



ROWVILLE
SECONDARY COLLEGE

2024 DUX SPEECH: Rodrigo Viegas Catarino

Good morning, Rowville Secondary College,

I have been invited today to share my experiences and strategies that allowed me to be where I am today. Reflecting on the start of Year 12, the extent of the work and all the motivation that pushed me to do better were all connected to my goals.

Leading up to the start of the year, I had decided that I wanted to get into the University of Melbourne and eventually finish with the right qualifications to become a Lawyer and become the DUX of our school, which required me to achieve a high ATAR. This goal allowed me to continue working hard throughout the year, studying consistently and effectively for every upcoming SAC and eventually exam. Although becoming tedious and tiring, persistence was key.

For all of you, whether starting VCE or not, it is important to have goals and aspirations for your future as they will guide you and allow you to push through the challenges of high school. However, having set goals isn't the only thing that will allow you to achieve your best, you will need to find what you are passionate about and sincerely enjoy.

The subjects I had chosen (even Maths Methods and Specialist Maths) made my time in Year 12 breeze by, as they were subjects that I sincerely enjoyed. I found that even when it got difficult, I never gave up and this played a huge role in constant persistence.

I would be lying if I said that I spent hours and hours studying each day, I still had work, I still had sports, I still had time out with friends and family. For me, having breaks from studying was just as important as studying itself, this prevented me from becoming overwhelmed and exhausted, which could destroy all the progress and hard work I had put in throughout the year, and this is something that each and every one of you will have to work out.

You will find the balance that works best for you - as what may have worked for me, may not work for you. I found it easy to do an hour or two of schoolwork in one sitting before training and be done for the day. It will become important to determine what studying habits and the method of studying that suits you best. A strategy that I found useful, particularly in Spec was to do the notes for the next couple of chapters during the term breaks which would allow me to start going through the questions earlier and at my own pace as well as be able to clarify any doubts that I may have even earlier, which by he



time a SAC approached I would have a week or so to just study for that SAC and not worry about the class work which let me have more time to do practice SACs, something that I found very useful in determining what your strengths and weaknesses are for the topic. I strongly recommend doing practice SACs and Exams in the lead up as not only will you see what you need to work on but also practice the crucial question answering skills that will make your answers stand out.

Furthermore, throughout the year I ensured to keep tabs on all upcoming due dates as this became imperative on how I would organise my time. With prioritising tasks, I found it easier to get through the required work and maintain up to date. Towards the end of the year, I also found that doing practice exams became just as if not more important than reviewing notes. Practice exams allow you to solidify your knowledge to a greater extent and become used to the time allocation and types of questions in the actual exams.

Overall Year 12 can be a tough year, but by allowing yourself breaks and figuring out the best way for you to study and what subjects suit you best, you will find that it can become less stressful. There will be doubts, frustrations and a lot of confusion but that is all part of the process. Do not forget to ask for help, your teachers are there to help you achieve your absolute best. The important thing is how you react and deal with the stresses of life as this will shape your future.

Thank you.

