

Alesco
is the
inclusive,
innovative
and personalised
education
model!

The WEA Hunter Foundation's

ALESCO LEARNING AUSTRALIA



THE
WEAHUNTER
FOUNDATION



WEAHUNTER
QUALITY LEARNING

Alesco students overcome challenges to realise their full potential

Alesco was first established in Newcastle Australia in 2002
and is now being translated to a variety of community
settings throughout the country.



THE
WEAHUNTER
FOUNDATION

What does the Alesco name mean and where did it come from?

"Alesco" comes from the Greek meaning "I grow" or "I am growing".

This embodies the aspiration of a typical Alesco student who wants to take responsibility for their growth through learning.

Understanding Alesco

➤ What is Alesco?

The Alesco School caters for students who are disengaged from mainstream and institutional education and invites participation by students from a variety of settings including social and family dislocation, school bullying, mental health issues and low socio economic backgrounds. Whilst these are not pre-requisites for being an Alesco student, many of the Alesco young people do face some of these challenges.

What is the Management /support structure?

The Alesco school is managed by the WEA Hunter Foundation through a Deed of Trust with the WEA Hunter and its Board of Directors. This translates to a support structure governed by the Board of Directors in turn engaging an Executive Director, a General Manager who acts as the School Principal and school teaching and non- teaching staff.

This team of personnel is made up of suitably qualified teachers, accountants, welfare workers, lawyers and educators and business people.

What is WEA Hunter?

The WEA is the Workers' Educational Association which was established in Australia in 1913. Its charter is to provide educational and learning opportunities for adults in a variety of community settings including the Hunter Region, Sydney, Illawarra and Adelaide.

The WEA Hunter is a company limited by guarantee which commenced its operations in 1917 and is now a thriving not for profit, community based organisation operating from several locations around Newcastle and other regional centres.

What is the relationship with WEA Hunter?

The Deed of Trust established between the WEA Hunter and the WEA Hunter Foundation sets out the relationships between the two entities and the objects of the Foundation. The Board of WEA Hunter is the Board of the Foundation and as such has governance responsibilities for it. The Deed has been registered and endorsed by the ATO and the Australian Charities and Not for profit Commission.



ALESOCO Student Mosaic 2009

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FAQ's

➤ Is Alesco a proper School?

Yes - **Alesco** is a Board of Studies registered and accredited independent school.

Are the teachers qualified?

Yes - All teachers have a tertiary teaching/education qualification.

Does a student receive a proper qualification by attending Alesco?

Yes - By completing their year 12 studies, students will receive their Higher School Certificate; not an HSC equivalent.

How is Alesco different from ordinary schools?

Alesco is a small school which offers an inclusive and personalised education model. This is built on the dual foundation of welfare and curriculum so that the students and teachers can create an individual learning plan to suit a variety of needs.

Do you have to pay to go to Alesco?

Currently the school fees are non - compulsory and set at \$60.00/ annum

What funding does Alesco receive?

Recurrent funding is available through the State and Federal Governments as well as the NSW Association of Independent Schools.

How big is the school?

The school currently allows for about 65 students. This is kept to a modest number to forge positive relationships with our students.

What is the teacher to student ratio?

We maintain small and dynamic classes where the teacher to student ratio is 1:17

What are the student outcomes?

The **Alesco** student co-hort is typical of any non- selective high school and our Higher School Certificate results reflect that; some with well above average outcomes with others below the average whilst most students are middle of the range.

Has the Alesco model been reviewed?

Yes - Alesco had been reviewed both internally and externally since its inception in 2002. This includes feedback from students and families, business and employers as well as tertiary institution appraisals.

Is Professional Development available to the Alesco staff?

Yes - Ongoing PD constitutes an important component of our staff enrichment program. This is available through a variety of opportunities including the University of Newcastle's School of Education, the NSW Institute of Teachers and the NSW Association of Independent Schools. Alesco Conferences are also held every two years to maintain ongoing support for alternative teaching learning models.

Where are the classes run? Does Alesco look like a "typical" school?

The below image portrays the new Alesco multi - purpose hall and teaching kitchen which were funded by the Commonwealth Government in 2009/2010. This contemporary facility forms part of the older and heritage building and campus located at Laman Street, Cooks Hill in Newcastle. The old Cooks Hill School building built in 1904 now accommodates many classrooms and teaching facilities that have been upgraded to support current teaching and learning requirements. This campus provides an environment for adult learners attending WEA Hunter courses and programs, as well the students attending the Alesco School.

This all- encompassing adult learning setting acts as an important model and platform for our school students who are treated as young adults.

Supporting and investing in Alesco

➤ Why does Alesco need my money?

Nearly all of the funding received from state and federal government departments is allocated to the largest component of our costs, wages, some teaching and learning resources and other conventional school based administrative expenses. The very modest and non - compulsory annual student fees of \$60 do not cover the costs required to operate a special school and its specific requirements.

What exactly will my contribution be spent on and are there different options?

Whilst the above funding is hugely supportive of our particular circumstances, there is a significant need to assist further the specific needs of our students and teaching learning environment.

- Scholarships; e.g. to TAFE or other Registered Training Organisation
- Specific teaching aids; e.g. software packages, Smartboard
- Student centred learning aids; e.g. IT hardware and software, art supplies
- Special student experiences and events; e.g. personal development camps and excursions,
- Preparation for transition to work and further education; e.g. professionally prepared resumes, appropriate attire.

Will my money be just spent in the Hunter Valley?

In the main the donations will benefit the student body of the Alesco School in Newcastle. However, given that there are other Alesco like schools in NSW and Victoria, some of the benefits of donations received may be transferable to other settings; e.g. teaching and learning templates, program development packages, registration and accreditation assistance, Alesco specific professional development.

How will my contribution be recognised?

Your contribution may be recognised in a number of ways depending on the nature of the contribution and your wishes. It is our intention and commitment to have your support recognised in a manner that reflects your wishes coupled with the practicalities of the Foundation.

For most businesses your donation will be tax deductible and therefore fully recognised by the ATO as refundable contribution. The donation to the Foundation may allow for you to be publically recognised or even have the donation or scholarship named after you or your business. In any event, we will always report to you as to its benefits.

Can I make a one-off contribution or an ongoing donation?

Both, depending on the Alesco project you are considering and your capacity/ desire to be involved. Some donors may choose a small and discrete, one off project whilst other may want a longer term sustainable involvement.

How will I know that you achieved a result with my money?

The Foundation will report regularly and at agreed times on the donation outcomes. This may be annually or every few months and is usually dependent on your wishes and the nature of the donation or project.

Is my contribution tax deductible?

Yes, the WEA Hunter Foundation is registered with;

1. the Australian Tax Office as a Public Benevolent Institution with Deductible Gift Recipient status,
2. the Australian Charity and Non for profit Commission as a registered charity.

[This means that your financial assistance is likely to be tax deductible.]

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Supporting and investing in Alesco

➤ How is Alesco controlled in areas outside the Hunter Valley?

Each Alesco School is established through an Agreement with the WEA Hunter. This Agreement sets out the terms and conditions under which this school may operate.

Can I sponsor an individual student?

Yes- there are several options available through the support of scholarships, student learning resources and attendance and participation in specific educational events.

Can I support a student after they have completed their school studies?

E.g. TAFE, University?

This is possible if there is a clear nexus and pathway established by Alesco (the Foundation) and the student. The tax deductibility component will require the student to maintain a connection with us, otherwise the student is then deemed beyond our scope of our jurisdiction.

Can I or my company name a scholarship? e.g. the “The Generous Family Geography Prize”

Yes- There will be opportunities for donors to have their contribution recognised through some naming rights.

How do I get started and can I commit to a “trial” involvement and grow the relationship from there?

There is an **Expression of Interest** form at the end of this **Prospectus** that will only take a few moments to complete. Once received, we will contact you to arrange a more comprehensive conversation and consideration of options.

For those who are establishing a “donor” relationship, a trial or one off contribution may be the most suitable option initially. This allows both parties to develop a relationship and an opportunity to assess the value of the contribution.

How will you keep me informed about the benefit that my contribution is providing?

Our commitment is to provide you with regular communications so that you feel that the worth of your involvement is recognised appropriately. The nature and timing of this communication will be negotiated with you at the commencement of the relationship.

Is it your intention to keep “growing” the Alesco family in other regions?

Our commitment is to provide you with regular communications so that Yes- Since our commencement in 2002, there has been an average of one new Alesco per year starting up in a community throughout NSW and Victoria. As you can imagine, establishing a school for disengaged young people is serious business which requires much effort by a number of key stakeholders. These considerations vary so as to reflect the specific needs and dynamics of each community and sponsoring organisation.

All the available indicators from research and anecdotal information suggests that nearly all communities and mainstream schools have students and young people who would benefit from a more personalised learning environment such as Alesco. We receive regular inquiries from these communities requesting further information and do what we can to support their considerations.

Will you come to my Business/Board of Directors and talk about Alesco?

Yes – we are very keen to provide you with the information you require as part of your consideration process and presentations form part of this.



Supporting and investing in Alesco

➤ What does the community get out of a few extra kids finishing the HSC?

As people learn, they develop their own set of skills and knowledge base which translates to human capital. As this human capital is applied to work or a broader community engagement, it translates to social capital thereby constituting a broader community benefit.

So...these are not just a few extra kids. In Newcastle alone, 450 young people have graduated from Alesco in 10 years. This means that these 450 young people are now contributing at every level of society rather than relying on it...studying, working, raising a family etc. Potentially these 450 graduates will have partners who will also value education and the opportunities that it provides. These couples may well have children who, like their parents will value the lifelong learning journey opportunities. Very quickly, a handful of graduates become thousands of beneficiaries and community participants.

The Alesco school provides a safe and supportive environment and the chance of participating in education which otherwise may not have been available previously.

Can my business offer an “in-house course” or post HSC traineeship/apprenticeship?

Certainly, part of our role is to create opportunities for our students to take advantage of pathways to further study or employment. A chance to secure such a placement would be ideal indeed.

[Expression of Interest form overleaf]

The changing face of Cooks Hill School



Cooks Hill School – the early days



Main entrance stairwell



The new multipurpose hall

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Expression of Interest

➤ Name - Individual or Business:

Address:

ABN if business:

Contact phone number:

Fax:

Email address:

Brief description of my interest in the WEA Hunter Foundation/Alesco:

.....

.....

Type of project that I would like to support - *Scholarship, special award, teaching and learning resources, special event.*

.....

I would like my contribution to be "one – off" ☐ or ongoing/recurrent ☐

My level of support or donation:

I found out about the Foundation?:

Please provide feedback about my donation benefits on a yearly or twice a year basis:

I would like to be invited to all Foundation events such as award ceremonies and graduations ☐

I would like my support to be publically acknowledged ☐ anonymous ☐

I would like an opportunity to discuss my potential involvement personally ☐

I am interested in having the Foundation make a presentation to my business ☐

Signed:

Date: / /

