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Queensland Association of School Tuckshops Inc.

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Cover: Andrew Porfiri Photography and Cavendish Road State High School Canteen.

## Welcome to 2024

Welcome to the Term 1, 2024 edition of Talking Tuckshops. Distributed to all schools across Queensland, even if you're not a QAST member, this newsletter is a useful tool for tuckshop staff and managers keen to make their tuckshop thrive.



2023 was another eventful year for our small but mighty organisation. Highlights included partnering in the delivery of the inaugural A Better Choice Conference and Expo with Health and Wellbeing Queensland and joining the Canteen Consortium to deliver the "For the Love of Veg" project.

Our Creating Connections Through Cooking Program continued to go from strength to strength, with funding renewed for another year and the project being recognised as a finalist in the Queensland Community Achievement Awards.

The amazing work being done in Queensland tuckshops was again spotlighted at a national level, with our 2023 Recipe of the Year winner and finalists attracting media coverage from Sunrise, 7 News and ABC Radio and TV.



SYN SIGNAL SAFETY

Deanne and Astri at the Queensland Community Achievement Awards

The coverage put tuckshops front and centre and QAST is pleased to have built on this with continued ongoing segments on ABC Radio and regular contributions to state-wide news outlets.

We hosted our first "Tuckshop Pop-Up" at Parliament House where we talked all things tuckshops with Queensland's elected Members of Parliament. Together with our Management Committee, and tuckshop convenors, staff and volunteers from around south east Queensland, we discussed the crucial role tuckshops play in schools, and how hard working you all are.

Tuckshop Day was another great success story, with our hearts warmed to see the outpouring of love through flowers and certificates, special morning teas and assemblies, and beautiful artwork from students to recognise and support the hard work of tuckshop workers across the state.

We also welcomed further State Government funding for tuckshop upgrades, which saw 40 schools across Queensland secure funds for much needed improvements to their tuckshops. We know just how important fit-for-purpose infrastructure and facilities are for implementing healthier menu options. We're confident these funds will help to increase the profile of tuckshops in the school environment, and help children make healthy food and drink choices for life.

On a member services-front, QAST continued to deliver key training for tuckshops, including 6 Pathway to Profit Courses, 10 Convenor Courses and 13 Food Safety Supervisor Courses. Our Menu Health Check and Financial Advisory Services continued to be well-used, while downloads of our online resources and use of the QAST website continued to rise.



Our network meetings throughout the year attracted tuckshops from across the state and we saw some great engagement and networking.

#### On the horizon

2024 is set to be another big year, with new planned partnerships and initiatives, plenty of networking opportunities and events, and regular training already in the works.

We're thrilled to have secured funding from the Queensland Government through Health and Wellbeing Queensland to continue to deliver the Healthier Tuckshops Support Program for another year (read more on page 5). We look forward to continuing to work with all schools across Queensland to deliver on our vision for healthy tuckshops, healthy schools, healthy children.

Cheers, The QAST team



## Join the QAST community

#### QAST membership is an invaluable business investment.

Experienced convenors have many skills, but there is always something more to learn. For new convenors, who have to hit the ground running, having a dedicated team behind them can make all the difference.

Who better to have your back than an organisation that exists to support tuckshops.

<u>Membership</u> applies to anyone attached to your school, with many direct benefits that translate to tangible time and cost savings.

Membership gives you access to a first-class range of services and up-to-date information, designed to support you and your tuckshop, boosting its presence and viability in the school community.



## Whats in it for my school?

#### **TANGIBLE BENEFITS**

Achieve higher profits and better financial accountability, more efficient operations, and superior food safety practices. Your tuckshop menu will improve and increase in popularity, and your tuckshop staff will be supported and heard.

#### **SAFEGUARD**

Being a member of QAST is a safeguard; if you don't have it, it may not be there when you need it. When a problem arises, we are your go-to.

#### **PEAK BODY**

We're the primary source of professional development, training, and resources. We have your back, and our large membership base puts us in a strong position to influence outcomes.

#### **TRUSTED**

QAST is a trusted source of information. We solve complex issues around running a tuckshop, working collaboratively with everyone involved.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY**

All employers are responsible for ensuring their staff have access to professional development and skills growth. We offer tailored training for members at a significant discount.

#### The investment

SCHOOL SIZE	COST/YEAR
Less than 100 students	\$50
100 to 999 students	\$280
More than 1,000 students	\$320

#### **SPECIALISED SERVICES**

QAST membership gives you FREE access to up to four Menu Health Checks each year (valued at \$75 each) and one Financial Advisory Service (valued at \$200).

#### **CONNECTIONS**

Through our social media platforms, networking opportunities, <u>training courses</u>, events and large member database, we can put you in touch with your peers to learn, share, celebrate and even vent when you need to. We're also here to support and help new convenors as they find their feet.

#### **OUR CHILDREN MATTER**

We believe tuckshops are an essential service to busy families, and offering healthy food to children is the right thing to do. We offer advice beyond the Smart Choices guidelines because there is more to delivering a nutritious foodservice than just complying with a policy.

#### **INSPIRATION**

At QAST, we're all in it together. Our members may have different goals and cater to different audiences, but in the end our goal is the same; run the best tuckshop you possibly can.

## Ready to get involved?

Like what you've read and keen to join the community?

Head over to <u>our website</u> and sign up to become a QAST member today.





QAST was thrilled to join the Health Minister, Shannon Fentiman MP, member for McConnel, Grace Grace MP, and Health and Wellbeing Queensland CEO Robyn Littlewood at Kelvin Grove State College to announce another year of funding to deliver the Healthier Tuckshops Support Program.

It was so wonderful to hear the Queensland Government acknowledge the importance of tuckshops in the school environment and their contribution to healthy eating for Queensland children.

More than a third of families rely on the school tuckshop once a week to feed their kids.

School tuckshops are collectively one of Queensland's biggest catering providers, with about 1,400 tuckshops servicing 870,000 students across the state.

"Tuckshops help hundreds of thousands of Queensland families feed their children nutritious and delicious food and drinks every day," Health Minister Shannon Fentiman said.

"The school tuckshop is no longer just a treat. For many busy parents and carers, it's a necessity, which is why we invest in supporting them provide the healthier choices to our kids.

"I know many families struggle with accessing healthier options for their children and this is one way we can help minimise that challenge.

"I am excited that we are providing more than \$130,000 in additional funding to ensure we continue delivering the <u>Healthier Tuckshops support program</u>."



The program is delivered by QAST and funded by the Queensland Government through the state's prevention agency, Health and Wellbeing Queensland.

"It's never been more important for tuckshops to supply affordable and healthy food and drinks to students as families adjust to the rising cost-of-living," Health and Wellbeing Queensland Chief Executive Officer Dr Robyn Littlewood said.

"Research by Health and Wellbeing Queensland shows 39 per cent of families order from the tuckshop once a week or more.

"Not everyone has access to the same food at low prices, and for families who experience food insecurity, tuckshops are vital in providing tasty, interesting and affordable meals that encourage children to adopt life-long healthy habits."

QAST Chief Executive Officer, Deanne Wooden also explained how complex and underrated the role of the convenor is.

"The school tuckshop is essentially a small business, with many moving parts. It is a higher-pressure environment than most foodservice operations because of the short timeframe for service," Deanne said.

"We are so pleased that the Queensland Government recognises the important place tuckshops have in the fabric of the school environment and how essential healthy menus are to student health, wellbeing and academic outcomes.

Thank you to Julie and team at The Hive Canteen at Kelvin Grove State College for their help in making the morning possible.

#### **About the Healthier Tuckshops Support Program**

The Healthier Tuckshops program offers support to ALL Queensland schools, helping tuckshops serve healthy foods and drinks, in line with the <u>Smart Choices</u> strategy.

FREE to anyone working in and around a tuckshop, the Healthier Tuckshops Support Program is a great way to learn more about what makes a tuckshop, its menu, and its people, healthy.

The program offers free <a href="networking\_opportunities">networking\_opportunities</a>, online <a href="networking\_opportunities">resources</a> and <a href="networking\_opportunities</a>, online <a href="networking\_opportunities</a>, plus a <a href="food and drink classification service">food and drink classification service</a> for manufacturers, industry members and suppliers. It also makes our popular <a href="Recipe of the Year">Recipe of the Year</a> competition and the <a href="Talking Healthier Tuckshops">Tuckshops</a> <a href="Podcast">Podcast</a> possible.

Keen to learn more or get involved? Check out our website.

The Healthier Tuckshops Program is funded by the Queensland Government through Health and Wellbeing Queensland.





## Meet our 2024 QAST Management Committee

QAST is fortunate to have a Management Committee full of passionate people who bring with them a wealth of knowledge and experience.

As a group they are responsible for the administration and strategic planning of QAST's activities on behalf of the Association's members.

The Committee members come from diverse backgrounds and include current and former tuckshop convenors, community

members, and representatives from parent and government bodies.

This group provides valuable insight into all aspects of tuckshop operations and their role in the community to ensure the Association remains representative of its members and relevant to current issues in the sector.

In 2024 QAST is thrilled to inaugurate several new members and welcome back long-serving members.



MADONNA JARDINE President



CANDICE COOPMANS
Vice President



LORIE ROBINSON Vice President



BARBARA RADCLIFFE Treasurer



**DEANNE GULBIN-O'NEILL**Tuckshop Convenor
Representative



TANIA-LEA NELSON Tuckshop Convenor Representative



MEGAN TOWNER Tuckshop Convenor Representative



KIM WOOD
Tuckshop Convenor
Representative



RAELENE AKERS
Tuckshop Convenor
Representative



KATIE JORSS
Community
Representative



CATHY CONDON Catholic School Parents Qld



DONNA PREZ Community Representative



JENNY SHARD Education Queensland Representative



P&Cs Qld Representative

## The survey results are in...

The 2023 QAST Tuckshop Survey was in the field midway through last year with a bumper response!

You told us you like what we do. Our resources are highly regarded with the entire range being rated as 'excellent' or 'good' by over 80 per cent of respondents. Member services, such as the <u>Book-a-Chat</u>, <u>Menu Health Check</u>, <u>Tune-Up</u> and <u>Financial Advisory Service</u> are also valued with over 90 per cent of respondents rating the services as 'excellent' or 'good'.

We were blown away to find that 83 per cent of respondents had made healthy changes to menus in the last year, but we also heard you want more information on menu planning. Along with volunteers, food safety, marketing, and financial reviews and advice.

This helps us plan for 2024, so stay tuned for our new Healthy Menu Planning training course (page 24). Look out for our Volunteer Management course (page 19) already <u>online</u> now at a reduced cost, and consider registering for our Pathway to Profit <u>course</u>, which will equip you with the skills to master your tuckshop finances. Find hundreds of resources on our <u>website</u>, and for any tricky queries, use our <u>Book-a-Chat</u> service for a one on one session with a tuckshop expert.

# 2023 tuckshop survey RESULTS SNAPSHOT

The 2023 Tuckshop Survey was conducted by the Queensland Association of School Tuckshops in July 2023 and was sent to all Queensland schools.



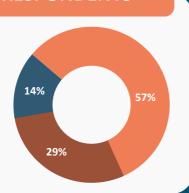
#### **SURVEY RESPONDENTS**

217

MEMBERS

NON-MEMBERS

UNSURE



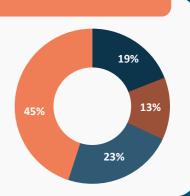
#### TIME INVOLVED IN TUCKSHOPS

< 1 YEAR

1 - 2 YEARS

3 - 5 YEARS

> 5 YEARS



## TOPICS TO MEET TUCKSHOP GOALS

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS



#### **RESOURCES**

(OF THOSE WHO USED THEM)



93%

RESPONDENTS RATED QAST CASE STUDIES AS EXCELLENT OR GOOD.



90%

RESPONDENTS RATED QAST RECIPES AS EXCELLENT OR GOOD.



88%

RESPONDENTS RATED QAST FOOD SAFETY RESOURCES AS EXCELLENT OR GOOD.



84%

RESPONDENTS RATED QAST MENU PLANNING RESOURCES AS EXCELLENT OR GOOD.



84%

RESPONDENTS RATED QAST OPERATIONS RESOURCES AS EXCELLENT OR GOOD.

#### **MENU IMPROVEMENTS**

**74%** †19% FROM 2022

LEARNT NEW INFO FROM QAST TO IMPROVE THEIR MENU.

71% †6% FROM 2022

FELT MORE CONFIDENT TO PROVIDE HEALTHY FOOD AND DRINKS ON THEIR MENU.

83% 15% FROM 2022

HAVE MADE HEALTHY CHANGES TO THEIR MENU IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS.

# A voice for tuckshops OAST is committed to being an independent

QAST is committed to being an independent voice for Queensland school tuckshops through our advocacy activities. The issues important to our members drives our advocacy agenda.



The QAST team works with a broad range of stakeholders on behalf of our members. We are active members of the Federation of Canteens in Schools and the National School Canteen Network, and we regularly share and collaborate for collective impact in the healthy food in schools space.

In 2023 we made advocacy a focus, and despite being a small team, we accomplished a lot "behind the scenes" to help build capacity and confidence in Queensland school tuckshops.

**MAY** 

Shared the Connections through Cooking project story at the Metro South Health Multicultural Health Symposium.

**JULY** 

Finalised a project for Health and Wellbeing Queensland reviewing evidence for healthy food and drink supply policy implementation in schools, and a summary of implementation models across all jurisdictions in Australia.

**OCTOBER** 

Visited Parliament House for a Tuckshop Pop-Up to talk all things tuckshops with Queensland's elected Members of Parliament. We heard from Minister for Education, Grace Grace MP who sung the praises of everyone who works hard, day in, day out, to feed Queensland kids at school. In 2024 we look forward to working with the new Minister for Education, Dianne Farmer MP, as well as continuing to collaborate with our local member, Joe Kelly MP on issues that impact school tuckshops.

Here's some of the highlights from 2023.

**MARCH** 

Spoke at the National Food Classification Unification workshop.

**MAY** 

Partnered with Health and Wellbeing Queensland to deliver the A Better Choice Conference & Expo, which increased the profile of school tuckshops contributing to preventive health efforts in Queensland.

**AUGUST** 

Delivered a Tuckshop Masterclass at the School Business Managers Association of Queensland State Conference.







Have you been given the directive to make more of a profit this year? Or keen to build on success from 2023 and increase your revenue?

The best place to start is to understand your current state of play and what you need to work on to achieve your goals. That's where QAST comes in!

Our member-only <u>Financial Advisory Service</u> can help set you on the right path to getting into the black and becoming a thriving small business.

So, what can we do for you?

We'll review your current and previous years' profit and loss statements and provide an assessment of your menu (including

items and pricing). We'll talk to you about the areas of concern and the needs of the P&C/P&F and/or school administration. Once we have the whole picture, we'll provide a written report that compares your data with industry benchmarks and outlines key recommendations for change.

Sometimes all it takes is an extra set of eyes or an outsider's perspective to pinpoint areas that can help you make real and meaningful change.

Our goal is to give you the tools, knowledge and confidence to identify ways to improve your financial position, to ensure you meet your tuckshop goals in 2024 and beyond.

Just head to <u>qast.org.au/membership/financial-advisory-service/</u> to get started.

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INTO A PROFITABLE AND EFFICIENT SPACE!

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We assess your site and discuss your requirements, providing a feasibility cost plan.

We help with grant applications, equipment selection, and coordinate regulatory approvals, ensuring a detailed and practical design.

Our process includes transparent coordination of the tender process and helping you choose the right builder.

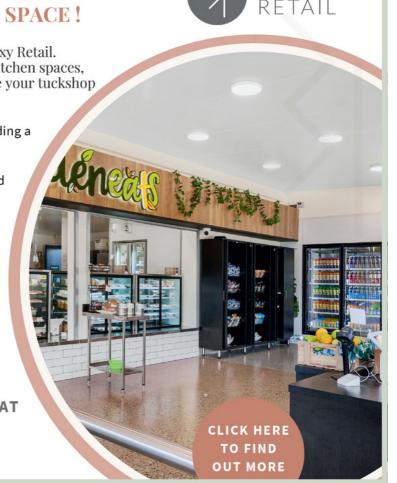
We offer advice on food safety and hygiene compliance.

Our efficient process guides you through effortlessly.

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For this edition of Talking Tuckshops we sat down with three high school tuckshop convenors to learn more about how their service operates, how they decide on their menu items, and what's bringing those teenagers (and teachers) back for more every day.

A high school tuckshop is a complex business. The potential customer base is generally larger than in a primary school, and the option to serve yourself is usually commonplace.

Many senior high school students have part-time jobs and are in control of how (and what) they spend, so developing a menu that attracts is crucial.

Convenors are also competing with fast food outlets that are often within walking distance of the school, so finding that balance between variety, appeal and cost can prove a challenge.



## Cavendish Koad State High School



How long have you been convenor?

Five years total - four as Co-Convenor and one as Convenor

Over the counter or online ordering service?

Self Service or Pre-ordering, as well as paying before school with a bag system.

What changes have you made in your time as convenor?

I have changed the menu to meet the criteria of the Smart Choices policy, as well as streamlining the menu and purchasing of food.

How much does Smart Choices influence your menu planning?

100%, as long as we can keep it affordable.

Top 5 most popular dishes?

- 1. Cold Chicken Pesto Pasta
- 2. Sweet Chilli Chicken Wraps
- 3. Southern Chicken Wraps
- 4. Satav Chicken
- 5. Butter Chicken

What are your most popular menu items with teachers?

All the hot meals of the day and cold salad wraps or baguettes.

What QAST services have you used in your tuckshop?

I use the Menu Health Check twice a year to ensure my menu is on track and meeting the Smart Choices guidelines, as well as accessing the recipes and templates. I have also just complete the Food Safety Supervisor Course to renew my qualification after the recent changes came in.

What's your favourite part of the job?

Knowing that we are providing some of the students with the only healthy option for food they will have in the day. Also getting to watch the students and how they progress and mature from Grade 7 to their last day of high school.

"I believe that tuckshops and canteens should be seen as a healthy alternative to a packed lunch."

#### Tips for other high school convenors

- Use all the support around you especially all the different tools that QAST have available to members.
- Ask for advice from other convenors of similar schools. After 12 years of working in tuckshops and canteens I'm still learning new things.
- Be on good terms with your suppliers; most times the written price is not the best price.
- Don't be afraid of change; try new healthy options as specials before putting them on the menu.
- Use social media for new ideas... there is always a new trend the kids are seeing.
- Take best sellers from the local fast food outlet and change it up to a healthier version.
- Your menu should reflect your staff levels, your equipment and your student body.
- We can't and won't be able to please everyone and sometimes convenors get overwhelmed with trying to keep 100% of people especially the parents happy.



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## Ferny Grove State High School



How long have you been convenor?

I have been employed in the Canteen for 10 years and have been Managing Convenor for nearly three years.

Over the counter or online ordering service?

We are self-service Canteen style. Pre-ordering is only available for those with dietary requirements or at the request of a parent or school staff member.

What changes have you made in your time as convenor?

In the past 3 years we have increased our fresh food options and offer more hot meal options on a daily basis.

How much does Smart Choices influence your menu planning?

We use Smart Choices as a guide whenever we plan a new menu item. We try and get extra vegetables and fruit into any meal we can.

How much of your menu do you cook on site?

We cook all our hot dishes on site. We bake daily and only order products in when we are short staffed. We prepare all our salads, sandwiches, yogurts, health pots etc. on site, with the exception of sushi which we have delivered twice a week.





Top 5 most popular dishes?

- 1. Karaage Chicken and Jasmine Rice
- 2. Butter Chicken and Basmati Rice
- 3. Mexican Burrito Bowls
- 4. Pita Pizzas
- 5. Burgers

What are your most popular menu items with teachers?

Ferny Nourish Bowl (with Quinoa, roasted vegetables etc.), burrito bowls, all hot meals, sandwiches, rolls and wraps.

What QAST services have you used in your tuckshop?

I often refer to the QAST website, in particular the fact sheets. If I can't find what I am looking for the QAST team are always helpful in answering my questions. I like this support as sometimes finding answers on the internet can be very confusing as it is hard to decipher fact from fiction. It is also very time consuming. Having information from QAST is a great support when I wish to change products or procedures and need to "put forward" information to school staff and/or the P&C executive team.

What's your favourite part of the job?

I enjoy being part of our school community, interacting with the students and the great bunch of people I work with.

Do you have any tips for other high school convenors?

Batch cooking and use ingredients across a number of dishes. Cater for the masses, not the individuals.

Get involved - ensure you and the tuckshop staff are valued members of the school community.

Join QAST- use the resources.

Share resources. Why re-invent the wheel when we are all busy and time poor? Convenors come from a variety of backgrounds and everyone has something to share!

## Wellington Point State High School



How long have you been convenor?

I have been a high school convenor for one year and was a primary school convenor for 5 and a half years

Over the counter or online ordering service?

We do both. We use QKR as the online ordering system.

Online orders are mainly from students in years 7-10. It is a lot less utilised than primary school as the older kids earn money and come and buy over the counter.

With a lot of experience and a bit of guess work it is a bit of a gamble as to how much food we provide for sale.

With some of the staff having worked in the tuckshop for quite a few years, we have managed to get it to a fine art that we have enough food to provide all students in the queue with food and have very little wastage at the end of the day, if any.

What changes have you made in your time as convenor?

Advocating and receiving installation of a commercial oven and dishwasher and complete costings of items and streamlining some of our products we serve.

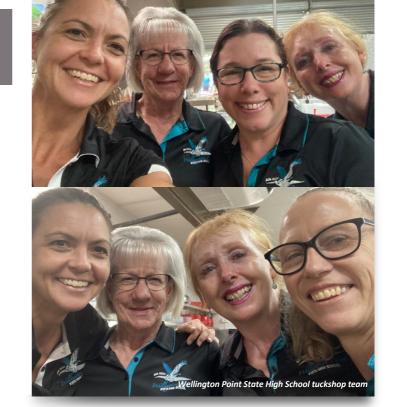
How much does Smart Choices influence your menu planning?

A lot less in high school, as I find the students in high school consume a lot more than a primary school student.

We do however follow the policy with our daily specials with making sure we have a good ratio of macro nutrients in our meals prepared on site.







How much of your menu do you cook on site?

All our daily specials, half of our hot foods and all our sandwiches and wraps, and salads and fruit bowls.

Top 5 most popular dishes?

- 1. Chicken and Cheeseburgers
- 2. Crispy Chicken bowls
- 3. Pizza slices
- 4. Sushi
- 5. Beef nachos and burritos

What are your most popular menu items with teachers?

Salad boxes, sushi, fresh-filled wraps and deluxe beef or chicken burgers.

What QAST services have you used in your tuckshop?

Since I have been at my high school tuckshop I often pick up the phone for advice, but at my primary school we used the Menu Health Check service and did a Tuckshop Tune-up.

What's your favourite part of the job?

Working with the staff and students and getting the correct amount of food to supply as close to demand as possible.

Do you have any tips for other high school convenors?

Patience with the students, paying attention to costings and volumes of food prepared, and marketing to students more so than to parents.

Biggest differences between primary and high school tuckshops?

The volume of food the students eat, the fact that the older students buy impulsively so it is a guess as to how much food to prepare, which is not the case in primary school. Also as mentioned previously a lot less use of online ordering in the older grades. Students are the buyers not the parents so need to market to students directly.



## Ingredient swaps

Meals made on site				
If a recipe says	Use this instead			
Butter	Polyunsaturated vegetable spread			
White bread/roll/wrap	Wholemeal or multigrain bread/roll/wrap			
Cream	Evaporated milk or yoghurt			
Coconut cream	Evaporated milk with coconut essence			
Mince	Lean mince			
Hard taco shells	Soft tacos			
Nacho corn chips	Homemade nachos made from Pita chips or use a baked potato for the base			
Pizza bases (small)	English muffin			
Full cream dairy products	Reduced-fat/skim dairy products			
Beef/lamb	Use a lean option			

Commercial meals and snacks			
When you want to buy this	Consider doing this instead		
Commercially-made fried rice	Homemade fried rice with salt- reduced soy sauce		
Cream-based pasta dish	Tomato-based pasta sauce, evaporated milk or yoghurt base		
Popcorn (highly salted, butter)	Popcorn (lightly salted or no salt) or wholemeal rice or corn cakes		
Chips	Popcorn (lightly salted or no salt)		
Lollies or jelly	Dried fruit mixes (popcorn), seasonal fruit, mixed fruit salad, or canned fruit in natural juice		
Muffins	Homemade, fruit-based muffins, fresh or canned fruit, or fruit crumble		
lce-cream/ice-block	Reduced-fat yoghurt and fruit cups (made onsite), frozen fruit pieces, or 125ml frozen fruit juice		

## Healthy cooking methods

#### **COOKING WITH OIL**

If you add fats when cooking, start by using healthier oils such as olive and canola oil. Instead of pan frying, use a spray oil and roast or bake.

#### **RETAIN NUTRIENTS**

Water-soluble vitamins are delicate and easily destroyed during preparation and cooking. Leave the skin on produce whenever you can. Microwave, steam or stir-fry vegetables instead of boiling.

#### **REDUCE SALT**

Salt is hidden in many of our foods, so it is a good idea to avoid adding it when cooking if possible. Use reduced-salt stocks and sauces and try adding a splash of olive oil or lemon juice at the end of the cooking to enhance flavour.

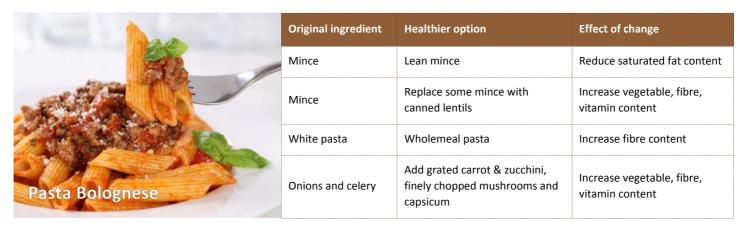
#### **ADD FLAVOUR WITH HERBS AND SPICES**

Herbs and spices can be used to add delicious flavours, without the need for salt or oil.

## Fasy examples

Original ingredient	Healthier option	Effect of change	
White bread	Wholemeal bread Increase fibre conten		
Butter	Polyunsaturated vegetable spread or butter blend	Reduce saturated fat content, increase polyunsaturated fat content	
Ham	Reduced fat, low salt ham	Reduce saturated fat and sodium content	
Cheese	Reduced fat cheese	Reduce saturated fat content	
No salad	Added salad	Increase vegetable, fibre, vitamin content	





Original ingredient	Healthier option	Effect of change	
White flour	Half white, half wholemeal flour, add bran or rolled oats.	Increase fibre content	
Butter	Polyunsaturated vegetable spread	Reduce saturated fat content, increase polyunsaturated fat content	
Sugar	Replace some/all with mashed banana or other pureed fruit	Reduce added sugar, increase fruit and fibre content	
Milk	Reduced-fat milk	Reduce saturated fat content	Baked Muffir



Ever wonder how tuckshops and canteens are being run in other states? In Victoria, the Healthy Kids Advisors initiative works with hundreds of local 'Canteen Champions' across Victoria to support them in increasing fresh, delicious food options for their community's young people and families.

Zoe from Athol Road Primary School shares with us her incredible baking and batch cooking tips and lets us wander through her sprawling canteen garden located in Springvale, Victoria.

"I love the interaction I have with the students. The kids hang around the window like flies asking, 'What are you cooking today? It smells so good.'



Our canteen is open five days a week. Most days, I hit over 200-plus orders. That's almost half the population of the school. I have four parent helpers who rotate throughout the week, with extra support on the busiest days: Thursdays and Fridays.

It's go, go, go from the minute I walk in until the minute I walk out. I make everything from scratch which is more cost-effective for the school. I've noticed a profit increase since I started making everything myself instead of buying pre-packaged meals. I know it's more time-consuming, but I'd rather know what's actually in the food than getting processed food full of additives and colours.

My best advice for preparing ahead is batch cooking and portion control. I cook my dishes in large batches and divide them all out before freezing them. For example, my muffins are baked, cooled, and then pre-wrapped, and my soups and pasta dishes are stored in ready-to-go containers.

Honey Soy Chicken and Spaghetti Bolognese are the most popular lunches, for sure, because they look good, taste good and smell good. These sorts of dishes contain heaps of vegetables from our huge veggie garden. The Bolognese has loads of blended vegetables and herbs to keep the fussiest of kids happy, and the Honey Soy Chicken has a homemade sauce, so I can control how much salt and sugar goes in it.

Another favourite is my Grandma's Chocolate Cake. The students love this on the menu. I was told this was a 'mum recipe' as a child. My Grandma told me that when I became a Mum, she'd give me the recipe too. When the time came, I was surprised to learn that the chocolate cake was full of spinach, zucchini and beetroot. I love it, as do the Athol Road Primary School students!

I make everything from scratch which is more costeffective for the school. I've noticed a profit increase since I started making everything myself instead of buying pre-packaged meals. I love sharing my family recipes with the students. This week I'm trialling my dad's meatballs. He's Danish, so we grew up eating this recipe, and I love it. Because the students are predominantly Asian, menu items like these are not usually on the menu at home, so the kids love eating these sorts of meals here.

The students still remember and want old menu items like two-minute noodles — but I'll never offer those on my menu again. When I started this role, I asked the students what new items they'd like to try. I also get the students to give me feedback once a term and ask them what else they'd like on the menu.

I work closely with the school's Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Coordinator, Wendy. Wendy runs a fantastic afterschool program encouraging students to design their weekly menu from a short list of delicious, nutritious options. The children can cook these after school in the canteen, and Wendy has provided a huge, printed folder of pictures and menu ideas for inspiration. If Wendy tries something with her OSHC children and it's a hit, I pop it on the canteen menu for the whole school to enjoy.

Since the switch to a healthier variety, students are excited to get their lunch orders. I've also noticed less rubbish and packaging left around the school.

Another useful idea is that I've identified a champion student who is my 'guinea pig' for trying new dishes and giving me feedback. He's also a great role model and influencer in the school. If he's eating something delicious, it definitely rubs off and encourages lots of other kids to order it too.

Since the switch to a healthier variety, students are excited to get their lunch orders. I've also noticed less rubbish and packaging left around the school. You're more likely to see bits of carrot than a chip packet. This has much to do with our brilliant Environmental Teacher, Brian, who shares the same fresh food messaging with the kids and coordinates the edible garden."



#### About the Healthy Kids Advisors initiative

The Healthy Kids Advisors initiative is delivered by the <u>Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation</u> and supported by the Victorian Government and Australian Government.

This community engagement initiative is active in 13 priority communities to spread pleasurable food education and encourage participation in the state-wide <u>Vic Kids Eat Well movement</u>.

In collaboration with local health promoters, Council and community, Advisors offer free support and simple ideas to boost healthy and delicious food and drink in schools, sports clubs, after-hours care and council-run facilities.

Want more information? Visit <u>www.kitchengardenfoundation.org.au/news</u>





In the area of community service, volunteers are the unsung heroes who dedicate their time, skills, and energy toward worthwhile causes. Their contributions form the backbone of countless organisations, driving social change and making a tangible difference in the world.

Yet, the key to unlocking a volunteer's full potential lies not just in recruiting the right people for your organisation, in this case the tuckshop, but in the often-underestimated step of volunteer induction.

Volunteer induction is the pivotal process through which individuals are welcomed into the tuckshop, familiarised with its culture, acquainted with its goals and values, and trained to fulfill their roles effectively.

The induction process is more than a mere orientation; it's the cornerstone upon which the entire volunteering experience rests.

Here's why this often-overlooked step is so crucial:



#### **Fostering Connection and Commitment**

An effective induction program isn't just about disseminating information; it's about fostering a sense of belonging and purpose.

Volunteers who feel connected to the tuckshop, and understand its mission are more likely to commit themselves passionately to their role. They become ambassadors of the tuckshop's vision, spreading its message far and wide through the school and wider community.

#### **Empowering and Building Confidence**

Induction serves as a platform to equip volunteers with the knowledge and skills needed to excel in their roles.

Training sessions, shadowing experiences, and access to resources empower them, boosting their confidence to take on tasks and challenges with assurance. This not only benefits the volunteers but also enhances the efficiency and quality of the work they contribute.

Volunteers who feel connected to the tuckshop, and understand its mission are more likely to commit themselves passionately to their role.

#### **Enhancing Retention and Satisfaction**

When volunteers are provided with a comprehensive induction, they're more likely to stay committed for the long haul. Feeling valued and supported from the outset significantly impacts their satisfaction levels.

High retention rates contribute to the tuckshop's ongoing viability, ensuring a steady flow of skilled and dedicated individuals working towards the common goal.

#### **Minimising Misunderstandings and Errors**

Clear communication during the induction phase helps set expectations and avoids misunderstandings. Volunteers who understand their roles, responsibilities, and the tuckshop are less likely to make errors that might impact, i.e. food safety and service time. Clarity from the start prevents potential issues down the road.

#### **Cultivating a Culture of Learning and Improvement**

An effective induction process isn't a one-time event; it's an ongoing journey. It opens the door to continuous learning and improvement, encouraging volunteers to seek growth opportunities within the tuckshop. It also provides a platform for feedback, allowing the tuckshop to refine its processes based on the insights gained from the volunteers' experiences.

In essence, volunteer induction is not merely a formality but a strategic investment in the success of both the volunteers, tuckshop and other organisations they are involved with. It sets the tone for a fruitful partnership and lays the groundwork for impactful contributions towards the greater good.

Tuckshops and organisations that recognise the significance of volunteer induction reap the rewards of a committed, skilled, and motivated volunteer base. They understand that the initial stages of a volunteer's journey are as crucial as the work they eventually accomplish. By investing time and effort into a robust induction process, these tuckshops pave the way for a more connected, capable, and empowered volunteer force.



## Get started with our Volunteer Management Course

If you would like to enhance your volunteer program, our Volunteer Management Course is for you. This self-paced, online course will help you develop a strategic approach for engaging volunteers in your school community.

We recommend you complete this course as a group where possible and invite all tuckshop staff, parent body members and school staff that manage volunteers.

#### What is covered in the course?

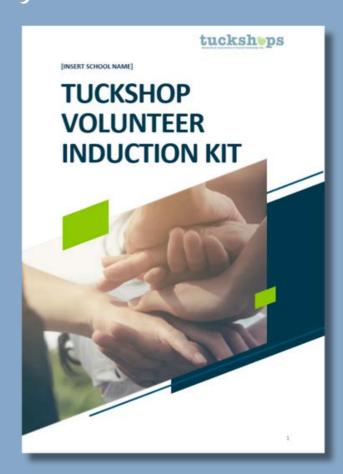
minutes to complete, working through a Volunteer Action Plan as your progress. A Volunteer Induction Kit is provided as part of the course fee.

Module 3 – Volunteer Recruitment and Selection Module 4 – Volunteer Support and Development Module 5 – Volunteer Retention and Recognition

#### **Course details**

Method: Online, self-paced

How to complete: Visit our website to get started







## Interested in doing more to manage waste in your school tuckshop?

There are many ways that tuckshops produce waste, but the good news is that you can do a lot to reduce yours. Here are some simple ideas to get you started.

- Placement of bins around the school is important for effective composting and recycling.
- Identify your coalition of the willing: all it takes is a few like-minded people with a shared passion and you will be able to make changes school-wide, starting from within the tuckshop.
- Find out if your school has student Environment
  Leaders who can help you implement your
  sustainability practices in the tuckshop: from taking
  the compost bin to the heap for you, to checking
  that students are using the correct bin and
  monitoring food waste, these students can be your
  allies.
- Recruit some staff members to help spread the message about reducing food and general waste around the school.

- Find out how your local Council can help. Brisbane schools can <u>apply</u> for a Brisbane City Council Environmental Educator to visit your school to run a waste and recycling program for students. Outside of Brisbane, check in with your local Council to see what they can offer.
- Need some funds to get started? Local and State Government offer grants periodically throughout the year. They are advertised widely when they open, or you can check in with the Queensland Government website.

Consider what you as the convenor can do personally to run your tuckshop more sustainably. When doing this, take into account what sustainability priorities will need the support of the school principal or parent body and schedule a meeting to discuss them.

The little steps you take every day will add up over the course of a school year and lead to big savings for the planet as well as the tuckshop budget.



What are some of the top things that you did to make your tuckshop more sustainable over the recent years?

The first one would be to introduce various waste streams. Things like recycling bins, organic waste bins, paper recycling; anything we could do to divert things from landfill.

The next thing we did was basically eliminate or get rid of plastic altogether. Obviously, it didn't happen immediately. But our goal was to change all of our packaging to something that could either be recyclable, or compostable.

The third thing was to actually start the composting.

It's important to get a good working relationship with the school to get them on board to help with recycling and composting.

## Can you tell us a little bit more about how you actually improved food waste across the school and within the tuckshop?

The first thing we did was speak to the school about food waste and how we wanted to try and eliminate it. We asked the school and the P&C whether we could purchase some bins to put all of our food waste in. Initially we were taking it home to compost, but very quickly, the school really got onboard and gave us some compost bins (using money from grants for organic food waste). Then we started collecting all of the food waste that we could from fruit and vegetables to bits of paper and cardboard.

#### How did you get the students involved in this process?

When we first started putting all of our waste into the food waste bins in the tuckshop, we realised students weren't seeing what was happening. So we needed to expand it into the school so that they could start to take ownership and understand what happens after those food scraps go in the bin.

Every class now has their own small bin that they take with them to the eating area. And then in addition to that, there's about five in-ground, compost bins, a couple of worm farms, and then some bigger compost bins around the gardens. They're really encouraged to put as much of their food that they're having at lunchtime into these little bins and then at the end of lunchtime, they tip them into either the worm farm or the inground compost bins.

#### How have you changed your packaging?

95% of our packaging is either recyclable or home-compostable. The only plastic that we do have are things that we can't control... things like pasta packets and rice packets and things that come from the supermarket.

We ditched clingwrap and now use paper. It's a specific, half greaseproof paper that is unwaxed and unbleached. So it can be recycled or put in the compost and it breaks down.

Do you have any tips for conveners that are wanting to get some sustainability practices up and running in in their tuckshop but don't know where to start?

Make some goals. Look at what you're currently doing and see where opportunities already exist. Create a mind map then break it down into smaller, achievable pieces and tackle something simple first, like recycling.

So just little things. It doesn't have to be a lot of things. The smallest things often make a huge difference.









The <u>Creating Connections through Cooking project</u> helps connect school tuckshops with volunteers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who want to be more involved in their local communities.

Currently operating in the Greater Brisbane area, our Connections Project Managers, Kamila Oliveira and Natalie Farrugia support schools and the volunteers to familiarise new recruits with the tuckshop environment.

Volunteers love meeting new people, practicing their English in a safe place, and gain valuable work experience which helps them find a job.

Tuckshops find more willing hands to help out, connect better with their multicultural community, and even boost the ethnic offering on the menu.

If you would like to volunteer in a tuckshop, host volunteers at your tuckshop or are a community organisation who would like to support us, please get in touch! Our project team can be contacted at the QAST office on (07) 3324 1511 or email connections@qast.org.au





If your school is interested in hosting a Connections through Cooking volunteer, visit our website for more information and to complete an Expression of Interest.



## Meet the volunteer: Wenhui

Wenhui is from China and is studying the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) at the Inala campus of TAFE Queensland. When our team recently presented about the Creating Connections through Cooking program, Wenhui's interest was piqued so she submitted an Expression of Interest to become involved.

After assisting her with the Blue Card application process, we reached out to the tuckshop team at Forest Lake State School, who were keen to welcome Wenhui on board as a volunteer.

Project Manager, Kamila, went along on the first day to guide Wenhui through the transition, and work with Convenor Ruth to ensure the tuckshop was a good fit.

Wenhui was grateful for the support on the day, and the warmth and friendliness of Ruth gave her the confidence to enjoy her volunteer shift.

"I am enjoying it very much, I thought it helped me to improve my English, to meet new friends, to learn about Australia, and to learn cooking food. It is very meaningful thing for me," Wenhui said.

"It will help me to be more confident, I am getting more and more confidence. The most important thing for me is to improve my oral English ability and lay a good foundation for a future job search.

"The work at the tuckshop is very important chance for me to practice my English."



Chris is an individual whose dedication, passion, and relentless spirit have shaped the very fabric of our organisation. Her 27-year journey was marked by an unwavering commitment to the QAST cause – supporting tuckshops to serve sustainable, affordable, nutritious and safe food choices.

For 17 years of her almost 3-decade long tenure, Chris led QAST as Executive Services Manager then CEO, with a rare blend of determination and grace. Her encyclopaedic knowledge of the tuckshop world was a guiding light through the achievements, and importantly, the challenges of our work. No task was too daunting, no challenge insurmountable. Her "can-do" attitude was not just an inspiration but a testament to what true leadership embodies.



Chris' work ethic was unmatched, and her passion for the sector contagious. Chris was the face of tuckshops for over two decades, not just in Queensland but nationally. Her advocacy and tireless effort have not just been contributions but an example of a way of working that will endure.



Chris always 'led from the front'. There are not many organisations where people can say the CEO can do, and regularly did, every task required for the operation of the business. Chris was in the trenches, on the tools, and out the front for QAST for as long as she worked for the organisation. The countless volunteer hours she devoted, the many lives she touched—these are testaments to her remarkable character.

As Chris embarks on this new chapter called retirement we know that her legacy will continue to resonate within the organisation. While her absence will be deeply felt, her influence will continue to guide us.

On behalf of QAST staff, every life you've touched in your work with us, every tuckshop convenor you've inspired, and every mind you've shaped, we extend our deepest gratitude, and wish for Chris a retirement filled with joy and relaxation.



### Schools have a role in supporting children to develop healthy lifestyles and habits.

But what happens when students walk out of a health lesson where they have learnt about the importance of enjoying vegetables every day, only to order from a tuckshop menu that is devoid of vegetables?

The tuckshop should be an essential part of a whole of school approach to supporting good health outcomes for children, alongside healthy food approaches in curriculum activities, and at other school events, reinforcing what they are learning in the classroom.

Planning a healthy menu is not as simple as choosing a few healthy recipes that may be popular with students. The tuckshop is a system, and the menu is a key driver within that system.

Changes to the menu will have repercussions in other areas, such as workflow, equipment required, procurement, food safety practices, sales, and profit potential. Understanding the interplay between the menu and related aspects of tuckshop operation is essential for creating a healthy menu that is profitable, achievable, and sustainable over time.

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Understand the role of the tuckshop in supporting health outcomes for children.
- Understand the menu as a key driver in tuckshop operations.
- Plan a tuckshop menu that:
  - · Meets policy obligations;
  - Caters appropriately to special dietary requirements and cultural needs of the school community;
  - Is responsive to the labour, equipment, skills and facilities available; and
  - Is affordable but profitable, achievable and sustainable over time.

Interested in seeing what the course is all about? If you're free on Monday 26 February, from 2 – 5pm join us IN-PERSON at the QAST office at 347 Old Cleveland Road, Coorparoo as we trial the course with our target audience, YOU! Plus, all participants will take home a \$50 Woolworths voucher to thank them for their time.

Your input will help shape the course to be as relevant and useful as possible for those aiming to achieve healthy menus in Queensland school tuckshops.

## Meet our new Food Satety Supervisor course trainer, Keryn

Keryn is new to the QAST team, joining after seven years teaching Health and Nutrition, plus Business Studies at The University of Queensland.

She is a qualified nutritionist and has a passion for healthy eating in a safe and sustainable environment.

Keryn has a long career in both the food and education industries and has worked as a tuckshop volunteer for 15 years.

She's also very interested in innovation in food and cooking in a healthy environment.

We look forward to Keryn imparting her wisdom on tuckshop convenors through our Food Safety Supervisor course.



School tuckshops play a vital role in providing nourishment to students, offering a variety of meals. However, ensuring the safety of the food served is paramount.

Working in a school tuckshop means you need to always keep food safety in mind. Food safety training in school tuckshops is essential to protect students from potential health hazards and uphold high standards of hygiene.

All people undertaking food handling operations within a food business should have appropriate skills and knowledge in food safety matters.

When looking for suitable food safety training to complete for tuckshop staff, ensure you find a course that covers the following:

#### PREVENTING FOODBORNE ILLNESSES

Foodborne illnesses can have severe consequences, especially in a school setting. Proper food safety training educates tuckshop staff about the risks associated with contamination, crosscontamination, and improper handling of food, reducing the likelihood of students falling victim to foodborne diseases.

#### **ENSURING HYGIENIC FOOD HANDLING PRACTICES**

Training empowers tuckshop staff with the knowledge of hygienic food handling practices, including proper handwashing, sanitisation of utensils, and maintaining clean work surfaces. These practices are critical to preventing the spread of bacteria and viruses that can cause illnesses.

#### **COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS**

Food safety training ensures that tuckshop operations comply with local and national health regulations. Adhering to these standards not only safeguards the health of students but also protects the reputation of the school and the tuckshop. Ensure you're across your obligations when choosing your training.

#### **ALLERGEN MANAGEMENT**

Many students have food allergies, and mishandling allergens can have severe consequences. Food safety training equips tuckshop staff with the knowledge to identify, manage, and prevent cross-contamination of allergens, creating a safer environment for all students.

#### **MAINTAINING FOOD QUALITY**

Proper training contributes to the maintenance of food quality. From proper storage to appropriate cooking temperatures, tuckshop staff learn to preserve the nutritional value of the food they serve, ensuring students receive meals that are both safe and nutritious.

#### **BUILDING TRUST WITH PARENTS AND GUARDIANS**

Parents and guardians entrust the school with the well-being of their children. A tuckshop with well-trained staff instils confidence in caregivers, fostering a positive relationship between the school and the community.

Food safety training is not just a regulatory requirement; it is a fundamental aspect of providing a safe and healthy environment for students.

The investment in training pays off in the form of reduced risks, improved food quality, and the well-being of the school community.

School tuckshops, through rigorous food safety training, can serve as models of excellence in providing nourishing, safe, and wholesome meals for students.

Keen to do some Food Safety training in 2024? Our <u>Food Safety Supervisor Course</u> will give you the skills you need to work hygienically when handling food and to ensure the safety of food during its storage, preparation, display, service and disposal.

The course content has been specifically designed for those working in school tuckshops and canteens, and meets the requirements of Nationally Recognised Training.

Don't have time to commit to a full-day course? Our FREE, online Food Handlers Course covers food handler and legal requirements, hand washing, health and hygiene expectations, food safety, allergens, cleaning and sanitising, and pest control.

The course can be completed online at your own pace, at any time and generally takes one hour to complete.





#### **CONVENOR COURSE**

This comprehensive course covers menu design, how to run an organised kitchen and working with your school community.

It's ideal for new convenors or experienced convenors wanting to brush up on their skills.

DELIVERY: Face-to-face and Virtual COST: \$200 (inc. GST) for members

#### **PATHWAY TO PROFIT COURSE**

This popular course covers basic financial terms and concepts, calculating recipe costing, mark-up schedules, menu changes, and understanding tally sheets and profit and loss statements.

This course is recommended for convenors, operations managers, and business managers, and is perfect if you want your tuckshop to make a profit in 2024.

DELIVERY: Face-to-face and Virtual COST: \$200 (inc. GST) for members





#### **FOOD SAFETY SUPERVISOR COURSE**

Gain the skills you need to work hygienically when handling food and to ensure the safety of food during its storage, preparation, display, service and disposal.

Units covered in our <u>Food Safety Supervisor course</u> meet the prescribed certification requirements under the Queensland Government's Food Safety Act 2006, and other Australian State and Territory food safety laws, for individual food premises and to ensure the safety of food during its storage, preparation, display, service and disposal.

QAST staff deliver this course as a third party for NAQ Nutrition Training (RTO Code: 110074).

**DELIVERY: Face-to-face** 

COST: QAST member: \$275 (inc. GST), Non-member:

\$350 (inc. GST).

#### **VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT COURSE**

Keen to upskill on how to efficiently manage your volunteers?

Our <u>Volunteer Management Course</u> will help you develop a strategic approach for engaging volunteers in your school community.

For this online, self-paced course, we recommend you complete it as a group where possible and invite ALL tuckshop staff, parent body members and school staff that manage volunteers.

**DELIVERY: Virtual** 

COST: TERM 1 2024 SPECIAL PRICE: \$50 (inc. GST) (member-

only)

Note: This is a flat rate, regardless of how many people from your school attend.





#### **FOOD HANDLERS COURSE**

Our FREE <u>Food Handlers Course</u> covers food handler and legal requirements, hand washing, health and hygiene expectations, food safety, allergens, cleaning and sanitising, and pest control.

The course can help your tuckshop meet the new requirements for <u>Standard 3.2.2A</u> (Clause 10) and is recommended for all casuals and volunteers. It can be completed online at your own pace, at any time and takes less than an hour to complete.

The course can be completed online at your own pace, at any time, and in under an hour.

**DELIVERY: Online** 

COST: Free (available to anyone with QAST membership, including those with a free non-member

account.)

#### **FOOD SAFETY SUPERVISOR REFRESHER COURSE**

This training has been designed as a <u>refresher course for Food Safety Supervisors</u> (or tuckshop staff) who have completed an accredited <u>Food Safety Supervisor Course</u>.

**DELIVERY: Virtual** 

COST: \$150 (inc. GST) (MEMBER-ONLY)



Keen to learn more or enrol in QAST training? Get in touch with the QAST team on (07) 3324 1511 or email enquiry@qast.org.au

## TRANSFORM YOUR TUCKSHOP

INTO A PROFITABLE AND EFFICIENT SPACE!



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