



Dear Parents, Guardians and Carers

As the world continues to minimise the fallout of this pandemic, I hope you are all staying safe.

I wanted to start by thanking you for your support in keeping students at home. These last two weeks of Term has enabled us to focus on trialling our online learning platform using different delivery mechanisms and seeing what works most effectively for our students and their support network at home. The effectiveness of this trial enabled us to iron out any apparent glitches in readiness for Term 2. The Department of Education has yet to clarify the specifics of what Term 2 will look like however I anticipate it will include 'learning from home'

In regards to our 'off-line' learning – for those students who have limited access to technology – we will have packages of work for pick-up on the first Wednesday back and then every Monday from Week 2 onwards (this may be subject to change depending on what information we receive from the Department in the coming weeks). Please remember that Monday 27 April is a public holiday and the Tuesday is a Staff Development Day. It has been a steep learning curve and your patience has been appreciated. We will keep evolving and improving this as we continue to refine how we teach and learn in the digital world. I can tell you I am one of those that struggles with technology so I take my hat off to you all at home and our staff who have accepted this challenge with such a short turn around time. I need to commend how well and how hard our staff are working on this.

Please regularly check our platform on the College Website to see what is new.

A few updates in different areas for you below:

Having trouble with the Online

Whether it's lack of access, technology issues or you need hardcopies as the digital world isn't available for you please let us know. We have support links on our website for those having technical issues or give us a call and we will work out the best way forward in partnership to ensure your child is not disadvantaged. We are currently working on ways to support every student - those with special needs and those students who may need offline learning opportunities. Please stay tuned and we will keep you posted. Again, your patience has been appreciated.

Please note, the Department of Education are working to fix connectivity problems that some are experiencing with CONNECT. However, we have been informed by a lot of parents that using Google Chrome is proving relatively successful in running CONNECT so this may be worth trying if you are experiencing difficulties.

Submission of and Marking of Work

Unless your teacher has specifically requested work for review purposes or marking (such as for our ATAR classes) we are currently not marking work Week 9 or 10 of this Term. The workload around developing online support for our students is considerable, added to which some of their technology skills and understandings for many also needs upskilling. It is the learning and doing rather than the mark that is the important part right now. Students can contact their teachers via Connect if they are having difficulty. We will keep you posted as we navigate uncharted waters together.

Exams and Reports

At the end of next week (Week 10) you will receive an Interim report based on what your child has demonstrated in the time they've been at school this year just to give you a sense of progress. If you feel that a conversation is needed with teachers, we will facilitate these next Term and will inform you how this can be done.

Term 2 Exams and Reports are currently being reviewed and we await clarification from the Department and SCSA (Secondary Curriculum and Standards Association) around whether these will run and what they will look like.

Senior School Update

All families will shortly be receiving a letter from SCSA around this.

Year 12 students will not be disadvantaged as a result of the events which are unfolding.

- SCSA will work with schools to ensure that valid and reliable assessments are used to calculate school grades.
- It is too early to call if there will be any changes to the ATAR and ATAR course examinations.
- SCSA has processes in place to ensure that students are not disadvantaged as a result of events that are beyond their control.
- SCSA confirmed that no WACE-eligible student completing their WACE in 2020 will be disadvantaged due to the decision by an organisation to cancel the work placement required for their VET qualification as a result of COVID-19.
- SCSA has an established process to ensure that students working toward their WACE are not disadvantaged by circumstances arising from RTO certification and resulting processes.
- Any student's work experience can be cancelled with no adverse effect to the WACE.

I do need to thank staff for prioritising this vital area to ensure our Year 11s and especially our Year 12s are privileged. Whilst it will be a different year, we want every student to succeed in their goals and achieve a competitive ATAR and/or WACE attainment.

End of Year WACE exams are still planned for by SCSA and we will look at ways we can deliver Semester Exams in a different way to ensure our students are on track to perform well. We may need to call upon parents to assist us with invigilation but stay tuned around this.

The External tasks for General Pathway Year 12 students are currently postponed and may make an appearance later in the year.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

This is vitally important. We will continue to post links on our Website to assist in this regard but staying connected and communication are keys. Please keep us posted and I know we are endeavouring to check in wherever possible. If you need help and don't know where to go – let us know and we will assist as best we can with support or connecting you or your child to someone who can assist.

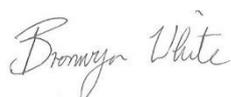
Please visit the information on [Support for parents and carers](#) around this. Parents are advised that, if they need urgent mental health advice and support for themselves or their child, there is a 24-hour Crisis Support Line 1800 048 636.

I hope you are managing to stay mentally positive and take moments to appreciate the people around you and the great things we have which are so often taken for granted. Please contact us if you need assistance in navigating this online world and keep communication via email with staff going if you have questions around coursework or concerns. Also, don't be afraid to shift the focus of learning for your child – asking your children – if able – to cook a meal or budget for the shopping for next week or build the tallest freestanding Lego structure – these have innate learning embedded; and you can have a lot of fun together in the process.

So I think, over and above the 'content' that sometimes we get overly protective of, let's consider what our students and your children may have learnt over the past week. I think they're learning that people are flexible and adaptable, and are learning to be this also. They are probably learning that people will show up for them even when it's hard and that people can 'show up' from a distance. Communities can work together for the greater good. We have truly embraced our College values of Care, Courage and Commitment; these are life skills and values that will always be more useful and invaluable than any piece of knowledge that is mandated in a Course Outline or Syllabus.

Stay strong and stay together. I will send you another letter before the holiday break.

Warmest regards



Bronwyn White

Principal

Halls Head College

3 April 2020