

PO Box 194 Boolaroo NSW 2284
T: (02) 4958 6711
F: (02) 4958 6145



St Paul's
Catholic College
Booragul

31 March 2020

Dear Year 12,

Re: COVID-19 Update No. 12. - Stage 6 Focus.

It seems a lifetime ago that I wrote to you all at the beginning of this brave new world. It's hard to believe that it was only just over one week ago.

Much has changed in the teaching and learning landscape for all of us, not just those who are studying for the HSC. The current economic landscape certainly points to the ideal that we need to be very flexible and adaptable in a world that is in constant change. Who would have thought two months ago that QANTAS pilots would be looking for work packing shelves at a supermarket? I see that as the ultimate in flexibility!

You would have received my update to your parents in the middle of last week about NESA. Their advice at this point is that the Higher School Certificate will continue. I also noted that in their correspondence, they did not say anything about an exam. The HSC is the credential, the exam is just part of it. They are very clear in their advice. Continue to work hard, continue to do the best you can do, and continue to engage in every learning opportunity. If you have major works, continue to work on them in whatever capacity you can. If it is a PIP, continue to do that. If it is a drama performance, continue to rehearse. If it is an art work, continue to sketch, to practice techniques and canvas ideas and feedback from others. For music, continue to sing and play – the world needs more uplifting music! Talk with your teachers, they will help.

I do caution you not to take media commentary about the future of the HSC exams too seriously at this point. I noticed this morning, there was a story out of Queensland about their equivalent of the HSC and the fact that for the first time that system is joining the ATAR program. The media need to run stories and this one happens to be the flavour of today.

School based assessments are being modified for this online world. I ask that you are patient and when they are finally ready for you to complete, do them to the best of your ability. Follow the guidelines and the rules so that all of the work is yours. Remember that the rules remain the same, particularly the rules of "All My Own Work."

The obvious question is – will there still be exams at the end? I suspect there will be. I also suspect that they might be different to what we normally might expect. There still needs to be a moderation aspect to the HSC and how that might develop is still to be decided. The options seem to be clear. One: plough on regardless and have the exams just the way they always have. If that happens, all students are in the same boat because all students have faced the craziness of the COVID crisis. Two: have a modified set of exams that take into account the crisis in some form or another that still allows for moderation of school based assessment. If that happens, all students are in the same boat. Three: no exams and just use school based assessment! If that happens, all students are in the same boat. What do I think they will do? If I was a betting man, number two. Am I good at punting? No!

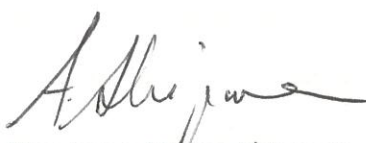
The take home message is whatever happens it will be fair for all regardless of what school system you are in. It has to be because the credibility of the HSC as an institution is at stake. School systems have been told that NESAs will make some further decisions and announcements in Week Two of next term. You are probably thinking, “Why are they waiting until then?” I believe that they are waiting to see what the landscape for teaching and learning will be after the Easter holidays. There is no point making decisions until there is more clarity about the future. I think that this course of action is wise. That way they can come up with a direction that can give certainty in these uncertain times.

So the message remains. Continue to work hard. Continue to make the most of every learning opportunity. Stay connected to one another and to your teachers. Look after yourselves and your families. Your future remains very bright. You are practicing the very skills of adaptability that will be needed into the future in all jobs and careers.

Yours sincerely



Mr Graeme Selmes
Principal



Mrs Anne-Maree Shipman
Assistant Principal C&W



Mrs Amber Carter
Assistant Principal T&L