transcribed and categorised, the data was then reduced to the analysis stage. Huberman and Miles (1994, 431) point out that 'qualitative studies which ultimately aim to describe and explain (at some level) a pattern of relationships ...Starting with them (deductively) or getting gradually to them (inductively) are both legitimate and useful paths'.

At the preliminary stage of the study, analysis was more deductive than the final in-depth interview analysis which was focused on the campus experience and, therefore, inductive. This analytic induction is based on the premise that there are:

...regularities to be found in the physical and social worlds. The theories or constructs that we derive express these regularities as precisely as possible. To uncover these constructs, we use an iterative procedure - a succession of question-and-answer cycles. (Huberman & Miles, 1994, 431).

The more structured preliminary investigation allowed the in-depth interview to be adjusted so it would reflect a better picture of the experiences of the students. The researcher's constructs were associated with student interests and this affected how the research would be viewed. The coding scheme, therefore, had its origins within those interests and thus a form of encoding was present from the original preliminary stage. This combination of semi structured and in-depth interviews then added more internal validity to the study. The inductive approach was considered more suitable for the totally unknown aspects of what students experiences of the Campus were, and the more deductive approach used in the preliminary stage worked within the more defined and well known concepts of why adults participate in adult education.

Qualitative Approach

However, when using this qualitative approach, I was aware that often researchers are so preoccupied with the methodology of the study that:

...the researcher moves away from understanding the actual experience of the participants in the research project. In other words, the qualitative researcher should immediately focus on the substance of the findings. Qualitative research depends on the presentation of solid descriptive data, so that the researcher leads the reader to an understand(ing) of the meaning of the experience under study. (Janesick 1994, 215)

The interviewing process used in this study established a relationship between myself and the students so that I could understand and describe students' experiences at the Campus from the descriptive data recorded at the interview; rather than give a quantitative explanation of those experiences. By understanding and describing their perceptions and experiences, conclusions can be drawn from the data by the detection of emerging patterns and tying these patterns into a research framework, underpinned by joint developments literature, CHEC reports and participation factors in adult education.

Merriam and Simpson attempt to explain the differentiation between theoretical and conceptual frameworks in that both terms refer to:

...the underlying structure, orientation and viewpoint of your research study. The topic you are interested in, specific problem you have identified, the purpose of your study, all reflect a particular orientation to the world ...The way to identify your theoretical framework is to examine the assumptions you are making about the phenomenon of study. (1984, 24-25).

This study is centred around the concern for students as users of the Campus and my interest in adult education. The unique combination of three sectors as a joint development is perceived as a major planning and capital works project, but it is how students perceive their participation at CHEC that is considered by the researcher to be the major consideration of such an innovative project. Research questions have been framed to reflect this interest.

Qualitative studies such as this one, are based in phenomenology in that variables are not manipulated and outcomes are unpredictable (Merriam & Simpson, 1984). An explanatory framework has emerged from the data collected. Even so, the researcher

has a value base or perspective that constitutes the conceptual/theoretical framework of this study. It is not proposed to test or to build a theory from this study, but the perspective which shapes the study is drawing from a knowledge base 'containing, at the very least, theoretical formulations and models. It is to this knowledge base and its accompanying theories that one returns, showing how the findings of a study contribute to the knowledge base' (Merriam & Simpson 1984, 29).

The relationship between myself, as researcher, and the students was established according to what Minichiello (*et al.* 1995) recommends when dealing with the overt and covert nature of research. Denzin states that if the researcher does not accept any difference between the domains of the informants, then there is no invasion of privacy for informants (quoted in Minichiello *et al.* 1995, 206). Therefore, the researcher decided to inform the students of how the research would be conducted so that data could then be collected within an honest and open relationship. The fieldwork and data collection in this study have enhanced and increased an understanding of the students' perceptions of CHEC, rather than tested an established hypothesis.

This strength of this type of research is that the study can be easily understood and the interaction that occurred between myself and students established trust and credibility by attaching value to their opinions about the Campus. This study is seen as an alternative and an addition to any multivariate evaluations used in quantitative studies undertaken at the Campus. The focus of this research is to examine attitudes and opinions, rather than to give value to sets of relationships.

Limitations

The information obtained during the face-to-face interviews was more than adequate for this study. A follow up interview might have added strength to the data as some students expressed an interest to add more and return for another interview, but I was aware that many empirical studies would probably be conducted in the future where students would be subject to questionnaires. This follow up interview would be more appropriate as an option for further research

Although the sample size is relatively small for the representation of CHEC students, the process of setting up interviews, participating in the interaction and transcribing tapes verbatim, in qualitative research design is time intensive. There is also the extended data analysis of categorising data which is also arduous and time consuming.

Consent Forms and Ethical Issues

A student consent form was signed by both researcher and student which explained the purpose of the study. The consent form also gives the participant the right to withdraw from the study at any time and advises that all the information from the interviews is confidential. The following extract from Merriam and Simpson (1984) was used as guidelines for this study.

1. *Respondents should be told the purpose of the research and how the data they are being asked to provide will be used.*
2. *Respondents should be informed of the nature of the research before data are collected and should be allowed to withdraw at any given point.*
3. *There should be no unpleasant or damaging effects on the individual, the setting, or others close to the participant either during or subsequent to the research.*
4. *The investigator must respect the privacy of the respondents and, whenever possible, ensure anonymity or confidentiality.*
5. *There should be no unprofessional behaviour required of the participants.*
6. *The participant should be given an opportunity to learn from the research). This can be achieved by debriefing participants and/or by sharing the results of the research with the participants. (Fox 1969, quoted in Merriam & Simpson 1984, 65).*

There were concerns from students about staff or management repercussions towards them for commenting on some perceived negative aspects of CHEC, but students are in no way identified either to each other or to readers of this research. Students were assured that their confidentiality would be protected and that they would be given feedback on the research study when completed.

An application was made to the Advisory Committee on Ethics in Human Experimentation, University of New England, and approval to conduct the study was granted on 24 July 1996.

Summary

The approach to this study meant the students were studied in their own setting, that is, at the Campus itself. As researcher, I attempted to study their perceptions of their participation and to interpret and make sense of the richness and meanings that the students brought to this context within a naturalistic perspective, in order to understand the phenomenon of students' perceptions. Qualitative research as used in this study was a method whereby the researcher could access the perspective of the students being interviewed. This narrative or descriptive method of research can produce data that describes 'what is' and allow the researcher to conduct a study into human life situations. Therefore, the use of two types of interviewing, open-ended questions and in-depth interviewing, provided some standardized information in how participants answered the questions in the preliminary investigation, but the in-depth interviews provided more insight and exploration of the experiences of students at the Campus.

What has emerged in this research and what is considered most significant, is the description of student perceptions of their participation within the context of a joint development. It is anticipated that these perceptions provide insight and shed a new light on the concept of joint developments and, in particular, the Campus itself. During the coding and clustering process, the researcher was aware that it is necessary to present a balanced view of the data and that there exists a potential for selective data to be supplied to influence the analysis. It will be seen in Chapter Five that every effort has been made to represent the basic nature of the results and include contrasting views so that the reader can understand the fundamental aspects of student participation at CHEC.