

The logo for Varsity College, featuring the word "VARSITY" in a bold, white, serif font above the word "College" in a white, cursive script font. The background is a dark blue gradient with a curved top edge and a gold-colored triangular shape in the upper right corner.

VARSITY
College

ASPIRE SPORT
BASKETBALL PROGRAM HANDBOOK

History and Rationale

'Fitter, Faster, Stronger & Smarter'

Since its inauguration in 2016, the Varsity College ASPIRE Sports program has been dedicated to nurturing not only high-calibre student athletes across various sporting domains but also leveraging sports conditioning as a holistic vehicle for their physical, mental, social, and emotional growth.

'Unlocking Potential: The ASPIRE Advantage'

We encourage your child to aspire to new heights by setting personal expectations and embracing our program's core values on a daily basis. The ASPIRE Sports program takes pride in shaping not only exceptional student athletes but also lifelong learners who seamlessly integrate the skills acquired within our program into their lives beyond school, ensuring enduring success.

Your child's involvement in our program promises a rich team culture that instils vital life attributes essential for navigating the world outside of our college. The emphasis is on nurturing qualities of 'high expectations,' encompassing work ethic, respect, integrity, responsibility, sportsmanship, and leadership. Through the daily application of these values both on and off the field, our students evolve into champions of character and easily coachable adolescents, ultimately positioning them as highly employable and adaptable adults. Your child's journey in the ASPIRE Sports program is not just about excelling in sports; it's a transformative experience that equips them with the skills to succeed in all facets of life.

Goals and Purpose

The ASPIRE Sports program are a pathway to propel students towards 'elite' levels in their chosen sport through a dynamic and enriching curriculum. Focused on cultivating fitter, faster, stronger, and smarter athletes, ASPIRE offers specialized strength and conditioning training coupled with health educational integrated with movement and performance experiences. This distinctive approach not only elevates the athletic potential of students but also serves as a valuable supplement to their existing professional coaching and training within their chosen sport.

'Elevating Aspirations' – ASPIRE Sports Program

ASPIRE Sports goes beyond conventional methods by exposing athletes to a multi-faceted perspective on professional sports. By fostering a comprehensive skill set, the program aims to enhance the athletes' adaptability and success. In essence, the ASPIRE Athlete Development Excellence program is a transformative journey, providing unparalleled opportunities for growth, preparing students for 'elite' status, and instilling the versatility required for success in the professional sports arena.

Key Personnel

Head of Department

Ty Dowker – tdowk1@eq.edu.au

Head of the Health and Physical Education Department, Ty has brought a wealth of expertise and professional knowledge to Varsity College since his arrival in 2017. With a robust background in elite sport and as a Physical Education teacher at Coombabah SHS, Miami SHS and Hatchend High, London England, Ty has refined his leadership skills in both educational and sports settings. Holding the title of Experienced Senior Teacher, Ty is deeply committed to unlocking athlete potential while emphasizing the significance of health, fitness, and overall well-being for students.

In his role, Ty is responsible for overseeing the program's management, leveraging his extensive experience to provide crucial support to coaches, teachers, students, and wider community. His passion extends beyond the classroom, as he strives to maximize student outcomes within the ASPIRE Sport Programs, ensuring a holistic approach to education and athletic development under his guidance.

Head Coach & ASPIRE Basketball Program Coordinator

Adam Darragh – adarr4@eq.edu.au

Qualifications:

- Experienced Senior Teacher
- Bachelor of Applied Science - Human Movements & Education

Coaching Experience:

- Head Coach Varsity College Aspire Basketball Program (2008 - Present)
- Varsity Vipers Junior Basketball Club - Club President (2009 – Present)
- Head Coach South Coast 16-18 years Boys 2010 - Present

Playing Experience:

USA College Basketball

- Martin Methodist College – Pulaski Tennessee 2001 - 2003
- Academic All-American Student Athlete & Deans List
- 2002 Freshman All-Star 5

Queensland Basketball League - (NBL1)

- Gold Coast Rollers (2006 - 2017)
- North Side Wizards (2005)

National Basketball League (NBL)

- Brisbane Bullets (2003 - 2005)
- West Sydney Razorbacks (2005 - 2006)
- New Zealand Breakers (2006 – 2007)

High Performance Coach

Simon Stevens

Coaching Experience:

- Varsity College ASPIRE Basketball High Performance Coach (2022)
- Senior, Junior & Sophomore Girls coach (2022)
- Varsity Vipers Junior Basketball Club Coach (2022)

Playing Experience:

- NBL1 Championship player (2003)
- NBL1 All Star Selection (2006)
- South West Pirates Shooting Guard of the Decade (2000-2010)
- Gold Coast Rollers Shooting Guard of the Decade (2010-2020)
- Former NBL1 Gold Coast Rollers Captain
- NBL1 Finals Runners up (2008)

Associate Program Coach

Scott McGregor

Coaching Experience:

- Varsity College Sophomore Boys State Championship - Silver medal (2020)
- U14 Div 1 Gold Coast Representative Coach – Qld State Champions (2020)
- Gold Coast u14 Representative Coach (2021)
- Varsity Vipers Junior Basketball Club - Director of Coaching (2019-Present)

Playing Experience:

- Australian Institute of Sport (1994-95)
- NBL Rookie of the Year (1996)
- Newcastle Falcons (1996-97)
- Sydney Kings (1998-2000)
- West Sydney Razorbacks (2000- 07)
- Hawke's Bay Hawks (2004)
- Otago Nuggets (2005)
- Gold Coast Blaze (2007-09)
- NBL1 Gold Coast Rollers (2011–2017)

Program Overview

The ASPIRE Sport Basketball Excellence program is conducted as a year 7-9 subject. Students will have the opportunity to engage in three x 70min scheduled classes for the week for the full year. The ASPIRE Basketball Program comprises of integrated theoretical and practical elements.

The ASPIRE Basketball program focuses on providing a sequentially developed program for students over years 7 -12 closely linked to the teaching practices and standards according to Basketball Australia.

- Year 7 & 8 – Intermediate: Skill Acquisition, strategy and game play
- Year 9 & 10 – Advanced: Skill Acquisition, strategy, motion principles and game play
- Year 11 & 12 – Elite: Games and Performance Training

Junior & Sophomore Team training times:

- Mondays 2:30pm – 4:00pm
- Wednesdays 1:15pm – 2:25pm

OPENS (years 11-12) Team training times

- Tuesdays 2:30pm – 4:00pm
- Thursdays 2:30pm – 4:00pm

High-Performance Training Sessions:

Students have the opportunity to be selected into our highly regarded High-Performance Program that will train prior to school with Coach Simon Stevens. These sessions will focus on individual skills and shooting mechanics from 7am-8am on allocated mornings.

Students **MUST** be on time, in training uniform and ready to practice as per the program training times set out above. If a student is unable to take part for any reason they are to notify the Head Coach via email, phone call or in person.

Uniforms

Students accepted into the ASPIRE Basketball program will be provided an 'ASPIRE Basketball Training uniform (Training singlet and Training shorts).

It is the expectation of the ASPIRE Basketball program that students will attend ALL training sessions with their training uniform. Students will not be permitted to train without the correct uniform. Training uniforms can be collected from the College uniform shop located near the tuck shop upon payment of program fees.

Competitions & Tournaments

The ASPIRE Basketball program takes part in several competitions throughout the school calendar year starting with the interschool GC24 competition for all college students.

In addition to the interschool competition, selected players will also take part in several invitational and exhibition style tournaments in three different age groups set by Basketball Queensland. These age groups are SOPHOMORE Boys & Girls (years 7-8), JUNIOR Boys & Girls (years 9-10) and OPENS (years 11-12). The ASPIRE Basketball competes in the following Basketball tournaments:

- Gold Coast Invitational Tournament
- TSS Invitational Tournament
- Marsden State High School Invitational Tournament
- District (Oceanic) Trials
- Regional (South Coast) Trials – Queensland State Championships
- Opens - Champion Basketball School of Queensland Tournament (CBSQ)
- Junior (9/10) - Champion Basketball School of Queensland Tournament (CBSQ)
- Sophomore (7/8) - Champion Basketball School of Queensland Tournament (CBSQ)
- Australian School Championships – National Titles

Note: Exhibition and one-off games will be scheduled during the school year. Players and families will be notified of player selection in advance.

Partnerships and Industry Links

The ASPIRE Basketball program has built strong relationships over the years with major stakeholders in Basketball, including the Gold Coast City Regional Basketball Association (GCCRBA). These partnerships provide students opportunities to compete at many different levels including representative teams at the club, district, regional and state levels.

Varsity College ASPIRE Basketball is proudly partnered with the Varsity Vipers Junior Basketball Club. Athletes have the opportunity to play in the Gold Coast City Regional Basketball Association for the Varsity Vipers club which is based at Varsity College senior campus.

Student Selection Criteria

Prospective candidates for the ASPIRE Athlete Development Excellence program must demonstrate, along with providing supporting documentation:

- Completion and submission of the ASPIRE ADP Application Form
- Above-average academic results in all subjects (exceptions may be granted)
- Exemplary levels of behaviour and effort
- Outstanding achievements in specific sports
- Exceptional levels of physical fitness showcased at the ASPIRE Sports trial day
- A clear eagerness to enhance their skills within their chosen sport and contribute to the broader sports community of the college.

Following an interview process, staff and specialized teachers will assess the suitability of each applicant. Successful candidates will receive notification from the school, and the school's decision will be deemed final.

Expectations and Commitment to Program Requirements

The ASPIRE Program is committed to establishing and maintaining a high-performing and supportive learning environment for all its students. Being an athlete in the ASPIRE Sport Program is a privilege, and students enrolled in the program must appreciate and uphold their placement. To this end, ASPIRE students will strive to excel across the Global ASPIRE Performance Areas at the highest level.

Academic (Classroom and Extra-curricular)

- Maintain high academic standards in all subjects (No 'D' or 'E' standards).
- Submit all assessments complete and by the due date.

Behaviour and Effort

- Maintain a very high standard of behaviour and effort across all subject areas.
- Respect teachers and fellow students at all times.
- Be punctual and prepared for all lessons.
- Display high levels of behaviour at all times, not only during ASPIRE lessons but with all Varsity College staff (teaching and non-teaching), contract, and supply teachers.

Culture

- Understand the responsibility as an ambassador of the ASPIRE Sport Program to be seen as a positive role model to others within the local community.
- Maintain a high level of school attendance to uphold learning standards.
- Actively participate in competitions, events, activities, and excursions related to the ASPIRE Sport Program.
- Demonstrate a clear desire for extending skills within their chosen sport.
- Uphold high uniform standards in line with the Varsity College Appearance Policy.
- Be accepting and tolerant of all students.
- Show modesty and humility in interacting with peers.

Maintenance of Position in Program

ASPIRE Sport Programs conduct a formal review process at the end of each term for students consistently not meeting the Global ASPIRE Performance Areas outlined in the Expectations and Commitment to the Program. Grounds for review may include:

- Consistent lateness
- Truancy, repeated detentions, after-school detentions, suspension
- Failure to submit assessments regularly (monitoring and due dates)
- Failure to meet academic, behaviour, and effort standards as outlined in the Expectations and Commitment to the Program
- Failure to meet the financial commitment of the ASPIRE Program

The ASPIRE Sport Review Process for students consistently not meeting expectations is conducted at the end of the term. The following procedures are then implemented:

- These students and their parents will be contacted by either the ASPIRE Sport Coordinator or the Head of the Department, where expectations of the program will be discussed. Specific targets will be identified, and it is the student's responsibility to meet these.

- The student will be placed on probation for the following term. If students fail to meet their targets throughout this period, their enrolment in the program will be cancelled, and they will be placed in a mainstream class for the remainder of the year.

Application Process

The Varsity College ASPIRE Program applicants are required to:

- Complete the online ASPIRE Sport Program Application which can be found on the Varsity College website. Upload all required documentation as required and submit by the closing date.

Please note that incomplete applications will not be accepted.

- All Applications must be received no later than **18th March 2024**.
- You will receive further correspondence about testing dates and times once your application has been received and processed.

Upon completion of the application process, staff and specialist teachers will decide on the suitability of each applicant. Successful applicants will be notified by the school and the ***school's decision will be final.***

APPENDIX 1: Student Parent Agreement

Student Agreement

I understand that the purpose of the ASPIRE Program is to select and retain the most highly motivated and knowledgeable students who will maintain the level of commitment, dedication, and interest necessary to successfully achieve quality learning outcomes in their program of study. I acknowledge that the ASPIRE Program will create and maintain a learning environment with like-minded students who will support me in achieving my personal and academic goals in my program of study.

1. In all areas of college life, I understand that I bear the responsibility of being an ambassador of the ASPIRE Program, seen as a positive role model to others within the local community.
2. I will strive to perform at the highest level across the Global ASPIRE Performance Areas.
3. I will demonstrate grit and determination as I work towards my goals, with the support of my parents.
4. I understand that failure to adhere to the standards of the ASPIRE Program may result in my removal from the program and forfeiture of my entrance fees.

I hereby accept my position to be a part of the Varsity College ASPIRE Program in 2025. I am aware that by accepting a place, I commit to adhering to the ASPIRE Expectations and Commitment to Program Requirements and upholding the values and expectations therein.

Parent Agreement

- I understand that the purpose of the ASPIRE Program is to provide my child with a learning environment that supports and facilitates quality learning outcomes in their program of study. I also recognize that an aim of the ASPIRE Program is to ensure that, as a parent, I am supportive of both my child in the program and of Varsity College.
- I am committed to assisting my child in maintaining a high level of commitment to successfully achieve quality learning outcomes in their program of study. I pledge to:
 - Assist my child in maintaining a high level of attendance to uphold learning standards.
 - Actively encourage my child to maintain high standards in all subject areas.
 - Provide support to my child and the college in adhering to Varsity College policies and procedures.
 - Monitor the completion of homework assignments.
 - Attend Parent-Teacher Interview Evenings where possible and convenient.
 - Maintain open lines of communication with the college to ensure success for my child.
 - Fulfill all financial commitments as outlined during the application process (please note all Aspire fees are non-refundable)

Signed: _____
(Parent)

(Student)