



# **Advance Rockhampton Small Business Expo Hub**

## **Benefits of Business Planning Dr Wayne Graham**

# What is a small business?

(ABS 2025; Clark et al. 2012)

- Less than 20 employees
- Mostly sole traders
- Mostly located outside major central business districts
- Mostly start-ups rather than acquisitions
- Many are home-based businesses
- Mostly service industries
- Mostly labour intensive

# 7 distinguishing features of small businesses

(Reynolds et al. 2000)

1. Strong owner influence
2. Centralised control
3. Limited ability to obtain finance
4. Narrow product/market mix
5. Intuitive decisions are common
6. Strong desire for independence
7. Lack of planning

# Trends in small business

- Growing numbers of women owner/managers
- Increasing number of franchises
- Growing number of company and trust structures
- Increasing number of casual workers
- Increasing number of young workers
- Increasing adoption of technology

# Reasons why small businesses fail

Approximately 60% of start-ups do not survive the first five years of trading with the main reasons being:

1. Lack of leadership and management skills
2. Limited long-term planning
3. Lack of market research, promotion, and insufficient sales
4. Lack of understanding about finance and cash flow
5. Lack of anticipation of external business environmental changes
6. Poor governance structures

*Source:* Australian Centre for Business Growth (2018); Nichols & Orsmond (2015)

# Key success factors

1. Work 'on' your business as well as 'in' your business
2. Develop a clear vision and communicate to all stakeholders
3. Prioritise and focus on the important and urgent issues
4. Be responsive to customer
5. Innovate to create a competitive advantage and be unique
6. Build a committed team and lead by example
7. Develop a long-term plan and review regularly
8. Embrace change (without compromising your values)
9. Constantly aim to improve
10. Seek assistance and advice

# Business plans

Definition: A collection of long-term goals with accompanying actions to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage

Benefits include:

- More effective management of your business as activities are organised
- Improves your ability to control your business as you monitor progress
- Develops resilience by anticipating changes
- Enables calculated change initiatives to innovate
- Empowers business owners to increase risk appetite
- Builds confidence, motivation and feeling of empowerment
- Can be liberating, providing a sense of freedom
- Helps to secure funding from loans, grants and investors
- Can increase likelihood of sale

# Most small businesses operate without a business plan

Reasons include:

- I just don't have the time, I'm too busy
- I don't know where to start
- I don't know how to put it all together
- What's the point, what do I do with it?
- Business plans are only for big business
- I'm a doer not a thinker
- It's too expensive
- I'm too impatient



# Business Planning Course

- Commenced in 2020 in the Moreton Bay area
- Developed to help small businesses write a business plan
- Expanded to Sunshine Coast, Gympie and Fraser Coast in 2021
- Expanded state-wide through Queensland Government funding in 2022
- Delivered onsite and online simultaneously
- Self-paced option available
- Runs for 6 consecutive weeks, 2 hours per week
- Free for established Queensland small businesses
- Currently taking Expressions of Interest

# Other free courses available

## Continuity Planning Course

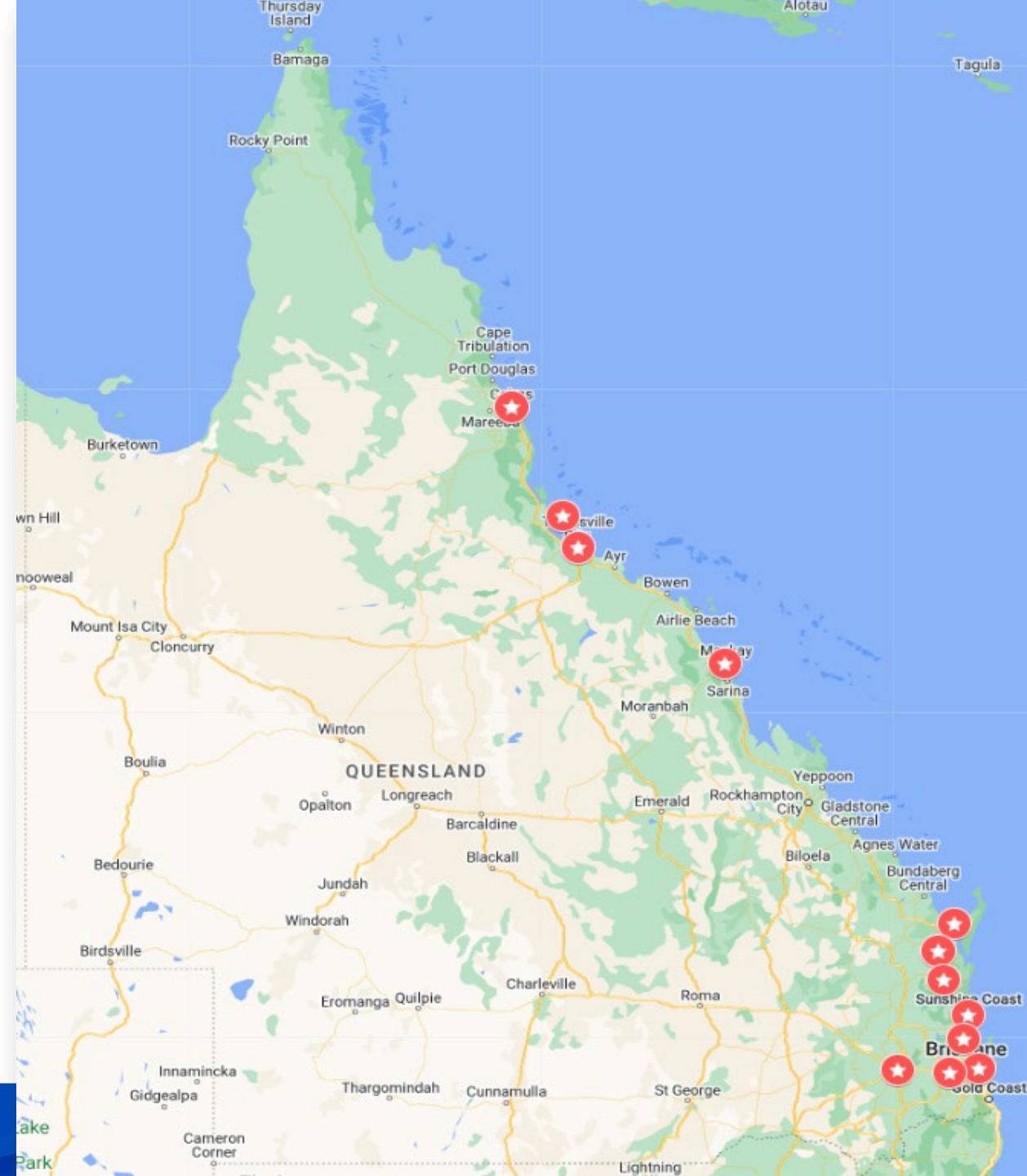


## Workforce Planning Course



# Delivery Locations 2020-2024

1. Cairns
2. Palm Island
3. Townsville
4. Mackay
5. Fraser Coast
6. Gympie
7. Sunshine Coast
8. Moreton Bay
9. Ipswich
10. Toowoomba
11. Redlands
12. Gold Coast





# Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Three courses currently being translated into Vietnamese and Chinese languages, the two most common non-English languages of the Queensland business community



For more information:  
[usc.edu.au/pc](http://usc.edu.au/pc)