

Coombah seeks excellence

COOMBABAH State High School has held its first master classes under a scheme aiming to link three of its learning strands into a performing arts school of excellence.

Under the scheme students from the school's drama, film and television and music strands attended classes by two industry professionals, director of photography Peter Morley and American film and television composer Art Phillips.

The students will this week attend a scoring for animation class with Guy Gross.

Coombah SHS film and television coordinator, Anna Zantiotis, said the workshops were designed to supplement the efforts of teachers with input from industry professionals, and to ultimately produce students ready to work in the film industry.

"For many of the students this will be as close as they get to the film industry," Ms Zantiotis said of Mr Morley's two-day workshop, in which students took part in an advanced lighting workshop before making a film in a single day under Mr Morley's

direction. Mr Phillips had discussed recording music for the image in his day-long workshop.

She said students had gained a great deal from both Mr Morley, whose work has been recognised with Logies and an AFI Award, and dual Emmy winner Mr Phillips.

"Students like creative work in this extended mode," Ms Zantiotis said.

"I'm overwhelmed, really. I wish we could do more, and that's part of our plan.

"We're starting by dealing with screen music and have the opportunity to make industry links.

"This is the first event organised on the road to a school of excellence.

"This has been a trial, in a way ... I don't see any other way for students to have contact with working people.

"On the Gold Coast, there's always the possibility they'll be working in the field.

"The element of vocation looms large in this area."

Plans for next semester include lectures from the head of Griffith University's Conservatorium of Music and

a workshop on copyright and business issues, while she was investigating whether students participating in the proposed school of excellence could gain pre-course credit for entry to Griffith University.

Ms Zantiotis said the school of excellence plan and the use of outside expertise dovetailed with Coombah's Leading School status.

"I see myself as a facilitator hosting and arranging expertise and then coming in and tying it together," she said.

"In the new teaching environment I feel I want to have support at hand to do things on our own and I'm fortunate that we've got people here who can see that vision.

"I do have big horizons. We're a Leading School and we're taking that on board and trying to think of different ways to deliver expertise to the students.

"At the end of the day I'd like to think that prospective secondary students on the Gold Coast would choose Coombah because we can teach screen music and we have this link with industry."

(P10)