

VCE was probably one of the most stressful and exhausting things I've ever willingly done, even though we all complained about it as though we were forced into it. It was also one of the most interesting and exciting years of my educational life; I was lucky enough to have subjects that I really enjoyed, teachers that I trusted wholeheartedly and that supported me, and friends and family who couldn't wait to plan for our years of freedom after graduation. I found a lot of joy in the subjects I did, Art, Psychology, Chemistry, and even General Maths I suppose. I also had the opportunity to take English Literature online, which was a wonderful experience thanks to my teachers, both here and at VSV. Being able to continue swimming for the college was something that I am incredibly proud of, and being something that I enjoyed so much, I felt that I had something to commit to outside of focusing entirely on academics, which is vital when you're under as much pressure as a VCE student. It was fulfilling to me as a person who enjoys variation.

Some of the biggest pieces of advice that I can give to not only the incredible class of 2025, but the future seniors of the college, is to trust yourself. Sometimes you will be able to push through every challenge that's thrown at you, but other times, you just have to accept and go with the flow. Take breaks when you get the chance, even if you feel like you don't quite need it, and apply yourself at every opportunity. The more chances you take, the less that small mistakes and disappointments will weigh you down. I wish I had told myself that early on, but as the exam season started creeping up and the workload suddenly dipped, I was able to look back on everything I had managed to achieve in just two terms; doing well in my SACs, competing for the college in swimming, leadership, production, and enjoying the social elements of year 12 with my friends.

Ask as many questions as you can, and never be afraid to bother your teachers. Asking for extra help, extra resources, practice tests, SACs, and exams, all helped me to feel not only prepared, but confident in my knowledge. Don't spend all your time trying to make prescribed, generalised study techniques work, or forcing yourself into subjects that will get you a prestigious score that gives you no benefit. Often, doing well in a subject that you actually enjoy will get you a better score overall. Spend time figuring out what works for you, and if that stops working, find another way. At the end of the day, you'll end up where you want to be.

After making it through the year, I am thrilled to be studying at my dream university, the University of Melbourne, for a Bachelor of Arts, aiming for my dream career as an art curator and conservator, blending my passions for art and science. But mind you, I didn't have a dream university until August last year, when my mum and I were going through our laundry list of uni open days to attend. My dream career only came into picture the year before during an excursion to NGV.

I felt a little bad initially, leaving behind the pathway that I had planned out in year 7 to become a research scientist, not sure what kind, and I had already backed it up with my work experience, so it was definitely happening. But in VCE, I was able to pursue both art and chemistry, and I did pretty well in both of them. If you want it, it's worth it, and my point is, that plans can change, and you should let them. Some people will hold onto the same plan that they've had since childhood, others may change the direction of their life every few months, but as long as you trust yourself, you'll be where you need to be.

Thank you to everyone who helped me to achieve the scores that I did; before I got them, I tried to tell myself that they didn't really matter, but I truly am proud of them. On my pathway, they were what I needed to get where I wanted to be this year. Thank you to everyone who supported me throughout this. I wish the best of luck to everyone, regardless of if you're counting up your first weeks at high school or counting down your last months until it's done, it will all be worth it.

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