

## NEWSLETTER

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### The Mac.Robertson Girls' High School

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## Principal News

Welcome back everyone for Term 4.

There was an article in the weekend paper reporting on a research project at Monash University examining the performance of students from the various school sectors once they reach the university. It found that students from state schools are generally able to manage university studies more effectively and achieve better results at university because they have taken responsibility for managing their studies while at school in contrast to students from the private sector who were used to receiving everything needed from their teachers, sometimes described as spoon feeding. The article suggested that this also happens to some extent in the selective schools as well but I am not so sure about this. Other studies have clearly indicated that our students manage tertiary studies very successfully.

The important message though is that for long term success in study, being strategic and taking an active management approach to your studies is by far the most successful approach. It is of course true of the world of work as well.

I would encourage our senior students in particular to strive for **balance** in their approach to the final exams. We know that people who are sleep deprived, not eating well and not exercising do not perform at anywhere near their potential. We also know that humans manage pressure far more effectively when there is this balance in place. I find it ironic that I am advising Mac.Rob girls to work smarter but I am concerned that some students are considering pathways in the lead up to examinations which may not lead to the desired destination. Parents who are interested in decreasing stress for their daughters and themselves as the exams approach might like to consider the talk being given by psychologist Piers Lloyd next Tuesday in the theatre. The Parents Association would love to hear from people who are coming and the contact details are in the advertisement below.

Congratulations to the Year 10 girls, Jenny Hu, Ayanthi Weerasooriya and Margaret Long who were successful in the State finals of the CPA Plan Your Own Business Competition. Congratulations also Year 9 students Jennifer Duong, Michelle Ho, Lorren Hayes and Monique Langley on their success in the Consumer Affairs Victoria Consumer Stuff Challenge competition. Jennifer won the Year 9, 10 and 11 Individual Entry with a multimedia which looked at the dangers of Internet consumer fraud and is the overall winner of the competition and is now in the running for the Consumer Affairs Victoria Excellence Award. The awards will be announced by the Minister for Consumer Affairs, the Hon Tony Robinson MP at a special presentation ceremony to be held at Mac.Rob next Wednesday.

Congratulations are also due to Year 11 student Emily Davies who has been selected as one of 288 top science students in Australia to attend the National Youth Science Forum in Canberra next January. This is a most prestigious event which provides great opportunities for participants to further their career in science. A number of Mac.Rob students have been selected in the past for this program which was featured in a recent television program about the challenging work they undertake as part of the program.

Jane Garvey

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### Parents@Mac.Rob News

Parents@macrob invites students and their parents to attend an evening with—**Piers Lloyd** - Psychologist with expertise in Adolescent issues who works in the Albert Road Clinic Adolescent Unit and in private practice in Collins Street.

We are lucky to have him speak on Tuesday, 16 Oct, from 7.30 p.m. in the theatre (next to the gym) at Mac.Rob on:

**“How to decrease student and parental stress in Years 9-12 and improve resilience, productivity, results and avoid burn out.”**



The talk was initiated by a SRC Representative who was concerned about the increasing stress associated with impending exams. Within Mac.Rob the pressure from a variety of sources to “do well”, can be enormous. This presentation will provide some practical advice around developing strategies to deal with such performance pressures.

We are delighted to inform you that there will be no charge for this talk. We would like RSVP's, but people are welcome to arrive on the night.

**RSVP:** [parents@macrob.vic.edu.au](mailto:parents@macrob.vic.edu.au)

## **International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS)**

Last term's school participation in the ICAS English and Writing Competitions, run by Educational Assessment Australia, University of NSW, has resulted in excellent achievements for our students. The competitions take place annually across Australia and in 12 other countries with 1.5 million entries worldwide.

Participation in the English competition is compulsory for all students in Years 9 to 11 and voluntary for Year 12 students. Of the 659 students who entered, 39 achieved High Distinctions, placing them in the top one per cent of results. These excellent results by Year 9 students were—Madeleine Barrow, Alexandra Dudley, Jaclyn Fisticchia, Greer Forrester, Aisling Grey, Hilary Hunt, Phoebe Imms, Alexandra Marks, Robyn Molyneaux, Dana Morrison, Jessica Nguyen, Thien Nguyen, Nishani Nithianandan, Louisa Selvadurai, Alice Trumble and Lillian Wong.

Year 10 students were—Hilary Bowman, Samantha Chow, Nagida Clark, Alana Cowling, Marina Filshtinskaya, Olivia Graham, Megan Jennings, Nicola Jing, Antonija Kurbalijah, Stephanie Lewis, Janani Paramanatham, Sitara Paul, April Scarlett and Kristen Valanidas.

Students from Year 11 were—Caitlyn Conway, Tamuz Ellazam, Francesca Hoban Ryan, Sofia Jasek, Laura Jones, Paula Loveland, Jacqui Lau, Alice Nagel and Emilia Hayes from Year 12.

Aside from these outstanding achievements 189 students received Distinctions and a further 253 students received Credits.



The Writing Competition is voluntary at all year levels and of the 30 students who participated, six were awarded Credits, six received Distinctions and five achieved High Distinctions, again placing them in the top one per cent of results. High Distinctions were achieved by Madeleine Barrow, Nishani Nithianandan and Kylie Pang, Year 9, and Genevieve Stewart and Ruyi Xu, Year 10.

Kylie, Genevieve and Ruyi were further honoured with Gold Medals for their outstanding achievement of receiving the highest score for their year level in the competition. Each will each be presented with their medals at a special awards ceremony later in the year, to which family members will be invited.

Our warmest congratulations are extended to these girls and to each student who entered the competitions.

**Deborah Stringer**  
English Coordinator

## **Debating and Public Speaking News**

It has been a busy period of competitions and finals for many debating and public speaking students.

Mac.Rob has three incredible teams in D, C and B grades who have made it through to the semi finals this week. This is a huge achievement as there are hundreds of teams from around Victoria in each grade, and Mac.Rob is the only school to have teams in three of the four grades at this late stage of the finals. Congratulations to all three teams for their wonderful success so far!

Nishani Nithianandan recently passed the semi final stage of the Legacy Junior Public Speaking Award. Her prepared and impromptu speeches were delivered with eloquence and conviction. Nishani will be competing in the State Final at the ABC Centre this week and we wish her the very best!

Congratulations to Christine Carder-Rice and Bebe D'Souza who represented China at the Rotary Model United Nations Assembly in Canberra. They were an excellent team and came third in the competition which is an impressive achievement!

**Ms Arnott**  
Debating and Public Speaking Coordinator

## **The United Nations Assembly**

On Friday, 24 August Bebe D'Souza and I went to Canberra as part of the Public Speaking program and it was a whole lot of fun.

We spent two days in old parliament house doing MUNA (Model United Nations Assembly). There was about 30 teams of two students from all over Australia, and each team was allocated a country to represent. During the assembly we were required to use our knowledge of that country to represent them on a range of issues very similar to those that would be discussed at the actual UN.

Bebe and I represented China and over the weekend talked on four issues which were global warming, the global drug problem, nuclear non-proliferation and the rule of International law.

We both had a great weekend and we ended up coming third! A big thank you to the Albert Park Rotary Club who funded our travel expenses. MUNA was a really great experience to develop debating and public speaking skills and our knowledge of world events!

**Christine Carder Rice, Year 11a Student**

## Victorian Interschool Snowsports Competition 2007

The Victorian Interschool Snowsports Championships were held last term at Mt Buller between 26 and 31 August. The event is organised by the School Snowsports Development Foundation and this year celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event with an estimated 7000 competitors from schools throughout Victoria.

Mac.Rob was represented by Rebecca York (Yr 11), Megan Hollo ( Y r 1 0 ) a n d Greta Leropoulos (Yr10).

The girls competed in the alpine giant slalom and skiercross events. They competed well and enjoyed their time in the snow and the sun! Kay Ferguson, Greta's mother accompanied the girls and organised their enrolment in the various events as well as their accommodation and time at Mt Buller. This is the second year running she has been the driving force behind the girls competing in the Interschool Snowsports Championships. The girls and I would like to thank her for her time and effort.



**Julia Trenchard Smith**

**I nterschool Snowsports Liaison Teacher.**

## Business Entrepreneurial Studies

Year 10 students taking Business Entrepreneurial Studies during semester 1 completed a business plan for a small business that they would like to set up in Melbourne. A number were entered into the CPA Plan Your Own Enterprise Competition and CPA was very impressed with the quality of all our entries.

Three girls—**Margaret Long, Jenny Hu** and **Ayanthi Weerasooriya** were short listed down to the final five in Victoria in the U18 category. On Tuesday, 9 October the girls

had a 15 minute interview with a panel of judges to determine the final winner. Jenny, who planned to set up a Party organising business in Box Hill came 1<sup>st</sup> in the U16

category and received \$200 from Enterprising Education. Ayanthi's idea for a Sri Lankan restaurant in Toorak won her 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the U18 age group and \$200 from CPA Australia.



Margaret's idea for an Australian themes restaurant in the CBD, with kangaroo and crocodile on the menu as well as aboriginal entertainment won her 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the U18 age group. As well as \$300 from CPA Australia, Margaret will represent Victoria in the National Finals in Canberra on the Monday, 22 October when she will give a 15 minute presentation about her Australian themed restaurant. As a school we also won a Quicken Computer Education Package courtesy of Quicken Australia and books to the value of \$1000 courtesy of Macmillan/VCTA Publishing.

Congratulations to all three girls, whose depth of preparation for their interviews impressed the judges and best of luck to Margaret in the National Finals!

**Fiona MacAlpine**

**Work Experience Coordinator**

## Careers News

### Careers in Biotechnology

During the last week of Term 3 eleven Year 10 students travelled to CSL in Broadmeadows for an industry careers day. Once a government owned business, CSL was the first to supply insulin, penicillin and polio vaccines. Current products include the Gardasil vaccine that students have recently received and flu vaccinations.

Listed on the stock exchange in 1994, it is now a global based company, the biggest success story in Australian pharmaceuticals with over 7,500 employees in 26 countries. By the end of 2008, it is estimated they will spend over \$220 million on research and development.

Students heard presentations from commercial analysts and human resource administrators. They were told about the type of graduates employed, typically those with science degrees but also engineers, commerce and business graduates. They were shown the electronic recruitment process used and given advice on the preparation of resumes. They toured the quality departments, the research and development laboratories where they conducted their own chromatography experiment and the manufacturing and engineering areas.



After lunch they took part in an activity to demonstrate the supply chain process and heard about careers in the sales and marketing area.

The day was very well organised and students came away with a better understanding of the employment opportunities in this growing area of the economy.



Our thanks to CSL for providing this opportunity.

Irene Serpless  
Careers Advisor

## VCE News—October 2007

Our Senior School students have just two weeks of formal classes remaining, prior to the start of written examinations for Unit 2 and Unit 3/4 studies. These two weeks will be extremely busy:

### Revision activities

Most Unit 3/4 studies are finishing their coverage of course content, and moving into revision activities. Some studies have been in this situation since the end of last term.

We see revision as very important for all students; revision classes provide an opportunity for both whole class sessions, and also for students to receive individual assistance from teachers. We therefore expect all students to attend all classes. It is disappointing that already students and parents have explained absence from school in terms of 'The class is just doing revision – my daughter can revise more effectively at home'.

### Teacher assistance for students during the study break and examination period

- \* Teachers are contactable via email, either direct to teachers' school email addresses, or through the general school address [office@macrob.vic.edu.au](mailto:office@macrob.vic.edu.au)

While email is a very effective communication method for students with revision questions, students and parents are asked to be aware that teachers may place limits on the quantity of work which they are able to correct/provide detailed feedback. All teachers have ongoing classes, through to December, some more than others.

It is also important that students do not send work to teachers at the last minute.

- \* Teachers are available for consultation during the school day, but we suggest that students make an appointment with staff if they are planning on coming in to school, rather than waste time by simply turning up, only to find that a teacher is unavailable. Such appointments can be made either by email or by telephoning.

### Effective use of the study break

Formal classes finish on these dates:

Wednesday, 24 October	Year 12 students (and all classes in Unit 3/4 studies)
Thursday, 25 October	Year 11 students (for Unit 2 classes)

Year 12 study break Thursday 25 October (pm) to Thursday 1 November (the first written exam is English on 2 November, but for some Year 12 students, their first exam is in the following week)

Year 11 students Monday 29 October is a study day, prior to the Unit 2 exam block

The **school library** is open for normal school hours, and is available for study purposes. L101 will be reserved for VCE students, when it is not in use for classes.

However, we do encourage students to maximise their time on personal revision during the study break, rather than wasting time in travel and waiting for teachers to become available. This is a time for consolidation of knowledge and skills.

### Farewell activities

#### For Year 12

Several activities are planned:

Wednesday, 24 October Final day of classes for Year 12, followed by the Valedictory Function (6.00 – 8.30pm at Kingston City Hall, Moorabbin). This function is attended by Year 12 students, and parents.

Thursday, 25 October A farewell breakfast from 7.30am, followed by a whole school assembly in the morning.

#### For Year 11

Thursday, 25 October Last day of Unit 2 classes

Friday, 26 October A morning of 'end of Year 11' activities, currently being planned by Year 11 student leaders.

### Examinations

All Senior School students were issued with a *VCE Exams Navigator 2007* in June. This VCAA booklet includes:

- \* the timetable of written examinations
- \* examination rules
- \* approved materials and equipment

An electronic version of this booklet is available at: <http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/publications/vceexamsnav07.pdf>

#### Examination timetables

- \* All students undertaking **Unit 3/4 examinations** received a personal copy of their timetable in Form Assembly on Tuesday this week.  
The importance of checking these details cannot be understated!  
Examination times will not be varied by the VCAA because of student lateness or misreading the timetable.
- \* **Unit 2 exam timetable for Year 11**  
The timetable booklet was distributed this week.

#### Examination venues, and other exam matters

- \* Unit 3/4 exams – will be located either in the Hall on in Kingsway, Level 3.
- \* Unit 2 exams – will be located either in the Hall or in Lakeside

Daily notices giving exact venues will be posted on noticeboards – all students should check these carefully.

#### Year 11 attendance and dress during the exams

- \* Year 11 students are required to attend only for their examinations, with the exception that they are required to attend practices for Speech Night, from 20 November. Exact times of these rehearsals will be published early next week.

- \* Students may wear casual clothes if they wish, subject to the usual guidelines for such dress (the main point is that these clothes should be suitable for school wear, and should not include short cut tops and pants)

### LOTE Orals, and Performance exams – Unit 3/4

These examinations are scheduled over the next month, and some have already been held. Students are not expected to attend school on the day of their examination, BUT should be at all other classes.

At this very important time of the year, students should NOT take time off school for any other reason.

### VCE Orientation 2008

There are two main aspects of the 2008 Orientation program:

1. **School-based Orientation** – 19 to 30 November. In this time, sessions will be held for each subject, in preparation for 2008 study. Most subjects will give students preparation work for the long vacation. All students are expected to attend relevant sessions, a timetable for which will be available before Friday, 26 October. A small number of students may have some difficulties with some sessions because of Unit 3/4 examinations in the week 19-23 November. Those students should see Mrs Kelly or the Year 11 Coordinators.
2. **Orientation program at Monash University, 30-31 January 2008**  
Parents will receive information about this residential program next week. Again, all students are required to attend this conference, in order to make a positive start to Year 12. Day 1 of the 2008 school year is therefore at Monash, rather than at school.

### Speech Night, and rehearsals – for ALL Senior School students

Rehearsals are scheduled for these days:

Tuesday	20 November (exact time to be advised soon)
Friday	23 November (exact time to be advised soon)
Monday	26 November (exact time to be advised soon, but students should plan for approx 2 hrs on this day)

Speech Night 27 November – morning rehearsal (Town Hall), evening performance.

A small number of students will still be doing examinations on 20 and 23 November. All other students are required to attend, and there should be full attendance on 26 and 27 November.

The rehearsals are vital, as senior school students will have had no practice at all from 22 October!

### Course confirmation – for Year 12 2008

The school is currently finalising details of staffing and subject availability for 2008. We hope to complete this process in the next two weeks, so that students' courses may be confirmed.

This process is always, however, influenced by student performance in Semester 2. Some further course counselling may be necessary during late November-early December, when all assessment (including examinations) is completed.

## A summary of important VCE dates

October	23	Year 11 and 12 Assembly (2.00 p.m)
	24	Last day Unit 3/4 classes Year 12 Valedictory function
	25	Year 12 breakfast and farewell assembly Last day Unit 2 classes
	26	Year 11 break-up morning
	27	Weekend
	28	

October	29	Year 11 study day	
	30	Year 11 exams	
	31	Year 11 exams	
November	1	Year 11 exams	
	2	Year 11 exams End VCE Semester 2	3/4 exams begin
	3	Weekend	
	4		
	5	3/4 Exams	
	6	Melbourne Cup Day	
	7	3/4 exams	Year 10 Study Day
	8	3/4 exams	Year 10 exams
	9	3/4 exams	Year 10 exams
	10	Weekend	
	11		
	12	3/4 exams	
	13	3/4 exams	
	14	3/4 exams	
	15	3/4 exams	
	16	3/4 exams	
	17	Weekend	
	18		
	19	3/4 exams	2008 VCE Orientation
	20	3/4 exams	2008 VCE Orientation
	21	3/4 exams	2008 VCE Orientation
	22	3/4 exams	2008 VCE Orientation
	23	3/4 exams	2008 VCE Orientation
	24	Weekend	
	25		
	26	2008 VCE Orientation	
	27	Speech Night	
	28	Report Writing Day	
	29	2008 VCE Orientation	
	30	2008 VCE Orientation Peer Support Training (current Year 11)	
December	17	Unit3/4 results & ENTERS available to students (by mail)	
	18		
	19	Final Assembly - <b>ALL</b> students—Yr 12 - VCE Graduation Certificates	

**Contact details for senior school students during Term 4,  
and the examination period**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Enquire about</b>
Head of Senior School	Mrs Christine Kelly	9864 7770	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* questions about any matters in this <i>VCE News</i></li> <li>* student illness in the approach to/ during the examination period</li> <li>* queries about special exam arrangements</li> <li>* questions about VCE Orientation</li> <li>* questions about 2008 student courses</li> </ul>
VCE Coordinator	Mr Peter Skinner	9864 7773	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* queries about exam venues, exam timetables and problems</li> <li>* queries about enrolment details</li> <li>* queries about 2008 external enrolments</li> </ul>
Year 12 Coordinators	Mrs Susy Puszka Ms Linda Harvey	9820 0788	* all matters of student welfare
Year 11 Coordinators	Mrs Michele Dean Mr Nuccio Gurciullo	9820 0788	* all matters of student welfare