**Navigating VCE: Tips for Success from Kilbreda's Class of 2023 Graduates**

As the school year unfolds and our Years 11 and 12 students embark on their VCE journeys, we are fortunate to benefit from the wisdom of accomplished graduates from the Class of 2023. During the Pastoral lesson this week, these graduates, Rachel Jones, Michaela Meyer, Sienna Koop, and Isabel Humphrey, generously shared their invaluable insights on their effective study habits and their personal experiences of conquering the VCE. At Kilbreda, where we prioritise providing essential support, cultivating strong study skills, and implementing effective learning frameworks, the tips for success shared by these remarkable graduates serve as a beacon of guidance for those navigating the challenges of Units 1 and 2 studies or delving into the rigours of Units 3 and 4 studies.

Throughout their final year at Kilbreda College, each of these graduates immersed themselves in all aspects of college life. They assumed active roles as members of our Student Leadership Committees and therefore had regular commitments inherent in these positions. Additionally, they enthusiastically engaged in various co-curricular activities, such as the College Production of Legally Blonde, Social Justice Initiatives, and Community events, showcasing their dedication to exploring their passions and skills in co-curricular activities and commitment to driving positive change in the world.

Remarkably, their extensive engagement in college life was seamlessly interwoven with a steadfast commitment to their academic pursuits. Despite the demanding schedule, each graduate maintained a rigorous study routine, a testament to their unwavering dedication. This balanced approach not only enabled them to excel academically, achieving the ATAR scores required for entry into their preferred tertiary courses, but it also undoubtedly equipped them with the resilience and time-management skills essential for success in their future careers. Their ability to balance academic excellence with active participation in school life serves as inspiration to current and future students to follow your dreams and to seek out opportunities to contribute, to participate, and to action change.

The Class of 2023 tips for success in VCE are:

**Tip 1 (Sienna Koop): Establish Routines**

Sienna emphasises the importance of routine, urging students to allocate their time wisely and effectively. By setting dedicated periods for study, relaxation, and socialising, she believes students can create a sense of order that makes the workload more manageable. She shares, “It was a routine that genuinely allowed me to find a sense of satisfaction and helped me balance academics, co-curricular activities, and personal time.” Additionally, Sienna advocates for identifying and mitigating distractions, such as social media, to enhance focus and productivity.

**Tip 2 (Rachel Jones): Pursue Passions**

Rachel strongly encourages students to embrace their passions and actively seek a balance between academic pursuits and personal interests. Reflecting on her own challenging experiences in Year 12, she shares the transformative impact of her dedication to art, dance, and participation in the school musical. Rachel affirms, "One indispensable aspect that sustained me during the demanding moments of Year 12 was my unwavering passion for art. I persevered with my dance classes and involvement in the musical. Though adjustments to my study routine were necessary to accommodate these commitments during SAC time, having these outlets was non-negotiable." This deliberate focus on personal interests provided her mind with a rejuvenating break, contributing significantly to her academic performance. To maintain this delicate balance, Rachel adopted the practice of visualising her co-curricular and academic schedule in a weekly timetable, strategically allocating dedicated times for both aspects.

**Tip 3 (Michaela Meyer): Balance is Key**

Michaela stresses the importance of balance, advising students not to bite off more than they can chew. While she acknowledges the importance of effective time management, Michaela advocates for a reassessment of commitments if the burden becomes overwhelming. Drawing from her diverse array of activities, including football, part-time work, and extensive school involvement, she encourages individuals to find a balance that not only sustains motivation but also fosters focused dedication. Michaela's personal journey exemplifies her advice, as she successfully navigated academics, part-time work, sports, and social life while passionately pursuing a career in the navy. In her own words, "I still played football, worked part-time, was fully involved in school life, maintained an active social life, and gave everything a go. Finding solace in the library, I discovered that it not only helped me stay in a study mindset but also kept me motivated to pursue my goal of a career in the navy."

**Tip 4 (Isabel Humphrey): Have Confidence in your Skills and an Awareness of your Weaknesses.**

Isabel emphasises the importance of possessing confidence in one's abilities while recognising areas of improvement. By acknowledging weaknesses, students can direct their efforts towards enhancing those aspects. Isabel's proactive approach involved spending considerable time critiquing her responses, utilising examiners' reports, sample responses, and both self and teacher feedback to analyse her performance and gauge progress. Her dedication to self-reflection and seeking teacher support played a pivotal role in her success in mastering specific skills. In her own words, "Having confidence in your skills and awareness of your weaknesses is essential. It's crucial to feel assured in your abilities, but also to identify areas for improvement and focus on strengthening them. I found it immensely beneficial to prioritise analysing my responses and seeking feedback from teachers. Regular one-on-one meetings during my spare periods allowed me to clarify concepts and address any academic concerns. The support and guidance provided by my teachers were invaluable, and their dedication to their subjects truly made a difference in my academic journey."

**Tip 5 (Collective Advice): Seize Every Opportunity**

Collectively, these graduates encourage current Senior Years students to make the most of their time at Kilbreda by seizing every opportunity. They stress that the memories that endure beyond VCE are not solely tied to academic achievements but rather to the experiences shared with friends and the exploration of passions through co-curricular activities.

As our Senior Years students embark on this academic journey, armed with the wisdom of their predecessors, we wish them the best of luck for the year ahead. Kilbreda College remains a place of opportunity and growth, where each moment is a chance to discover, learn, and create lasting memories. Embrace the journey, try something new, and make the most of these transformative years.