MONDAY November 3, 2014
ALL Students are dismissed at 1:20pm

SAVE THE DATES!

NOSSAL HIGH SCHOOL ANNUAL YEAR 12 VALEDICTORY DINNER,
Thursday 20th November, 6:30 pm
Victory Room, Etihad Stadium
* Year 12 Students, Parents and Families *
Tickets available—www.trybooking.com/FEDX

NOSSAL HIGH SCHOOL ANNUAL SPEECH NIGHT,
(Student attendance compulsory)
Tuesday 2nd December, 7:00pm
Robert Blackwood Hall, Monash University Clayton
* All parents welcome *
Tickets free of charge

For more information regarding Nossal events, see the 'Coming Events' tab on our webpage.

PRINCIPAL NEWS - Mr Roger Page

Dear Parents,

VCE Exams
Final VCE exams start this week and I wish all students well – particularly those involved in the Unit 4 studies in Year 12. It can be a stressful time of the year for those involved, but I am confident that the Nossal students have been well prepared and will perform as best they are able. Teachers have been working incredibly hard to support and assist their students and this support and assistance continues throughout the exam period. Class teachers are available for students during swot vac during their designated lesson times and at other times by negotiation. I am aware that a number have been, and will run 'out-of-hours' review sessions after school or at weekends and most are communicating regularly with their students online.

Year 12 celebrations – I must commend the Year 12 group for an entertaining and enjoyable farewell assembly and celebration day last week. It was a nice opportunity to acknowledge their journey at Nossal in an irreverent way, and to celebrate the end of their secondary schooling with the rest of the school and their teachers. While we are genuinely sad to see them leave – it is most affirming and warming to have shared an important part of their journey, and to (hopefully) have assisted them to prepare, and successfully transition into, the next phase of their education. After the exams – the next big milestone for the school and students is the release of their final results, then the tertiary offers in the last week of the school year.

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IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

Oct 29-Nov 21  VCAA Exams
Oct 31  Dark Zone & Indoor Sports excursion
Nov 3  Yr9 Big History excursion
       Early finish-1:20pm FOR ALL STUDENTS
Nov 4  Student Free Day-Melbourne Cup Day
NOV 17-21  Yr9-11 Exam Week
Nov 20  Valedictory Dinner
Nov 24-25  Yr9 Bogong Leadership Camp
Nov 24-28  Early Commencement of 2015 classes
Nov 28  Yr 10 Final Assembly
       Yr 11 Final Assembly
Dec 1  2015 New Yr9 Orientation Day-No classes
Dec 2  Monash Challenge 9-1.30pm
       Speech Night Rehearsal
       Students finish at 1.20
       Speech Night 6pm – Robert Blackwood Hall
Dec 3  Monash Challenge 9-1.20pm
Dec 4  Monash Challenge 9-3.30pm
Dec 5  Yr 9 Terry Bennett Cup at Suzanne Cory HS
Dec 8  Monash Challenge
Dec 9  Monash Challenge
Dec 10  Yr 9 Big Day Out
Dec 11  Course Counselling
Dec 12  Course Counselling

2014 SCHOOL TERM DATES
Term 3  July 14– September 19
Term 4  Oct 6– Year Level Dependant

2015 SCHOOL TERM 1 DATES
Jan 30  Yr 9 & 12 & new students start
Feb 2  All year levels return

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Congratulations to…

Devam Modi of Year 11 who was presented with a “Junior Tall Poppy Science Award” by the Australian Institute of Policy and Science at Melbourne University last week – one of only 10 awards offered to top preforming science students from across the state.

Yong See Foo of Year 10 who will be presented with a medal at Government House in Brisbane next week from the Australian Mathematics Trust – one of only 77 medallists worldwide; and one of 34 of the highest performing mathematics students in Australia.

Krshna Balakrishnan of Year 11 who has been selected by the Rotary Club to attend the 2015 National Youth Science Form in Canberra in January. His selection panel feedback was exceptionally positive and he will be an excellent ambassador for the school.

School Self Evaluation and Review

The school leadership team have been very busy collecting and analysing data, interviewing students, staff, alumni and parents and drafting a comprehensive evaluation of what has been achieved in the past 5 years, any areas of concern or issues that we need to address, and what priorities and planning we need to put into place for the next 4 years. We will undergo the formal review part of the process in mid November with an independent school reviewer.

The feedback has been generally very positive and very detailed, and has given us a comprehensive set of recommendations and directions that we will confirm and consolidate with staff and School Council input during the next fortnight. Sincere thanks to those who were able to offer their insights and were active participants in the focus group and survey activities. We greatly value your input and it will help us build an even stronger and more effective school. Please don’t hesitate to contact me directly should you have any concerns or suggestions that you think we may have missed or need to ensure is included. We will publish the outcomes for the school community in the form of a “Strategic Plan” that will be the result of the self-evaluation, the review and further input from the school community.

Partnerships with the Select Entry Network

Along with the other three selective Schools we are about to embark on a pilot outreach program for gifted students in regional primary schools. This is a DEECD initiative as part of their response to the Parliamentary Enquiry into Gifted Education. The initial stage of the project involves us appointing a project officer from one of the 4 schools to manage the initiative, and then to design and deliver some pilot programs to regional primary school students. This will take place in 2015, and may involve some of our staff and students in delivering the programs or hosting visitors to our school for conferences and workshops.

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Robotics

We have had some early discussions with Silverton and Berwick Lodge Primary Schools and Kambrya Secondary College and are hoping to organise some links, co-operation and partnerships around Robotics and Systems Engineering programs. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to work with other local schools in a developing area where we can break some new ground and create some exciting programs and pathways in this rapidly growing field.

Warwick University UK & Monash

Some of our Year 9 classes have been trialling “IGGY” (International Gateway for Gifted Youth) through Warwick University and have been given free access to the IGGY portal to trial the programs, resources and activities that are available to them. Monash is keen to encourage this link and are offering research support and assistance to strengthen the program and build the links. This is a good example of an online community that could be of much benefit to our students, and is one of an increasing number of digital resources available to 21st century learners.

Digital Delivery

I was quite amazed to hear from the Vice Chancellor at Melbourne University recently that they had 640,000 students from 150 countries currently enrolled in “MOOCs” (Massive Open Online Courses). The numbers of enrolments in online courses and “virtual universities” has exploded in the past few years and the Vice Chancellor stated that the university was now undergoing significant change in the way they were teaching as a result of the change in the way students were learning. Lectures are now predominantly downloaded and students will scan the information on iPhones, or personal devices – seek their information online rather than in a traditional lecture theatre or library and communicate online. Tutorials have become more important, but the way that students study and access information is undergoing rapid change. This of course has significant resonance with our students and I’m pleased to see that the work of our ICT team and teachers particularly around the digital delivery program is at the cutting edge.

Internet access

I have just signed contracts to vastly improve our internet access and bandwidth. We are now able to connect via AARnet who provide “transmission capacity” to hospitals and universities and who have recently been allowed to offer their services to schools. Fortunately we had planned for this possibility at building design stage, due to our partnership with and proximity to Monash. Once the connection is finalised we will have vastly increased capacity over what we currently have at a considerably reduced cost. This should be operational shortly and then our capacity will far exceed our current needs which will be a welcome (and necessary) improvement. My thanks to Mr Fankhauser and Mr Humphreys for facilitating this dramatic improvement.

Roger Page

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL NEWS - Ms Sue Harrap

Wish students in Unit 3 & 4 VCE subjects well in their final exams

By the time this newsletter is published, we will have already started the VCAA exams. We wish all students who are sitting these exams well, knowing that they have worked hard and done their best.

It is important for the rest of the school to be considerate of the students sitting their final exams, ensuring they keep noise and distractions to a minimum in the areas around the Gymnasium, the Meath Auditorium and the Jean Russell Centre.

Whole School Exams for Years 9-11

I would just like to reiterate a few points regarding the end of year exams, to ensure that parents and students are clear about the expectations of students at this time.

Students in Years 9 to 11 will be sitting their Nossal Examinations in the week November 17 – 21st.

Year 9s will undertake normal lessons on Monday 17th and Tuesday 18th November 2014. They will follow a Week B timetable and will undertake revision with their classroom teachers. Their end of year exams will begin on Wednesday 19th November.
2014. Students will be expected to attend school from half an hour before the beginning of their first exam and may leave at the end of their last exam for the day, in line with the expectations for senior students.

Year 10s can expect an exam in all subjects and Year 11s can expect an exam in all subjects, although their Unit ¾ VCAA exam will generally be held at another time. There are special provisions for students with VCAA exams throughout the Nossal Exam week. These have been outlined to students and parents via a letter from Ms Katherine Warriner (Director of VCE).

A timetable indicating when the exams occur will be distributed to students shortly. Students are expected to be in full academic uniform and should ensure they have all required materials for each exam. Class teachers will provide this information. Teachers will also provide revision opportunities and materials for students to develop and refine their study habits.

To maintain the security of exams we do not reschedule examinations for students who miss their exams due to illness or other reasons. If there is a school approved event on during the examination period, we will accommodate the students involved so that they are able to participate.

**Attendance Expectations at the End of the Year:**

Year 9 are expected to attend all classes, exams and additional programs until the Wednesday 10th December. Year 10s and 11s are expected to attend all classes, exam feedback and early commencement programs, including their final assembly on Friday 28th November.

All students in Years 9 to 12 are expected to attend Speech Night in full summer, academic uniform in the evening on Tuesday 2nd December at Robert Blackwood Hall, Monash Clayton.

Sue Harrap

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL NEWS - Mr Wayne Haworth**

**Year 12 Celebrations**

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the Year 12 students were about to enjoy their final days of formal classes before heading into the swot vac period. Last Friday, Monash Berwick hosted a delicious buffet lunch for the Year 12 students and staff of Nossal. At this time, Mr Michael Watchorn Campus Manager of Monash Berwick, congratulated the class of 2014 and each student was presented with a generous gift. I would like to thank Michael and the team at Monash for their on-going support of our students and staff.

Following lunch, the whole school then assembled for the Final Year 12 assembly. What a joyous occasion it was! It was reflective and funny and I even saw a few tears. We were all entertained by a number of performers including Miley Cyrus (by a rather shy Rahul Ramesh), Bollywood dancers and a cameo by Mr Mahalingam and who could forget LaFank! It was lovely to have Sir Gus present to acknowledge the hard work from students and to wish them well for the upcoming exams.
That evening, almost all Year 12 students remained at school and enjoyed an evening together. Students enjoyed games, nibblies, pizza and a movie! Thank you to Subi and Shawn from Year 12 for their leadership in organising this celebratory event. Thank you too, to the staff who assisted by volunteering with supervision after a long and tiring week. A special thanks to Ms Soltys and Ms Warriner for organising the Year 12 activities throughout the year and also at this time.

Rise and shine… for many, it was an earlier start on Tuesday, as the Year 12 Celebration Breakfast was in full swing. Bacon and eggs, pancakes, berries and ice cream with topping and juices were some of the delights on offer.
Soon after, Mr Rule had the students engaged in fun activities including tug of war. Nossal's very own holi powder run was next. Mr Page, Ms Harrap and many staff joined in the festivities. White shirts were very quickly transformed, as were faces and hair styles!
As I write this article, our Year 12 students are hitting the books. Best wishes to all Year 12 students. As I stated in the last edition of the Nossal News, be proud knowing that you did the best that you could do. There are many pathways. If you are passionate and determined you will achieve your goals. I look forward to seeing all Year 12s at the Valedictory Dinner at Etihad Stadium on Thursday 20th November.

Early dismissal for an extended staff meeting
A reminder that next Monday 3rd November, students will be dismissed early and will finish at 1.20pm. As previously advised, this is to allow for an extended staff meeting as we begin to finalise the schools Strategic Review.

Speech Night
A reminder to all members of the Nossal community, that you are invited to attend our annual speech Night at Robert Blackwood Hall on 2nd December at 7pm. I want to see as many parents as possible as we reflect and celebrate the endeavour and achievements of our wonderful students. Although this is a ticketed event, there is no charge. Information regarding tickets will be available on the Nossal website.
Working Bee/Secondhand Book and uniform sale

Save the date. Saturday 29th November from 9-1pm. (Yes, this is the morning of the state election.)

The PFA are hosting our second annual uniform and second hand book sale. This is a great chance to save money on the purchase of books and uniforms. It is also a great way to sell unwanted items. Last year we had more buyers than sellers so if you are keen to be involved as a seller, please register early. Sellers are welcome from 9am and buyers from 10am. On the same day, we have our Term 4 working bee. I would be very grateful if you could spare an hour or so. The outdoor seating needs resealing, and our garden could benefit from additional mulch to drought proof it over the summer months.

Mr Wayne Haworth

Science Olympiad- Ms Diane Latham

Every year, Australian Science Innovations, via Monash University, run an Australia-wide Science Olympiad competition. The first stage of the competition comprises examinations in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. These examinations have a very high degree of technical difficulty and often include questions that are of university standard.

A number of Year 10 and Year 11 Nossal students participated in the Olympiad competition this year and we are extremely pleased and proud to announce the following award recipients:

Sandeepa Suriyage – Chemistry, Distinction; Biology, High Distinction – Bronze medal winner –Well done Sandeepa!
Aedan Kertesi – Biology – Distinction
Alan Ung – Chemistry – Credit
Anthony Salib – Physics – Distinction
Bothidah Thach – Biology, Distinction; Chemistry, Credit
Bridgette Van Diepen – Biology, Credit
Cherry Chan – Biology, Credit; Chemistry, Credit, Physics, Participation
Devam Modi – Biology, Credit; Chemistry, Distinction
Hargun Bhalla – Chemistry, Participation
Kevin Yu – Physics, Credit
Krshna Balakrishnan – Biology, Distinction
Louise Jin – Biology, Distinction; Chemistry, Participation
Muzamal-Ali-Ibrahimi – Chemistry, Credit
Nathan Dalton – Biology, Distinction; Chemistry, Distinction
Saliya Wickramasinghe – Biology, Credit; Chemistry, Distinction
Shon Kolomoisky – Physics, Credit
Siobhan Mooren – Biology, Distinction
Susna Kuriakose – Biology, Credit; Chemistry, Credit; Physics, Participation
Teagan Goh – Biology, Distinction
Timothy Chen – Biology, Participation; Chemistry, Credit
Yong Han Lai – Physics, Credit
Zahraa Albander – Biology, Distinction.
All of these students self-selected to enter this competition and they should be congratulated for their efforts. We are very proud of them all.

Next year, the Olympiad exams will take place during August. Current Year 9 and 10 students should seriously consider entering this prestigious competition. Why not prepare ahead and start looking at the past-year’s papers on the website: 


For further information, contact Mrs Latham in the Science Staffroom or by email:

Diane.latham@nossalhs.vic.edu.au

Mrs Diane Latham
Science Domain Leader

Public Speaking Competition - Ms Brianna Chapple

UN Youth Victoria- Voice Competition

On Wednesday 22nd October, Nossal High School had eight of our Year 10 students who competed in the UN Youth Victoria Voice public speaking competition as Melbourne University. Baneen Saberi, Isuru Wakishta, Thomas Velican, Rohan Dalal, Hao (Bill) Ding, Meghna Prasannan Ponganam and Jessica Leed all presented speeches on topics ranging from International Human Rights concerns and challenges facing Indigenous Australia, through to the future of Australia's economy. All students had to present a researched and prepared speech followed by a short questions and answer session with the judges. Our school was extremely well represented by all of these students who were articulate, well-informed and presented thoughtful, intelligent responses.

Hao was successful in being advanced to the state finals held on October 31st. This is a very exciting opportunity for him. All students who took part are to be congratulated on their efforts and we hope to see them representing our school at future UN initiatives.

Wellbeing- Mr Leigh Candy

SAFEMinds at Home

SAFEMinds was launched by the Victorian Education Minister here at Nossal on 2 July. It’s a primary and secondary program whose aim is the early detection and intervention of emotional distress in children.

SAFEMinds was developed in partnership between Victoria’s education department and headspace, Australia's national youth mental health foundation. SAFEMinds at Home is a component of the program designed to help parents understand their role in fostering children's mental health and wellbeing.

Headspace is presenting a free session in Dandenong for parents to learn about early detection and support for young people through the SAFEMinds training being introduced for schools and families across Victoria.

The session is from 7 till to 9pm on Wednesday 12 November at headspace Dandenong, 196 Lonsdale Street. Parents wanting to attend can register via www.eventbrite.com.au/o/safeminds-7552791023.
Uniform Donations - Mrs Leanne Ansalde

Attention Year 12 students and families

Currently we are seeking donations of second hand uniform for the Nossal Wellbeing team. We have a shortage of PE shorts and track pants. This uniform is used to assist us in implementing our uniform policy as well as to assist students and families who need extra support.

If you can help us with this, please place items in your Nossal school bag or plastic bag labelled donations/wellbeing and hand in at the front office.

Thank you for your support,

Leanne Ansalde
Director of House
The 2014 academic year is almost over, and at this time we would like to extend an invitation to you to attend the Annual Nossal High School Speech Night to be held on Tuesday December 2 at Robert Blackwood Hall, Monash University, Wellington Road, Clayton commencing at 7pm.

This is an important event in our school calendar; an evening where we recognise and celebrate the academic achievements of our students. It is compulsory for students and a wonderful opportunity for our students to share their successes with parents and the whole school community! We would be delighted if you would join us.

Please order your FREE tickets to this event on Trybooking using this link - http://www.trybooking.com/GHKZ

(Please note: All students are expected to attend in full academic uniform and do not require tickets for entry.)
We are seeking volunteers for a full day (with break times) to assist us in the supervision of exams.

**Dates:** Monday 17th to Friday 21st November 2014

**Who can do it?** Anyone with a current Working With Children's Check or an application pending. Application forms are available at Post Offices and they are free for volunteers.

**What do volunteer supervisors do?**
- Work with the coordinating teacher to supervise exams to ensure that students comply with exam requirements.
- Patrol amongst the rows of students sitting exams.
- Assist students with questions and escort them to the toilet
- Collect exam papers at the end.
- We run training sessions for new volunteers.

**How do you sign up?**
- Email Jane Petty (jane.petty@nossalhs.vic.edu.au) your details including your phone number and the day(s) that you are available.
- Phone the school for more details on 87624600
- Someone will contact you closer to the date to confirm the days you have been allocated to supervision and organise a time for training.

**What do volunteers get for offering their time?**
- Food during meal breaks throughout the day.
- A letter of thanks
- The opportunity to see and understand the pressures on our students and how impressive our students are.
- Experience in and understanding of VCAA exam conditions, rules and processes
- A good feeling

*When you sign up for supervision we are relying on you to fulfill your commitment.*

Many thanks for your assistance,

Sue Harrap (Assistant Principal)          Roger Page (Principal)
Are you a writer? Interested in the world around you? Want your voice to be HEARD by others?

‘A YOUNG COMMONWEALTH’

This year’s theme recognises that young people account for the majority of the Commonwealth’s population and play a vital role in shaping the world that we live in, now and in years to come.

Through the world’s oldest and largest schools’ international writing competition, the Royal Commonwealth Society provides an opportunity for young people to share their stories and have their voices heard.

JUNIOR CATEGORY
Born after 1st May 2001 (under 14 years)
1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being young?
2. Imagine what the world will be like when you are an old person.
3. I am the future.
4. Imagine you are a young person living in a different part of the Commonwealth. What is life like for you?

SENIOR CATEGORY
Born between 2nd May 1996 and 1st May 2001 (14-18 years)
1. What do you hope to achieve in your lifetime?
2. In 2030 you will no longer be young. What changes would you like to see in the world in 15 years’ time?
3. Youth versus experience.
4. Fresh perspectives. What can a young Commonwealth offer?

ENTER BY 1ST MAY 2015

Please see the NHS IRC staff for further information
SAFEMinds Comes to Town!

headspace – the National Youth Mental Health Foundation will be presenting a FREE session in Dandenong for parents to learn about early detection and support for young people through the SAFEMinds mental health training currently being introduced for schools and families across Victoria.

Time: 7pm to 9pm
Date: 12 November 2014
Venue: headspace Dandenong

196 Lonsdale Street
Dandenong 3175

Parents interested in attending can register via www.eventbrite.com.au/o/safeminds-7552791023
The following table details what exams are being held at Nossal High School. Please note the venue of your exams.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Exam</th>
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<td><strong>Wednesday</strong></td>
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<td>29/10</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Theatre</td>
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<td>29/10</td>
<td>English as Additional Language</td>
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<td><strong>Thursday</strong></td>
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<td>30/10</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Theatre</td>
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<td>30/10</td>
<td>Economics</td>
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<td><strong>Friday</strong></td>
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<td>31/10</td>
<td>Biology</td>
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<td>31/10</td>
<td>Further Maths Exam 1</td>
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<td>3/11</td>
<td>Further Maths Exam 2</td>
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<td>Business Management</td>
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<td>Math Methods CAS Exam 1</td>
<td>Gymnasium</td>
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<td>Health &amp; Human Devpt</td>
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<td>6/11</td>
<td>Math Methods CAS Exam 2</td>
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<td>7/11</td>
<td>Literature</td>
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<td>7/11</td>
<td>Specialist Maths Exam 1</td>
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<td>Specialist Maths Exam 2</td>
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<td>10/11</td>
<td>History: Revolutions</td>
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<td>Chemistry</td>
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<td>Legal Studies</td>
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<td>Art</td>
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<td>English Language</td>
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<td>14/11</td>
<td>Food and Technology</td>
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<td>14/11</td>
<td>Music Performance</td>
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<td>14/11</td>
<td>IT – Software Development</td>
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<td>14/11</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
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<td>German</td>
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<td>17/11</td>
<td>Japanese as a Second Language</td>
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<td>Vietnamese</td>
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<td>18/11</td>
<td>French</td>
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<td>Indonesian as a Second Language</td>
<td>Jean Russell Centre</td>
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<td>19/11</td>
<td>Chinese as a Second Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>19/11</td>
<td>Chinese as a Second Language (Advanced)</td>
<td>Jean Russell Centre</td>
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Jacqueline Huang received a perfect VCE English score last year. Here’s her advice on how to do the same.

My name is...  
Jacqueline Yuyen Huang

I went to...  
Westbourne Grammar School

In VCE ENGLISH I received a score of 50

The thing I liked best about doing this subject was:  
With English being my second language I disliked the subject. However in retrospect, I really enjoyed writing essays for Context. I had a lot of fun creating a personal voice and being able to be more creative/unconventional with my writing.

This year I am doing...  
Bachelor of Biomedicine

The best advice I can give the Class of 2014 about this specific exam is...  
Don’t over complicate and over think. For Language Analysis: At the start of the year, I really struggled with this section of English. I was never able to finish a timed essay and felt as though my essay was poorly constructed. For me, it became a very formulaic piece of writing when I stopped thinking too much, and just identified the most relevant techniques that I knew I had plenty of practice analysing. Don’t think too much and just paragraph according to the points the author makes. Always remember to really dig and analyse. Don’t write fluffy sentences. I find it to be the easiest format that ensures you are analysing straight forwardly without having to worry about essay structure etc. Also, it really helps to have a few adjectives and verbs that describe the author’s tone and what he or she is doing up your sleeves. Spend some time writing good sentence patterns for an analysis because you start to see that you can re-use a lot of things you’ve written in the past. Paragraphs for language analysis are essentially: “point, evidence, analyse”.

Don’t try to over-do your language. When I did VCE I was always amazed by the fancy words and impressive sentence structures that were evident in the sample essays. Keep in mind those aren’t the only good essays. Keep your language simple and straight forward.

Practice is key: the more you do now the easier it is for you to prepare later. Throughout the year I put in a lot of effort into each and every one of my homework essays. On top of that, I would often write individual paragraphs for some random idea – a theme, a character etc that I hadn’t covered or had time to write a full essay on. The more quality essays I wrote that covered a broad range of topics, the easier it became when it came to assessments. I was able to recycle a few of my many paragraphs I had already written and form them into a cohesive essay. It made things a lot easier.

The best advice I got from my teacher about this exam was...  
There wasn’t specific advice that was directed particularly at the exam (apart from her suggestion of starting the Language Analysis first and to be more creative with our Context pieces in order to stand out). However I am really grateful for a very supportive and hardworking teacher. Our school’s English department is also very well resourced with some excellent English teachers that really taught us the best approaches to essay writing. I also appreciate how my school gave us only an hour to do our assessed essays at school under exam conditions. I think that really prepared me in terms of time management.

In the month before this VCE exam, I...  
collected every essay I had written and improved upon them (fixing up my expressions and adding in extra information or ideas). I also wrote separate paragraphs for all three sections of the exam. I went through my texts to familiarise myself with it more.

I didn’t have a study schedule at all. I would sit down to write when I had an idea and leave it when I couldn’t write anything decent.

I recorded myself reading out the paragraphs/ essays and listened to them. I also revised all my essays.

On exam day, I prepared myself by...  
I felt like I couldn’t recall anything that I had memorised. However I quickly reminded myself not to think about anything else: didn’t even try to recite any memorised essays, I just read everything over and over again just before entering the exam room. It helped keep me calm on my way to the exam.

After the exam, I...  
went home and took a couple of hours’ break. I felt like I did really well since I was lucky enough to have been able to write all of my best paragraphs for the exam. This feeling made me more motivated to study for my other exams which were only days after the English one.

The best exam advice I received from my parents, siblings or family member was...  
I didn’t receive anything exam related, but I thank my parents for believing in me and they never gave me any pressure. I also thank my friends who reminded me not to doubt my capabilities. I didn’t work a part-time job during year 12 because...  
my parents felt as though it would interfere with my studies.

For more tips like this and for advice about looking after yourself during VCE exams, please visit www.education.vic.gov.au/school/students/Pages/vce.aspx
Further Maths

Samuel Goh received a perfect VCE Further Mathematics score last year. Here’s his advice on how to do the same.

My name is
Samuel Goh

I went to...
Rowville Secondary College.

In VCE Further Maths I received a score of...
50

The thing I liked best about doing this subject was:
Studying a wide range of topics due to the different modules available.

Doing maths that could actually be a little useful in the future.

This year I am doing...
Year 12

The best advice I can give the Class of 2014 about this specific exam is...
Get to know your calculators well: For both exams you can use a CAS calculator AND a scientific calculator. The better you are with the calculator, the less time you may spend fiddling around and the more time you have to solve problems.

Make a bound reference, but don’t go overboard: A bound reference in the exam can be really handy for quickly confirming some knowledge, but there is no need for hundreds of pages. In the real exam there isn’t enough time to look through all your notes. Remember that the exam also comes with a formula sheet which covers MOST of the formulas you need to know. Also, when constructing your bound reference make sure to look at the Study Design from the VCAA website which outlines everything you need to know for the exam.

Underline important information: There are often worded questions in exams with lots of information to introduce the question. Underline the most important pieces of information which you can use in your calculations such as angles, dates or prices.

If you have time, double check your answers and find a way to make sure you’re correct!

This could mean eliminating other multiple choice answers, taking a different approach to the calculations or re-doing calculations on your CAS to make sure you didn’t type anything incorrectly.

The best advice I got from my teacher about this exam was...
Take your time: If you’ve done a lot of practice, you may start to recognise similar questions showing up on exam papers. Sometimes it’s good to avoid rushing and slowing down, really taking in the details of the question and asking yourself: ‘Is this really the same question I’ve done before? Or is there something different about it?’ It’s a little bit about speed versus accuracy. In the exam it’s good to have a balance.

Show working out and make it clear: There are often working marks allocated for longer questions. When tackling them, make sure your working out is clear and follows a logical order. The examiners need to understand what you’re doing so they can see that you know the content. It also makes it easier for you to spot any errors if you have time to check through your exam.

In the month before this VCE exam, I... worked through different practice exam papers, trying to get as much exposure to different types of questions so I was well prepared for anything that could show up on the exam. I made sure I spent time reviewing VCAA past year papers and their assessment reports – the reports are very detailed and can be very helpful. I made sure to record any big mistakes from the practice exams in a document on my computer.

In the week before this VCE exam I... continued working through practice exam papers – I think they are the best form of revision for mathematics subjects. I then finished off my bound reference by compiling all my recorded mistakes into a word document, printing that off and putting it at the front of my bound reference. All of the areas which I was weak in could easily be seen on my bound reference.

On exam day, I prepared myself by...
getting as much sleep possible, eating well, praying, watching videos online – I tried to stay as relaxed as possible and didn’t let the pressures of the imminent exam get to me. I already had my stationery and calculator ready the night before. I didn’t think cramming would do much on exam day for me; I had to trust that I had done all I could to prepare.

After the exam, I...
made sure I didn’t discuss the exam with others as I didn’t want to think about results until results day – there was nothing I could do about the exam that I had just completed. It was a bit of a personal preference. And I also had another exam the next day, so I had to get studying for that.

The best exam advice I received from my parents, siblings or family member was...
simply to do my best. You can often get caught up in numbers, trying to figure out SAC scores work and how all the statistical moderation works. But the bottom line is, if you get to the end of the year having done all you can and tried your best with no regrets then there is definitely success in that.

I did work a part-time job during year 12 because...
I felt it was a good way to take a break from studying. In the second semester, I decreased the number of shifts I was working and when exams neared I let my supervisors know about exams and made sure I took many days off during exam period.

For more tips like this and for advice about looking after yourself during VCE exams, please visit www.education.vic.gov.au/school/students/Pages/vce.aspx
Cherry Skinner Tarlo received a perfect Psychology score last year. Here’s her advice on how to do the same.

My name is Cherry Skinner Tarlo
I went to... Newhaven College, Philip Island.
In VCE Psychology, I received a score of... 50
The thing I liked best about doing this subject was: Learning about how we, as humans, function and respond to our environment.
I also enjoyed analysing the brain and its complex ability to create life in people.
This year I am doing... Bachelor of Psychology/Criminology at RMIT University, City Campus.
The best advice I can give the Class of 2014 about this specific exam is... Always use the name of the person if it is mentioned in the question (often used in examples).
Use your time wisely: look at the allocated marks and structure your time accordingly.
When doing practice exams, try completing the sections (multiple choice, short answer and extended response) in different orders and find out what works best for you.
The best advice I got from my teacher about this exam was... Do as many accredited practice exams as possible under timed conditions in an exam-like setting.
Only write as much as you need to gain the full marks.
Have faith in yourself.

In the month before this VCE exam, I... Devised a study plan for myself, and stuck to it, giving myself small rewards after chunks of study, such as watching a tv show or online shopping! I made cue cards and practised with friends and family, talked often with my teacher about areas I felt unsure of and explained concepts to friends/family (this really is confirmation of your knowledge when you have to teach it). I maintained a study/ life balance by remembering that it will all be okay in the long run, making plans for things I was excited about, doing regular exercise, taking time out to enjoy meals, and organising my time so I wasn’t having to stay up late at night studying.

In the week before this VCE exam I... Went to as many revision lectures/ workshops as possible (run both inside and outside of school), meticulously worked through past exams with my teacher, spent time at school studying, familiarised myself with the classroom where exams were to be held, continued to do timed practice exams and worked with my teacher to figure out how I could optimise my mark. I forced myself to have breaks, do exercise every day, follow a study plan to ensure I was managing my time correctly, made posters, flash cards, notes, and stuck them all around my house, including my bedroom, the bathroom, toilet and kitchen.

On exam day, I prepared myself by... Briefly reviewing my notes, but not in too much depth. I ate a good, hearty breakfast, had my bag packed the night before, left more than enough time to get there, reassured myself that everything was going to be okay and that if I didn’t go as well as I hoped, I was confident that I had done my best, and then began studying for another exam.

After the exam, I.... Talked with my friends and other students about how they went, debriefed with my teacher, had a break for lunch, felt confident that I had done my best, and then began studying for another exam.
The best exam advice I received from my parents, siblings or family member was... That all you can do is your best, and that if you’re unhappy with your results, it’s not the end of the world, and there are always alternative pathways.

I didn’t work a part-time job during year 12 because... I found I had no spare time, and what little time I did have, I thought it was more important to create balance in my life with healthy food, exercise and time out for myself and my family, rather than earn a subsidiary income.

For more tips like this and for advice about looking after yourself during VCE exams, please visit www.education.vic.gov.au/school/students/Pages/vce.aspx
Janet Davey received a perfect VCE Psychology score last year. Here’s her advice on how to do the same.

My name is
Janet Davey

I went to...
Ruyton Girls’ School

In VCE Psychology, I received a score of...
50

The thing I liked best about doing this subject was...
that not only was it interesting, but the topics – such as sleep, memory, and learning – felt relevant (unlike many other subjects) and helped me in my other subjects as well.

This year I am doing...
A Bachelor of Science/Asia-Pacific Studies at ANU, majoring in Physics and Chinese.

The best advice I can give the Class of 2014 about this specific exam is...
Word your answers carefully, and make sure you get the key terms in.

Know research methods inside out, because many students neglect it.

Have examples prepared beforehand and check with your teacher that they’re right. Don’t try to be really original with them, just keep them simple and nail them.

The best advice I got from my teacher about this exam was...
this is probably a pretty specific problem, but my wonderful teacher kept telling me to stop overthinking the questions and not waffle on in my answers. Many students don’t know this, but you can actually write your answers in dot-points, and many examiners prefer this because it’s clearer.

In the week before this VCE exam I...
did practice exams. But almost more important than completing practice exams is correcting them and understanding how your answer differs from the given solution. I kept a little notebook, and I’d write down every question I got wrong, what the correct answer was, and the key terms needed to get full marks.

On exam day, I prepared myself by...
The Psych exam started at 9:00 am, so I don’t think I did anything beforehand, other than have breakfast and read over my errors notebook.

After the exam, I...
went straight home. The exam was on a Friday and I didn’t have another exam until mid-way through the following week, so that afternoon I just did some ‘light’ Methods study and went for a run.

The best exam advice I received from my parents, siblings or family member was... ‘Calm down’.

I didn’t work a part-time job during year 12 because...
I didn’t want to add another thing to an already stressful year, and would have struggled to find the time for it.

For more tips like this and for advice about looking after yourself during VCE exams, please visit
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/students/Pages/vce.aspx