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St Paul's
Catholic College
Booragul

27 April 2020

Dear Year 12,

COVID-19 Update No. 19.1 – Year 12.

Welcome back to Term 2.

If things were normal, we would be onto the second half of the HSC year. Things aren't normal but as I have said, it is the same for all students in NSW and I am sure that good decisions have been made and will continue to be made for you as we move forward with the HSC.

If you have been following the media reports about schools and the HSC, you will be more than confused. Unfortunately there are two forces at play. The Governments, both federal and State have conflicting views about schools but under our Commonwealth system, schools are run by the states and decisions made about schools are made by the Premier and her team of advisors. At this point, Mrs Berejiklian has said that schools will remain online and only open for people who need to be at schools because they are unable to be at home. This will continue until week 3 when she has asked that schools organise a staged return of students where each child will be at school for one day per week. The delivery of curriculum will remain online because it is still up to parents if they are happy to send their children to schools given the issue of COVID – 19.

The other issue at play is the media. News reports are often confused and they also make all sorts of assumptions about schools and how they are able to operate. They give only half the information because they are either limited by print space or time in a news broadcast. An example is when the news bulletin says that "Children in NSW will return to school in Week three for face to face lessons." They conveniently leave out what the Premier said about all students, for fairness, will continue to learn using the online platforms regardless of whether they are at school or at home. They also conveniently miss out the information about being at school for only one day per week for the next 3 to 4 weeks of the term! I heard a news report on a local radio station this morning on my way to work that suggested that all year 12 students are returning to school today! So far from the truth. (Perhaps Donald Trump has a point.)

So what about Year 12? Tomorrow I have a meeting with all the Secondary Principals in the Diocese to discuss the staged return of students. Year 12 will be a priority for that discussion. We will make sure that the decisions that we make mean that your continued education towards the HSC is the best possible. We will ensure that you are not disadvantaged in any way given that there are reports that Independent Schools might be doing things very differently to the State school system. As a Catholic systemic school, we will work to make sure that you have the best possible outcomes as we all move forward.

NESA continue to make changes to the HSC. The latest decisions are about subjects with major works. Here is the information from the NESA website:

To ensure all students receive an equitable mark, NESA has moved the marking of some components of the 2020 HSC practical examinations from an external mark provided by HSC markers to a mark provided by the teacher. Teachers are best placed to provide a mark as they have been monitoring each student's progress on their projects and body of work since the beginning of the HSC year.

The effected exam components are:

- Design and Technology: Major Design Project (Product)
- Industrial Technology: Major Project (Product)
- Textiles and Design: Major Textiles Project (Product)
- Visual Arts: Body of Work

The folios in Design and Technology, Industrial Technology and Textiles and Design will continue to be marked externally.

Extended hand-in dates:

The hand-in dates for the teacher marked components and the externally-marked folios have been extended by two weeks. (St Paul's will publish due dates in the next few weeks for students to use in their continued planning and work.)

Teacher - provided marks:

Teachers are well placed to fairly mark these components as they have been monitoring each student's progress on their projects and body of work since the start of Term 4 last year.

The teacher marked components have the following values:

- Design and Technology: 20 (the 15 marks for development and realisation will continue to be externally marked as part of the folio)
- Industrial Technology: 40
- Textiles and Design: 25
- Visual Arts: 50

Teachers will use the HSC marking guidelines and annotated benchmarks to mark each student's product or body of work. The guidelines will be available in Schools Online later in Term 2, along with other supporting material.

For students unable to complete their work, or whose work has been disrupted due to the impact of COVID-19, the teacher may estimate a mark. The estimated mark will be based on their teachers' professional judgement about what a student is likely to have achieved if 2020 had proceeded without COVID-19. NESA will provide advice to teachers on accurately estimating a mark.

I hope that gives you some clear guidance going forward in the next few weeks. I will write to you as soon as I have more information, particularly about attendance at school from week 3.

Continue to work hard on all the tasks that you have from your teachers. Ask for clarification as you need it and continue to send in work for feedback.

Cheers



Mr Selmes
Principal