

# EYE ON EDUCATION



**NETWORKING:** Attending the session at USQ are (from left) Amy Steginga, Anthony Green, Wendy Dighton, Bianca Shinnie, Amanda Heffernan and Karen Campbell. PHOTO: DON HILDRED

## Students look to rural and remote schools

UNIVERSITY of Southern Queensland education students interested in working in a rural or remote location took part in a valuable networking opportunity at USQ Toowoomba last week.

The session provided the chance for students to speak to school leaders in the Darling Downs South West Region about professional placements that can lead to employment opportunities.

School principals Anthony Green (Roma State College), Karen Campbell (Cunnamulla P-12 State School) and deputy principal Bianca Shinnie (Cunnamulla) attended the session, along with Department of Education and Training (Darling

Downs and South West) human resources director Wendy Dighton.

USQ Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Jan Thomas said working in a rural or remote school was a fantastic way for teachers to start their careers.

"There are many opportunities for personal and professional growth for those who teach in rural or remote schools," Professor Thomas said.

"They get to experience different parts of Australia and see how welcoming and supportive people can be in these communities."

USQ Lecturer (Education) Amanda Heffernan said the unique challenges involved with teaching in a small and rural school with composite classrooms could

prepare teachers to work anywhere.

"Teaching multi-age classes ensures you know the curriculum and develop effective teaching approaches," Mrs Heffernan said.

"It also offers valuable leadership opportunities for teachers at all stages of their careers."

Ms Dighton said the reason many USQ graduates currently held teaching positions in outback Queensland was about more than the financial incentives and extra benefits.

"The main reason people want to work in these areas is for the experience," she said.

"You get to work in communities you may never have been to before, engage

with people on many levels and make lifelong friends."

USQ Bachelor of Education (Primary) fourth year student Amy Steginga has completed teaching placements at Charleville, Tambo and Dalby.

Miss Steginga said she thoroughly enjoyed the experiences and believed working in a country town would boost her teaching career.

"I really enjoyed the challenge, the social life and being out of my comfort zone," she said.

"It is also an excellent career pathway and provides a springboard to other positions in teaching."

For more information about studying education at USQ, visit [www.usq.edu.au/education](http://www.usq.edu.au/education).