



**CAN'T WAIT:** Cairns Hospital nurse Natalie Winterburn started her first day of university at the new campus yesterday, to become a registered nurse. PICTURE: STEWART McLEAN

## Expansion already on the cards for Central Queensland University in Cairns

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DANIEL BATEMAN, The Cairns Post  
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CENTRAL Queensland University already wants to expand its Cairns campus, which could have another two floors built on to it.

The university opened its doors for the first time yesterday at its \$15 million inner-city campus at Cairns Square, on the corner of Abbott and Shields streets.

CBRE Cairns managing director Danny Betros said the owners of the building were preparing a development application for the Cairns Regional Council to add another two floors, providing a total 5000sq m more space.

“It’s all preliminary at this stage, but the capability is there,” he said.

“That’s the idea. The building can expand with the university.”

CQUniversity hopes it can attract 2500 students by 2020 to Cairns, including 500 from overseas.

There is now support for more than 600 students, before it offers its on-campus programs such as business, accounting, education, engineering, IT, nursing, paramedics, and professional communication, from early next year.

The two-stage fitout of Cairns Square, which will be fully completed by semester one next year, will include a six-bed nursing laboratory; engineering labs; research facilities; hi-tech classrooms, theatres and teaching spaces; meeting rooms; a library; student recreational and social spaces; a kitchen; and staff offices.

The campus will create more than 50 jobs and generate almost \$250 million for the local economy.

The first intake of international students is expected in mid-2016.



STEP RIGHT IN: CQ University students Velocity Alliston, Simon Williams and Jayde Miller experience their first day on the Cairns campus yesterday. PICTURE: STEWART McLEAN

The university's associate vice-chancellor (Cairns and Far North region) Jodie Duignan-George said she was confident CQUniversity would be able to fulfil its student target within the next five years.

"When we get to the 2000 students, there won't be the capacity here to cater for that," she said.

“So if we’re as successful as we envision we will be within five years, we will definitely need more space, in which case we could go up (in Cairns Square).”

She said there were numerous courses the university was hoping to establish in Cairns.

These included medical science, but it did not want to compete with James Cook University.

“We could look at the future at some kind of medical sciences, but at the same time, you’ve got to be careful not to go into direct competition in such a small market,” she said.

“It doesn’t really do anyone any good.

“We want to remain a two-university town.”

Cairns Hospital nurse Natalie Winterburn started her first day of university at the new campus yesterday, to become a registered nurse.

The young mother-of-two said she was excited to hit the books.

“It’s great having a campus here, because it means I don’t have to travel for future residential (placements),” she said.

She said she was a bit concerned about parking, with Cairns Square only offering a potential 124 rooftop carparks.

Engineering student Simon Williams, who lives in the city, said the campus was ideally located for him.

“I think it’s really great resource for students,” he said.

<https://www.cairnspost.com.au/lifestyle/expansion-already-on-the-cards-for-central-queensland-university-in-cairns/news-story/c32b386a40a6eb85822c3e44bab6b2b7>