Life at the Top – Senior Studies

It’s hard to believe that it is already seven weeks into the academic year!

For our Year 12 Students do you know …?

- there are only thirty-two weeks to the last day of official classes
- thirty four weeks to the English Studies Exam on Monday November 2
- thirty-seven weeks to graduation

This time will pass by very quickly so every student needs to be working at full capacity to attain the best results they can.

When my son was in Year 12 I was Assistant Principal Pastoral Care at his College. Early in the year the Assistant Principal Curriculum reflected on some very poor AST (ATAR) league table results from the previous year.

His words were simple but were spot on; he said the students from the previous year ‘got the results they deserved’. They had displayed a poor work ethic and did not put the time into their studies.

All students in the senior school (Year 10-12) need to take these comments on board. You will get the results you deserve if you do not put the effort in they will not be pretty!

What does this mean? All students need to apply themselves in class paying attention to teacher directions, doing their home study and having a balanced life style. For students in Year 10 NOW is the time to put this to practice. If you are going to achieve the best results you can, you need to work hard in class and also do the home study.

You need to develop a sound work ethic in Year 10 in order to establish successful study patterns in Year 11/12. For students in Year 11/12 the time you put into your home study, will in large part, determine where your grade will be.

Family & Friends / Study / Rest / Recreation (exercise) / Paid Work

One key to success with senior studies is to keep everything in balance. Like most things in life, too much of one thing is not good for you. For example spending all your free time in paid work will have a negative impact on all other aspects of your life. It might bring immediate rewards – Money, but at what long term cost?
I like to think of this as short term gain...long term pain! In other words it’s nice to have some money now but not at the cost of stopping you getting good grades which reduce your post school options.

Andrew Fuller, a Clinical Psychologist in Victoria, has completed some research on this very issue.

The research indicates that the ‘rule of thumb’ for hours of paid work for a senior student is 10 hours per week.

What this means is that, on average, students can do paid work for about 10 hours per week without it having a great impact on their studies. The hours above this will increasingly have an impact on grades attained. This will vary from student to student but is a good guide for senior students.


All aspects of life need to be kept in balance. It is a well know fact that people who exercise regularly are able to think and work more effectively. So recreation, such as playing sport, is another important aspect to achieving the best results from senior studies.

Don’t neglect family and friends as they can provide great moral support when things seem to be getting on top of you. They can also keep you grounded in facing challenges.

Rest is another import factor that I will expand on in the next edition of ‘Life at the Top’.

(Mark Pickham – Head of Senior School)