KOTARA HIGH SCHOOL

We Aim High

YEAR 8

ELECTIVE CHOICES

2026

OVERVIEW YEAR 8 2026

This handbook outlines the Technology (Mandatory) and Elective Program for Year 8 in 2025. It has been prepared so that parents and students will be aware, not only of the variety of courses offered, butof the choice that is possible within subject areas. Our program relies heavily on student choice and a careful study of this handbook is needed.

If further advice is required, please contact any of the following staff.

Key contact	Email
Principal: Mr Mark Snedden	mark.snedden@det.nsw.edu.au
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Head Teacher TAS: Mrs Rebecca Murphy	rebecca.murphy@det.nsw.edu.au

CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

Students in Year 8 2026 will follow the pattern of study indicated below:

1. English
2. Mathematics
3. Science
4. HSIE
5. PDHPE
6. Japanese
6. Mentoring
7. Sport
8. Technology Mandatory
9. One Elective

This booklet provides information regarding the available options for students to satisfy requirements of points 8 and 9 above.

Parents and students are advised that:

- Each student will be emailed an individual access code to make their selections online at https://spring.edval.education/login.

- Kotara High School offers Year 8 students a choice of one **Elective Course.** Descriptions of these courses are on pages 7 - 14 in this booklet. A summary of all elective courses can be found on page 6.

- Students are advised to choose their Elective courses carefully. The number of classes allocated to particular courses and staffing result from these choices. Changes to selections after the closing date cannot be guaranteed.

- Once selections are made, students will be enrolled in one elective course for the entirity of 2026. This means that students who are currently in Year 7 **must choose one preference from those on offer in this booklet**. The nature of the selection process is such that we cannot guarantee that all the options will run in 2026. For this reason, we ask students to choose **two reserve options**.

- Whilst every attempt is made to give students their **first** preferences, in some cases, this is not possible. Some students may find that the structure of curriculum results in a clash of courses, with two or more of a student's choices being allocated to the same line of the timetable. In other cases, if insufficient students choose a particular course, the course may not run. Students involved will then be allocated their reserve selections in order of preference.

- Students will only be able to apply to change courses in the last two weeks of this school year or the first two weeks of next year. In applying to change courses, **students should <u>not</u> assume that the application will be granted**. Any change will depend upon vacancies in the course to which the student wishes to change, whether the change will result in a course clash and whether the student's course pattern still complies with NESA requirements. Changes will only be considered if an application is made after completing a form available from the foyer of the administration building or the Deputy Principal.

- Parents and students are advised that **some** elective courses **involve a cost.** Where applicable, these costs are indicated at the course descriptions from page 7 - 14 of this booklet. Parents are requested **to meet these costs as early as possible in the semester**. If there is difficulty in meeting the contribution, **assistance** is available through the Student Assistance Scheme. Application forms are available from the school office.

MAKING SELECTIONS

Opens: **Monday 23rd June 2025 (Week 9, Term 2) at 9.00am**
Closes: **Friday 25th July 2025 (Week 1, Term 3) at 3.00pm**

Instructions

1. Visit the website https://spring.edval.education/login
2. Use your unique access code to login and make your selections.
3. Choose 1 course from the Electives group.
4. You will also choose two reserve preferences from the Electives group.
5. Please note that Technology Mandatory courses in 2026 will be determined by which class students are in next year and there is no choice in these subjects as all students are to complete all areas of **Agriculture and Food Technologies, Digital Technologies, Engineered Systems and Material Technologies**
6. NO subject can appear twice in your selections.
7. If a subject is important for you, then select it before any less important subjects.
8. The number of classes to be run in a subject will depend upon the number of students who select that subject in their preferences.
9. If the school decides not to run a subject that you have selected, then it may be replaced by one of your reserve subjects.
10. Consult with Mr Paterson or Mr Garner if necessary for any concerns.

OVERVIEW OF COURSES 2026

TECHNOLOGY MANDATORY 2026 - COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Technology Mandatory engages students in design and production activities as they develop solutions to identified needs and opportunities. Through the practical application of knowledge and understanding they learn about:

- **Agriculture and Food Technologies**
- **Digital Technologies**
- **Engineered Systems**
- **Material Technologies**

The syllabus identifies the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that students are expected to develop in the Technology learning area. Students are required to study Technology Mandatory for 200 hours. This is achieved in years 7 and 8.

Course Description
Technology Mandatory engages students in design and production activities as they develop solutions to identified needs and opportunities.

What will students learn?
Students develop knowledge and understanding of the four Technology contexts through the Design and Production of solutions to meet identified needs or opportunities.

In Agriculture and Food Technologies students learn about the processes of food and fibre production and investigate the innovative and sustainable supply of agriculturally produced raw materials. Students are provided with opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding about food selection and preparation, food safety and how to make informed choices when experimenting with and preparing nutritious food.

The Digital Technologies context encourages students to develop an empowered attitude towards digital technologies, use abstractions to represent and deconstruct real-world problems, and implement and evaluate digital solutions. Students have the opportunity to become innovative creators of digital technologies in addition to effective users of digital systems and critical consumers of the information they convey. Students are provided with opportunities to develop fluency in a general-purpose programming language and use these skills to solve information problems and to automate repetitive tasks.

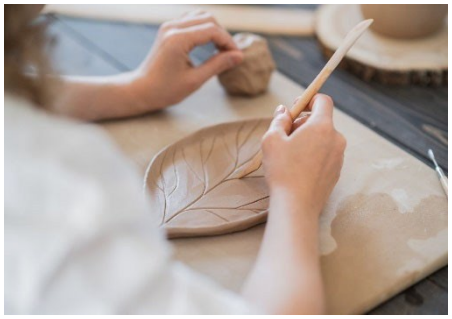
The Engineered Systems context focuses on how force, motion and energy can be used in systems, machines and structures. Students are provided with opportunities to experiment and develop prototypes to test their solutions. They are lead to understand how forces and the properties of materials affect the behaviour and performance of engineered systems, machines and structures. Knowledge of these principles and systems enables the design and production of sustainable, engineered solutions.

The Material Technologies context focuses on the application of specialist skills and techniques to a broad range of traditional, contemporary and advancing materials. Students develop knowledge and understanding of the characteristics and properties of a range of materials through research, experimentation and practical investigation. These are applied when they produce products to satisfy identified needs and opportunities.

FROM THE ALPACA FACULTY

ART STUDIO

Dive into a dynamic creative experience that blends **clay, photography, and multimedia** into one exciting course. In *Art Studio*, you'll explore the magic of the darkroom, learn to compose powerful photographs, and experiment with light and perspective. You'll get hands-on with clay, creating unique ceramic artworks from pinch pots to sculptural forms, and finish them with glaze and firing techniques. You'll also develop skills across a range of art forms such as drawing, painting, printmaking, mixed media, and digital design. Whether you're a beginner or a confident young artist, this elective offers the perfect foundation for future Visual Arts studies—and a chance to express your creativity in new and exciting ways. Students will not study Visual Arts in Year 8 unless it is chosen as an elective.



Contribution - $60 (take home your artworks)
Requirements: Visual Arts Diary (A4 size)

DRAMA

In this course, fun and games will combine to work out ways of exploring your hidden talents. The course involves participation in all aspects of theatrical skills (warm-ups, improvisation, mime, play- building, and workshops), leading to a performance.

The aim of the course is that students will acquire an understanding of the nature of dramatic arts and its forms. Students will be involved in workshops where dramatic themes and forms are explored through active participation. This includes acting, directing, stage management, designing, costuming, lighting, make-up, sound effects and projections.
Contribution - $10

FILM MAKING

This elective is a practical course for students interested in film making. As part of this course students will watch and analyse select movies to assist in their understanding about how techniques are used to create awesome films.

Students will learn about storytelling devices used by filmmakers, camera shots and techniques, how to use a drone and editing software to enhance film's purpose. The combination of the theoretical study of films, the practical knowledge of filming and using editing software will be combined when students produce their own short films.

The course is about being creative and developing technical expertise in camera work to produce your own film.

Study in this area leads to the development of skills essential for senior film work in Drama, Year 12 Extension 2 English film project and Photography, Video and Digital Media.

Contribution: $10

ROCK BAND

The Rock Band course is entirely practical and will begin by extending on students' skills developed in Year 7 Music, where students can choose to focus exclusively on a rock band instrument of their choice, typically being bass guitar, drum kit, guitar, keyboard and voice.

The course will also cater for students who already have skills on other instruments such as brass or wood wind, as well as those that are starting from scratch.

Students will not study Music in Year 8 unless it is chosen as an elective.

Contribution: $10

FROM THE HSIE FACULTY

MINECRAFT MACHINATIONS MEETS SPHERO CIRCLE WORK

Ever dreamed of immersing yourself in a world of your own creation, battling foes near and far, then this is the course for you. Through project based HSIE centered lessons, students will build critical 21st century skills like collaboration, creative problem solving and digital citizenship. After you have mastered your world learn to code in Minecraft with Codebuilder and you will then be introduced to Sphero where you will continue your coding journey compliments of C and Javascript.

Contribution - $10

OCEAN TECH

Students will be immersed in the wonders of the ocean. Project based learning tasks will provide students with opportunities to solve issues relating to the marine environment such as designing shark deterrents and designing their own species-specific fishing lures. Through a range of research, design and create opportunities students will work collaboratively to problem solve and investigate marine based topics.

Our Ocean Tech classroom has aquariums housing both freshwater and saltwater species from around the world which students will be responsible for using current technology and water testing procedures.

Students will have the opportunity to participate in several excursions and interactive activities such as:

- Design, create and fish with self-made fishing lures.
- Research, design and create a shark deterrent.
- Aquarium maintenance and development

Contribution - $15

FROM THE PD/H/PE FACULTY

HEALTH EXPERTS – THE SCIENCE OF SAVING LIVES

Students develop foundational first aid and CPR knowledge, culminating in basic accredited first aid certification. Includes a visit from local paramedics and a excursions to surf lifesaving clubs, outdoor recreation facilities, and fire stations. They will have hands-on experience and practical assistance from leading experts in the field of first aid, health, and sports medicine.

Students explore the body systems essential to life and how trauma, stress, or illness can impact function. Includes a field trip to the University of Newcastle medical labs and potential multiple day work experience with professional health experts.

Students take on the role of public health detectives to investigate real-world illnesses, pandemics, and the science behind vaccines and disease control. Includes a field trip to the John Hunter Hospital's public health unit OR Hunter Medical Research Institute.

Students explore careers in health science, medicine, fitness, emergency workers, and technology. Includes work on health technologies (stethoscopes, AR anatomy, etc.) and a capstone project on an innovation in health.

Contribution - NIL

SPORTS STUDIES

Sports Studies is an exciting, educational, and enjoyable course which is an extension of the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education and Physical Activity & Sport Studies syllabuses. It is a movement-based course and uses a variety of sports as the focus for practical and theory units. Students are given the opportunity to increase their awareness of issues relating to fitness, movement skill development, coaching, strategies and techniques, event management and career opportunities.

Teams, games, competitions, skills, and techniques will be used to provide examples that will provide knowledge and skill of selected sports as well, as providing an opportunity for students to transfer this knowledge to other forms of physical activity and sport. Students need no prior experience of sport but do need a willingness to participate enthusiastically in practical lessons and an organised approach to theory lessons.

Contribution – Nil

FROM THE TAS FACULTY

INTERIOR and FASHION DESIGN

Students will design and make fashionable clothing and interior items and learn about the technology of colour in dyeing and printing fabrics and explore production techniques using both machine and hand methods of construction.

Contribution: $30

FUTURE FOODS

With the world's population expected to reach almost 10 billion people by 2050, the production and provision of sufficient, nutritious food is a global challenge.

This food practical course explores food product development, healthy food choices and the marketing of food.

Student will explore food selections and what effects this has on changing food cultures and how to make better choices in food consumption and monitor healthy eating. Further opportunities will investigate how technological advances are influencing the food system.

Contribution: $50

METAL TECHNOLOGY

The Metal 1 elective develops knowledge and skills in the use of tools, materials and techniques related to general metalwork. These are enhanced and further developed through the study of specialist modules in Metal Machining and Fabrication.

Practical projects reflect the nature of the Metal focus area and provide opportunities for students to develop specific knowledge, understanding and skills associated with metal-related technologies. These may include:|

- Fabricated projects
- Sheet metal products

Requirements: DoE Mandatory footwear requirements and long hair tied back

Contributions: $35

Timber Fundamentals

Woodworking Fundamentals / Timber Skills

Learning to design and construct items are essential skills used in our built environment.

Students will focus on the development of skills when working with the timber resources, equipment and machinery. These skills will provide students with an introduction to the workshop and an opportunity to pursue further studies and specialisations in Stage 5 and 6 and possible professional endeavours in the future.

Students will focus on fundamental skills in the use of a range of materials, tools and manufacturing techniques used in the timber industry which will enable them to create individual and useful projects.

Requirements: DoE Mandatory footwear requirements and long hair tied back

Contributions: $35

FROM THE ENGLISH FACULTY

YOUNG WRITERS

Young Writers is an exciting and dynamic Year 8 elective for students who love storytelling, creativity, and self-expression. Whether you dream of becoming an author, enjoy crafting fantastical worlds, or are passionate about sharing real-world stories, this course provides a platform to explore a variety of writing styles and projects in a fun and supportive environment.

What You'll Do:

- **Creative Writing:** Explore short stories, poetry, and micro-fiction across a range of styles and genres.
- **Myths, Legends, and Fantasy:** Discover the timeless power of storytelling through ancient tales and modern fantasy and use these as inspiration for your own imaginative works.
- **Young Reporters:** Investigate and report on issues and current events, honing research and journalistic writing skills.
- **True Stories, Real Voices:** Craft and share personal stories, memoirs, and narratives.
- **Personal Writing Project:** Design and complete your own writing piece or collection, with mentoring and peer feedback.

Community and Collaboration:

- Share your work through public displays, readings, and publication opportunities
- Join a team to write and publish a book in a day, combining creativity, teamwork, and quick thinking

This elective gives enthusiastic writers the time, space, and guidance to take their writing to the next level.

Contribution - NIL