

From Ken Bell (Year 10-12 Sub-School Leader)

Welcome to the 1st Later Years Newsletter for 2009.

This newsletter will appear nearly every month to keep parents informed of what is happening in the VCE, VCAL, Year 10 and other issues relating to the later years of education. Please make sure your child brings it home for you to read. This newsletter can also be downloaded from the school website (www.mortlakep12.vic.edu.au) or I can email the newsletter to you.

Later Years (10-12) Coordinators

Mr. Bell: Year 12 Coordinator and overall coordinator of the Years 10-12 Sub-School
 Mrs. Riordon: Year 11 Coordinator
 Mr. Bennett: Year 10 Coordinator
 Mr. Croucher: Careers/Work experience/MIPs Coordinator.

I would encourage all parents/guardians to contact us on any issue relating to your child’s education at Mortlake College. Our aim is to establish regular communication between ourselves and all parents/guardians.

TERM DATES FOR 2009

TERM 1 Monday February 2 – Friday April 3 (9 weeks)

TERM 2 Monday April 20 - Friday June 26 (10 weeks)

TERM 3 Monday July 13 - Friday September 18 (10 weeks)

TERM 4 Monday October 5 - Friday December 18 (11 weeks)

IMPORTANT VCE SEMESTER DATES

First day of classes (Semester 1)	Monday 1/2/2009
House Swimming Sports	Tuesday 10/2/2009
Year 12 Camp: University of Melbourne	Sunday 15/2/2009 – Tues. 17/2/2009
MWC Swimming Sports (Beaufort)	Friday 20/2/2009
MWC Triathlon (Lake Bolac)	Wednesday 4/3/2009
Labour Day Holiday	Monday 9/3/2009
School Photographs	Wednesday 11/3/2009
House Athletics Sports	Monday 16/3/2009
Parent Teacher Interviews	Tuesday 24/3/2009
Good Friday	Friday 10/4/2009 (During Holidays)
Easter Monday	Monday 13/4/2009 (During Holidays)
Tertiary Information Service Day (Year 12)	Wednesday 22/4/2009
MWC Athletic Sports (Warrnambool)	Friday 24/4/2009
ANZAC Day	Saturday 25/4/2009
Year 10 Work Experience	Monday 27/4/2009 – Friday 30/4/2009
Last Day to withdraw from Units 1/3	Monday 27/4/2009
House Cross Country	Wednesday 6/5/2009

May Race Day	Thursday 7/5/2009
Year 11 Exam Week	Monday 18/5/2009 - Friday 22/5/2009
MWC Cross Country (Lake Bolac)	Tuesday 26/5/2009
Last day of Semester 1	Friday 5/6/2009
Queens Birthday Holiday	Monday 8/6/2009
Start of Semester 2	Tuesday 9/6/2009
VCAA June Exams: Day 1 Biology & Physics	Tuesday 9/6/2009
VCAA June Exams: Day 2 Psychology & Chemistry	Wednesday 10/6/2009
GAT Exam (Final Mid-Year Exam) Compulsory for all students studying a Year 12 sub.	Thursday 11/6/2009 10:00am to 1:15pm
Report Writing Day	Friday 12/6/2009
Last Day to withdraw from Unit 4	Friday 17/7/2009
VCAA June Examinations results available	Monday 3/8/2009
Year 11 Exam Week	Monday 24/8/2009 – Friday 28/8/2009
Parent Teacher Interviews	Tuesday 8/9/2009
Last Day of classes for Year 12 students	Thursday 22/10/2009
VCE Lunch	Friday 23/10/2009
VCAA Exams Begin: English	Friday 30/10/2009
Last day of Semester 2 (Year 11 only)	Friday 6/11/2009
Year 10 Camp	Monday 9/11/2009 – Friday 13/11/2009
Year 11 Work Experience Camp begins	Sunday 15/11/2009
Year 11 Work Experience Camp finishes	Friday 27/11/2009
2010 Year 12 Orientation Week	Monday 30/11/2009 - Friday 4/12/2009
Last Day for Year 10	Friday 4/12/2009
Presentation Night	Tuesday 8/12/2009
VCE Results Available to students	Monday 14/12/2009

1. V.T.A.C 1st Round of Tertiary Offers: 2008 Year 12 Students

Sophie Barr: Media and Communications at the University of Melbourne

Sarah Murphy: Medicine/Surgery at Monash University

Holly Barr: Arts at the University of Melbourne

Ted O'Connor: Journalism at RMIT

Rachael Muir: Health Science at Latrobe University

Tom Draffen: Arts at the University of Melbourne

Amy McCormick: Teacher Education – Early Childhood & Primary at the Australian Catholic University (Ballarat)

Michael Monteith: Computing and Internet Technology at RMIT

Lee Edwards: Nursing at the Australian Catholic University (Ballarat)

Jasmine West: Teaching Primary at Deakin University (Warrnambool)

Jess Cameron: Nursing at Deakin University (Warrnambool)

Jack Hubbard: Electrical at RMIT TAFE

Lucinda Whitson: Management at Swinburne TAFE (Hawthorn)

Ten of the above thirteen students received their first preference.

Whatever the 2008 Year 12 students do, we congratulate all Year 12 students on achieving their VCE Certificate and wish them both success and happiness for the future.

2. Year 12 Camp is from **Sunday 15th February to Tuesday 17th February.**

Venue: Deakin University (Warrnambool)

This camp starts with a BBQ on Sunday 15th February at 6:00pm. We would like to see all parents and Year 12 teachers attend. The BBQ will be followed by a Year 12 Information Session. The cost for the BBQ dinner and dessert is \$15 per person (payable on the night).

Students need to pay \$100 to the college by Friday 13th February or have spoken to Dot Jenkins to make arrangements for partial payments for this camp over a period of time. This is a most worthwhile camp that we do want all Year 12 students to attend. More comprehensive details of the camp along with the usual camp consent forms have been given to students.

3. Exams for Year 11 and 10

For the past two years, Year 11 students have had an examination week in Term 3 of Semester One. There will be now also be an examination week in Term 2 of Semester. The results of these exams will be reported in each of the end of semester reports. There will also be an exam week for Year 10 students. We have not yet worked out the exact date for these exams but they should appear in the next VCE newsletter. At this stage, there will be exams for English, Maths and most likely SOSE and Science. The purpose of all these exams is to teach students how to prepare for and sit exams. They will also be timed to help students and parents make more informed decisions when it comes to subject selections for the following year.

4. Attendance: Last year, the school had an extensive review from an external educational consultant. Most of the data collected and analysed confirmed what we already know. It highlighted that Mortlake College is a high achieving school. It also highlighted that overall student attendance is well below what it should be. Staff are determined to make an improvement on student attendance. In school newsletters and/or by personal contact, all parents will soon find out some of the positive strategies that will be used to improve student attendance. Parents can help the school by making sure that students get to school before Form Assembly to assist Year Level coordinators keep accurate attendance rolls. If a student has to be away, please contact the school on the day or in advance to let them know the student is going to be absent and for how long. If that is not possible, a note should come to school as soon as the student is able to return. This can help Year Level coordinators by reducing the number of times we have to repeatedly ask for absence notes from some students.

5. ENTER and Study Scores

Most of you may already know that Mortlake College was rated the top VCE performing school in the region and one of the best in the country with a median study of 33 and 15% of study scores of 40 or above. One third of our students had an ENTER score greater than 85. This certainly has brought additional pride and respect to the school. When I look at the students undertaking Unit 3/4 studies this year, I see no reason why we cannot strive to repeat or even do better than 2008.

For those students wishing to go onto Tertiary Education, you must make every effort to maximize your ENTER score. This means getting stuck into the books straight away. All students who are studying a Year 12 subject this year had vacation work. This should have been done. If students didn't do it, they are letting themselves down. Students must remember that they are not just competing against students in their class, they are also competing against at least 45,000 other students. Many of these students may be wishing to pursue similar career paths. You may have seen in the newspapers and on Television many feature articles based on the joy of students getting into their chosen tertiary institution and the despair of students who missed a 1st round offer. At various times throughout the year, progress checks are done. From these progress checks, some students may be asked to put more effort into their studies to try and improve their study scores. This is done to try and avoid that feeling of despair that comes when a student does not receive a VTAC offer. It also assists students to make sure that their VTAC applications are realistic. Most of our students receive their 1st VTAC Preference because their VTAC applications are realistic.

6. Mr. Bell's Suggestions on how to maximise your Year 12 Subject Performance:

Students studying a Year 12 subject will experience SACs (School Assessed Coursework) in all of their subjects and SATs (School Assessed Tasks) in some of their subjects. These SACs and SATs contribute to their final study score at the end of the year. Therefore, they can be stressful to the students and with this stress, there may be an associated changes in mood. We will endeavor to offer students relaxation techniques that will help to alleviate stress. One good way to reduce stress is to develop some good study techniques so the workload is even and not concentrated when it a SAC is about to happen. Here are my tips on maximizing your VCE performance.

Maximum Attendance: The top student performers have very few (if any) absences.

Have a Career Goal: Students who have a career goal have something to strive for.

Effective Private Study: Our top performers very rarely have to be told to make better use of private study.

Regular Homework: Students must aim to do **at least** two hours of work per subject out of the classroom. If you are not doing at least two hours, you are not doing enough. High achieving students must aim for a minimum of 3 hours per subject.

Vacation Study: Year 12 is such a short year. Students need to commit some time to study over the holidays. In previous years, some Year 12 attended exam revision study lectures or career seminars over holidays.

Homework Environment: Students need to have a place to study away from the television and other distractions. Attempting to study or do homework in front of a television is not effective.

Many of these study tips are also relevant to students in Years 11, 10 and lower. Students must practice and develop good study techniques. Too often, you see students adopting the attitude of “I’ll wait till I get to Year 12 and then I’ll really put in”. This approach seldom works. Students who haven’t developed good techniques by the time they get to Year 12 really do struggle. In 2009, through activities in the Year 12 Camp and the “You Can Do It” Program, there will be a strong emphasis on all students in Years 10 to 12 developing good study skills.

7. You Can Do It! By now, I think most parents are aware of this program. This program is still run at the college but is implemented in different ways at different year levels. Sometimes the activities that students do can be a little bit corny but the message is 100% accurate. Students who make the effort to practice the lessons learnt from YCDI will see the benefits.

8. Uniform at Mortlake College

Uniform is compulsory for **ALL** students

Students who are out of uniform must present a note from their parents to their year level coordinator outlining the reason Parental cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Out of Uniform procedures

The expectation is that **all** secondary students will wear the correct school uniform. We understand that there will be occasions when some students will be out of uniform. If this is the case, a student out of uniform is expected to provide a note of **explanation** from the parent/guardian. If this is not forthcoming, the student can be given lunchtime detention. A note from a parent regarding a child being out of uniform is not meant to be ‘long term’, and we believe it is reasonable, in most circumstances, for the situation to be rectified within 7 days. If the student is still out of uniform after 7 days, the student may be excluded from all school classes and activities. This decision will only take place after consultation with one of the college Principals.

Hopefully, all students in Years 10 to 12 will be in full school uniform from day one. For those students who are not, questions will be asked. Notes from parents are always appreciated and in most cases, accepted without question. Contact with parents usually only happens when a student is regularly out of

uniform. A couple of issues I would like to bring to your attention. Some boys try to wear shorts for the whole year. However, when the weather turns really cold, some have tried to get away with wearing jeans instead of the designated grey pants. This will not be permitted. Similarly for girls, blue tracksuit pants or jeans will not be permitted as a substitute for the approved blue slacks.

9. Lateness to School:

Uniform is usually checked at morning assembly when the attendance role is marked. Some students who do not have the correct college uniform have made it a practice of missing form assembly to try and avoid being questioned about being out of uniform. This creates problems in having accurate attendance rolls. All level coordinators are entitled to give a 30 minute detention to any student who is late to school (without a note) **more** than 3 times in a term. Student should all be aware that AUSTUDY may make adjustments to payments if there are more than 5 absences from school. This can happen even if absence notes have been provided. Their policy is very simple: **“We’re paying you to attend school so that what you must do!”**

Important: A Parental Note explaining out of uniform, absence or lateness can avoid many problems. I would urge parents to keep sending in these notes. They are most appreciated.

10. VCAL: The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning started at Mortlake College in 2004 and has been quite successful. The VCAL in conjunction with the VCE will hopefully encourage more students to stay on and complete Years 11 and 12. Most VCAL students will be studying four VCE subjects so they are still collectively called VCE students by the college. In future, when I use the term **“VCE student”**, I am most likely referring to both VCE and VCAL enrolled students. A number of students can simultaneously achieve both their VCE and VCAL Certificate with no extra effort. Parents and/or students wanting to know more about the VCAL are most welcome to contact either myself or our VCAL teacher (Mr. Bennett).

11. VET stands for Vocational Education and Training.

Both the VCE and VCAL Certificates offer arrangements that allow students to complete **Vocational Education and Training** qualification within a two year VCE program. The end result is that students not only get their VCE or VCAL Certificate at the end of Year 12, they also receive a VET Certificate that counts towards either their VCE or VCAL Certificate and also towards their ENTER score. So far, we have only two students intending to study a VET subject outside of Mortlake College in 2009. It is not too late for students in Years 10, 11 and 12 to enroll in a VET program for 2009. Because of an agreement with South West TAFE, **there will be no tuition charge for any students wishing to undertake a VET program this year.** Considering that some of these VET programs would normally cost \$1800 per year, this is exceptional value. Most VET classes run by South West TAFE run from 1:00pm to 5:00pm on Thursdays usually starting next week. Any student or parent wanting to know more about VET should contact me as soon as possible.

12. RACV Free2go: is an initiative brought to you by RACV. It’s a motoring assistance program developed especially for young Victorians who are new to the road.

Available to all Victorians aged 18 to 20 years, as well as Year 12 students, free2go offers all the benefits of RACV membership and comes with Roadside Care. What makes the program really stand out is that for 18 year olds and Year 12 students, it is **free**. And for 19 and 20 year olds, Roadside Care is only **half price**.

- To more details or to sign up, visit the following website **free2go.racv.com.au**

Enough said. Wishing all students and their parents the very best for the 2009 year.

Mr. Ken Bell
Year 10 to 12 Sub-School Leader

VCE and VCAL Subject Blockings: Mortlake College 2009

Block 1

- English $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 periods) Mr. Good
- Mathematical Methods $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Ms. Simkin
- General Mathematics $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Mr. Drew

Block 2

- Further Mathematics $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 periods) Mr. Drew
- Mathematical Methods $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 periods) Ms. Simkin
- English $\frac{1}{2}$ (5 periods) Mrs. Good

Block 3 (This block is the 1st block that will be offered to Year 10 students)

- Biology $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 periods) Mrs. Riordon
- Physical Education $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Mr. Jones
- History $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Ms. Russell
- Accounting $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Mr. Croucher
- VCAL Work Related Skills 1 and Personal Development Skills 1 (Intermediate/Foundation) (4 periods) Mr. Bennett
- Year 10 Multimedia + MIPs (4 periods) Mr. Bell

Block 4 (This block is the 2nd block that will be offered to Year 10 students)

- Physics $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 periods) Mr. Bell
- Design & Technology $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 Periods) Mr. Bennett
- Drama $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Mr. DeManser
- Health & Human Development $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Mr. Jones
- VET Equine Studies $\frac{1}{2}$ & $\frac{3}{4}$ (4 periods) Mrs. Janes
- Year 10 Multimedia + MIPs (4 periods) Mr. Croucher

Block 5

- History $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 periods) Ms. Russell
- Health & Human Development $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 periods) Mr. Jones
- Agriculture and Horticultural Science $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 periods) Mrs. Allinson
- Art $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 periods) Mrs. Janes
- Psychology $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Ms. Campbell
- Information Technology $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Mr. Bell

Block 6

- Legal Studies $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 periods) Mr. Croucher
- Physical Education $\frac{3}{4}$ (5 periods) Mrs. Riordon
- Literature $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Miss Wright
- Food & Technology $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Mrs. Good

Block 7

- Art $\frac{1}{2}$ (4 periods) Mrs. Janes