

Prestigious award for St Margaret's Head of eLearning

St Margaret's secondary teacher Kerry Daud has been named among Australia's top educators in *The Educator's* Hot List Awards.

Head of Faculty – eLearning, Research, Technology and Design, Kerry was recognised for her work in pioneering girls' participation in eSports.

In 2022, Kerry introduced the first Queensland interschool all girls gaming invitational. With 45 students from schools around Brisbane taking part, the inaugural competition provided an opportunity for girls to receive professional performance coaching and development and compete in an all-girl environment.

Although half the gaming population is female, esports at the highest level is dominated by men.

According to Kerry, unfortunately, female gamers compete in a space where harassment is commonplace, and they find it to be taken seriously.

Kerry is committed to changing this rhetoric, providing opportunities for schoolgirls to play esports in a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment.

Kerry also says that competitive gaming is one of the fastest growing industries in the world and the skills developed through the sport are highly valuable and transferrable.

"There are many career opportunities not only within the industry itself, but the strategic, computational and high-cognitive problem-solving skills involvement in esports can nurture and lead to jobs in cybersecurity, online forensics, and a host of other careers where these skills are highly sought after," Kerry said.

Kerry has been instrumental in the establishment of esports alongside St Margaret's traditional sports, as well as initiating the construction of a digital lab at the school for training and competitions.

Aside from her work in esports, Kerry has also developed tailored online digital literacy courses for St Margaret's staff, students, and parents covering topics such as cybersecurity, safe use of social media and secure internet browsing tips.

Kerry has also redesigned the Year 9 Digital Technologies subject at St Margaret's, resulting in a marked increase in student engagement.

On receiving the award Kerry said she was surprised and honoured.

"Nothing happens in isolation, so the award really acknowledges how at St Margaret's we are given amazing support to be innovators. This in turn ensures that we can provide our girls with opportunities that enable them to pursue their passions and I feel wonderful to contribute to this and girls' education as a whole," Kerry said.

The Educator's Hot List showcases education changemakers and their significant innovations and industry contributions.