

16 August 2016

YEAR 12 IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Dear Parents/Carers of Year 12 Students,

As we head towards the end of Term 3 and prepare for the HSC and the end of year activities, I would like to inform you of relevant information regarding your son or daughter as they finish their secondary education at Mater Dei Catholic College. I am well aware that completing the HSC can be a hectic time, not only for the students, but for their parents as well. As such, I trust the following pages go some way to assist you in your planning. I ask that you please take the time to read the following information carefully with your son or daughter, so that you are aware of events this Term and next.

TERM THREE CLASSES

Classes have resumed after the conclusion of the Trial HSC examinations. Most students will easily fit back into the routine of school. Supporting students and encouraging them to keep working with their teachers is our primary focus for the last five weeks of Term 3. Not only will teachers be working methodically through the recent Trial papers, but they will also be following their planned revision programme with time allocated to the completion of past HSC papers. If students are to benefit from such an organised programme, it is crucial they **attend every Homegroup and class on every day**. Timetabled study lessons must be seen as valuable study time by students and parents. As well as all of this, numerous details regarding references, clearance forms, end of Term activities, the HSC examinations and the Graduation Evening needs to be given to the students. **Partial or spasmodic attendance by students may also result in students and parents missing last minute reminders.**

LINE DAYS

Line Days will commence on Tuesday 13 September. Mr Fitzpatrick will distribute a timetable closer to the date. Final day of normal classes will be Monday 12 September. Line Days are compulsory and are crucial for preparation leading into the HSC exams.

THE LAST DAY FOR YEAR 12

The school year will conclude on **Thursday 22 September (Week 10, Term 3)** for our Year 12 students. This will be a busy, and no doubt, emotional day for all. There are three significant and compulsory events scheduled for farewelling our Year 12 students:

1. Breakfast on site: The College will host a breakfast for all our HSC students. This will be held the morning of **Thursday 22 September** in the Café, commencing at **8.15am**. Year 12 students will need to be in full winter College uniform (including Year 12 jumpers) for this breakfast. After breakfast (9.00am – 10.30am) students will go to the College Hall for a rehearsal of the Farewell Assembly, Graduation Mass and Awards Evening, and any other last minute reminders or notices.

2. Year 12 Farewell Assembly: At approximately **11.30am on Thursday 22 September**, Years 7 to 11 will gather to farewell our Year 12 students. **Parents are welcome to attend and need to be seated by 11:30am.** This farewell will be held in the Hall. At the conclusion of this Assembly Year 12 students will be free to go home.

3. Graduation Mass and Awards Evening: Students need to be dressed in full winter College uniform BUT no Year 12 Jumpers. The Graduation Mass will be held in the Hall at 6.00pm on **Thursday 22 September**. The College asks that all Parents/Carers be seated ten minutes before the commencement of Mass. At this Mass the Year 12 students, parents and staff will liturgically celebrate the completion of 13 years of formal education. A supper will be served immediately following the Mass and prior to the Awards presentation for approximately 30 minutes. All parents, staff and students will then regather in the Hall for the presentation of awards and performances by of our Year 12 music students.

The above mentioned events for the final day of Year 12 are important rituals to mark the passage of students from the College to post-school life, and it is hoped that they suitably fulfil this role. We ask that none of these functions be preceded by champagne breakfasts, the consumption of alcohol or similar activities. The College does not endorse any activities organised outside of the College.

*Year 12 students need to bring to the College one **\$25 payment** as part of a Graduation Fund which will contribute toward the cost of farewell activities and a gift to the College on behalf of Year 12. The students have been informed that this contribution needs to be paid before we can issue tickets for the Graduation Evening.*

HSC EXAMINATIONS

- **Optional classes Term 4:** Students are welcome and encouraged to return to the College for voluntary classes/tutorials. Teachers of HSC classes will be available for their students at the scheduled lesson time, in the lead up to their relevant examination. Students who attend must remember the purpose of the classes and ensure, by their behaviour, that all students receive the extra help they require. Please note that although Year 12 students have no formal classes in Term 4, all other students will be continuing their lessons. It is imperative that these classes are not disrupted in any way. Year 12 students should observe the normal recess and lunch breaks when at the College during Term 4.
- **Commencement of HSC Written Examinations:** The HSC written examinations commence on **Thursday 13 October**. All HSC examinations during this period will be held in the College Hall. Students will need to present all exams **30 minutes prior** to the commencement time. Students sitting examinations under Disability Provisions will also complete their examinations at the College.
- Each student should access their own copy of the HSC Timetable online from the Board of Studies website at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au. Students have received a copy of Rules and Procedures for the HSC. Students should make themselves familiar with the contents and details outlined in the Timetable. **Students need to attend all HSC examinations in full summer uniform.**
- Students should have received both their ATAR PIN and Board of Studies PIN. The ATAR PIN is necessary for **UAC Applications**. The Board of Studies PIN allows students to access their HSC results online. These PINs are confidential and as such the College does not have access to them.

SEMESTER TWO REPORTS

Semester Two Reports will be posted towards the end of this term. These will be the final reports for our Year 12 students. They will give you an indication of how your son/daughter has progressed in their final year of schooling. These reports will indicate Trial Exam results as well as final rankings in courses. I hope it is a report of which they will be proud to show any future employer.

TEXTBOOK AND LAPTOP RETURN

Texts are to be returned after each exam to the Resource Centre which will be open during normal school hours. The books should be presented in good condition with all pencil marks erased and covers intact. Students will be expected to cover the cost of any lost or damaged books. Failure to return textbooks will result in the relevant student not attending the Graduation Evening. Students are welcome to keep their laptops. There is no need to return them to the College.

At the completion of their final examination students are to collect a **Clearance Form** from the Front Office and take this to the Resource Centre with their remaining textbooks. When all texts have been returned, a staff member in the Resource Centre will then sign the student's Clearance Form.

Please note the following in relation to the completion of Clearance Forms:

- During HSC exams
Clearance forms available from the College Office.
Return texts at the end of each exam.
- End of final exam:
Return of remaining texts to the Resource Centre.
Clearance Form to be signed by Mrs Morton and returned to Mrs Sullivan.
Locker to be cleaned out and key returned to Mrs Sullivan.

HSC AND ATAR RESULTS

On **Thursday 15 December**, students will be able to access their HSC results from the Board of Studies. On **Friday 16 December** from 9.00 am, students will receive notification of their ATARs (if eligible and requested) from the Universities Admissions Centre.

It would be appreciated on both of these dates that students contact me at the College (Miss Paul on 6923 8300) to confirm their results. The College does not have access to student ATAR results, so early contact will assist us in highlighting outstanding results and allow us to personally congratulate students on their achievements.

UNIVERSITY OFFERS

Mr O'Connell will be available at school or via email oconnellr1@ww.catholic.edu.au if any students have questions about university offers.

DUX AND ACADEMIC AWARDS ASSEMBLY

On **Tuesday 2 February 2017**, at 10.00am the College will be holding a special Academic Awards ceremony in the College Hall to acknowledge and acclaim students from the 2016 Higher School Certificate cohort who gained outstanding academic results in the HSC examinations and in the ATAR calculations.

At the ceremony the following Academic Awards will be conferred:

- 2016 College Dux (based on the student with the highest ATAR)
- Outstanding Academic Achievement Awards (for students gaining an ATAR of 90 or greater)
- Outstanding Academic Achievement Awards (for students who gained places on the Board of Studies Order of Merit lists for receiving a mark of 90 or greater in a course)

It will be necessary for students to apply for these awards as ATAR results are not released publicly to schools.

GRADUATION EVENING

This function is set for **Friday 4 November** with proceedings commencing at 6.15pm. The cost for the night is \$75 per person, payment is to be made to the **College Office by Wednesday 14 September**. We ask that all parents be seated inside the Mater Dei Catholic College Hall by 6.30pm. Student **dress for the evening should be modest and appropriate**. Failure to comply with this expectation may result in the College

withdrawing the privilege of the student graduating on the evening. **Students are required to remain at this Function until 11.00 pm.** College policy in relation to the Graduation is that each student is allocated three seats only. That is, **one for the student and one for each parent.** Obviously there may be some family situations that will necessitate an extra seat and any requests for such should be in writing to me, Miss Emily Paul, by **Monday 5 September. (Week 8, Term 3).** **Students will not be allocated seats for 'special friends'.** Rehearsal for the Graduation ceremony will be held in the College Hall at 10:00am on Friday 4 November. Please make any other appointments around this time and date. The rehearsal will last approximately 1.5 hours.

DRIVING CARS

It is important that mention is made of the College's concerns about the dangers associated with motor vehicles and end-of-year activities. Every year we see statistics where Year 12 students are injured, lose their lives or take another's life in car accidents. It is easy to understand how students could be in an heightened state of excitement due to finishing classes or examinations. In some cases this may involve an over indulgence in alcohol. The mix of excitement, cars, and perhaps alcohol can be potentially deadly. While you may have already spoken about this issue as a family, we ask that you spend a little time discussing it once again.

'SCHOOLIES WEEK'

The last decade or so has seen the dramatic escalation of "Schoolies Week", a period of celebration by students completing Year 12. This celebration characteristically occurs at a variety of holiday venues both within and outside Australia. The following article, supplied by the NSW Department of Education, Employment and Training a few years back, highlights some of the pitfalls of "Schoolies Week" and offers some suggestions for parents/guardians and students.

"There have been reports of violence, intimidation, sexual license and drug and alcohol abuse during 'Schoolies Week'. It needs to be remembered that large gatherings of school leavers will bring together students who do not all have the same code of ethics or behaviour. Such gatherings can also attract non-students who wish to join in the celebrations. Thus both predators and victims are to be found during 'Schoolies Week'. Adding to the heady cocktail of freedom from the strictures of both home and school, is the excitement of travel to a location specialising in the pursuit of pleasure. To this excitement must be added the extra energy of being in a large group, a group that often has the time on its hands and money in its pocket, a group in their athletic and sexual prime of life, a group with minimal responsibilities, a group in transition from school to adult life. The capacity for both pain and pleasure during 'Schoolies Week' can be magnified for some with the newly acquired licence to drink, and the opportunity to access a variety of social drugs. There is evidence to suggest that not all young people handle this excitement and freedom in a responsible manner, and so become a liability to others with violence, sexual exploitation, as well as drug and alcohol abuse being reported. Encourage students to be aware of stranger danger and to stay in a group of trusted and responsible friends who are committed to looking after the welfare of each other. Students need to be careful when admitting others into the group who have not been fully vetted. A "buddy system" is often a very useful method of supporting each other during 'Schoolies Week'.

Parents and students need to know that whilst it might be accurately said that schools have no right to determine what goes on in 'Schoolies Week', the reality is that when trouble occurs, the public often waste little time in writing outraged letter of complaint to schools. In other words, despite students having left school, the public continues to see students during 'Schoolies Week' as being ambassadors of their schools, and thus a school's reputation can be both positively and adversely affected by its alumni. The media is very quick to identify schools when trouble is reported during 'Schoolies Week'.

It is recognised that in the end, the success or otherwise of 'Schoolies Week' will depend upon individuals respecting each other. It is also worth noting that when individuals get together in groups, a synergy or mentality might be adopted by the group which may be at odds with its individuals. Thus it is important that

the chemistry of any group be thoroughly tested and understood before any allegiance is given. In the end what is hoped for is that 'Schoolies Week' becomes a time of deserved relaxation with friends, the enjoyment of a few blissful days before one set of responsibilities is swapped for another.

'Schoolies Week', if it is to grow into one of the 'rites of passage' worthy of a civilised society, must be protected from those wishing to exploit it."

OBLIGATIONS TO FINISH THE YEAR WELL

As you can see the calendar is very congested. At the same time students must realise that the focus of their effort should be on the HSC examinations and they should use the time available in the remaining weeks to prepare thoroughly for them. All teachers will be analysing the Trial HSC papers, working systematically through past HSC papers, and doing their very best to assist the students in their final preparations. We require all students to be in all classes until formal classes cease at 3.10 pm Monday 12 September 2016. Students who do not comply may be asked to explain the reasons for their absences to the College, and may also find themselves excluded from some end of year activities.

Inappropriate behaviour by individuals or groups of students may result in students being excluded from some, or all, of the end of year activities, at the discretion of the College. Ultimately, the College wants your child to be able to finish 2016 feeling confident about their HSC and feeling good about themselves, leaving school with an adult confidence ready to embrace the future.

SUMMARY OF DATES

A summary of significant dates is attached for your convenience. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss any of the points mentioned in this letter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Emily Paul', with a long, sweeping underline.

Miss Emily Paul
Assistant to the Principal – Students

SUMMARY OF DATES
Year 12, 2016/2017

Monday 1 August	UOW Early Admission Opens
Wednesday 3 August	The University Admissions Centre (UAC) opens for university application in NSW/ACT
Wednesday 3 August	Schools Recommendation Schemes (EARLY ENTRY), for schools participating through UAC, opens. This includes CSU Early Entry
Friday 26 August	UOW Early Admission Closes
Thursday 15 September	Last day to purchase Graduation Evening tickets
Thursday 22 September Last day of Year 12	8.15am – Breakfast at the College 11.45am – Farewell Assembly in the Hall 6pm – Graduation Mass followed by Awards Evening in the Hall
Friday 30 September	Schools Recommendation Schemes (Early Entry) closes
Friday 30 September	On time applications to UAC close
Thursday 13 October	HSC begins
Friday 4 November	10am – Graduation Rehearsals at Hall 6.15pm – Graduation Evening at Hall
Monday 5 December	December Round Change of Preferences closes
Friday 9 December	December Round offers e-released
Wednesday 15 December	HSC results from the Board of Studies
Thursday 16 December	ATAR released by UAC from 9am. Notification of ATAR to Miss Paul at the College from 9am – 11am, 6923 8300
Friday 6 January 2017	Change of preference date for MAIN ROUND
Wednesday 18 January 2017	6pm Main Round offers released
Tuesday 2 February 2017	College Dux and Academic Assembly