Mary MacKillop
Catholic Regional College

Year Nine Handbook
2012
Dear Parents and Students,

Year Nine is a challenging year for students. They are moving from the junior to the middle years of secondary schooling and as parents well know, the rate of adolescent change accelerates too. During the year they will need to start developing a pathway, thinking about the subject areas that will best suit them as they move towards the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) or the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL).

Our Year Nine program aims to give students involvement in all subject areas, to better prepare them to make informed choices in the future and to cater for as broad a variety of learning styles as practicable. For this reason, most of the curriculum for the year is compulsory. Students do have the opportunity to express a preference in two areas: they may apply to study French if they wish and they are asked to express their preferences for their Humanities subjects.

In addition to their core and elective subjects, students will be involved in Launch. Launch is an innovative program of elective units developed in response to the VELS domains of Personal and Interdisciplinary Learning. These units will facilitate student learning in dynamic and varied contexts, building co-operative skills and developing abilities in self expression and evaluation.

As Co-ordinator, I look forward to welcoming the students into the Year Nine Sub-school. Year Nine students are full of energy and enthusiasm and will enjoy many exciting and interesting activities over the year. Two highlights are the Outdoor Education Camp and the Melbourne Experience.

At the start of next year, we will announce homeroom and elective classes. If you have any concerns or questions regarding your son or daughter entering Year Nine, please contact me at the College. I will be happy to assist in whatever way I can. Please read the remainder of this booklet regarding next year’s curriculum.

Yours Sincerely

Danny Pellin
Year 9 Sub School Coordinator

Michael Brennan
Deputy Principal - Teaching and Learning
Moving into Year Nine is an exciting time for students, having completed two years of secondary schooling. While there are not many changes to the studies undertaken at this level, there is an opportunity for students to begin exercising their preferences for some subjects. Largely this will occur in the Humanities area where students elect to study subjects of particular interest to them. Of course students also continue to indicate their preferences for the Launch units offered. This is perhaps the first time many students have had to give any real consideration to the future. While it is not critical that students study specific subjects at this time, it is advisable to start thinking about those studies which will best prepare them for possible future pathways.

All Year 9 students are required to indicate their preferences for elective subjects. This is the first step in the process of determining the subjects that each student will study. Based upon the students' initial preferences, we will be able to allocate subjects, allowing the greatest number of students to study their chosen preferences. Obviously this will not be possible for all students, so individual guidance and reselection will be necessary in some cases.

**Compulsory subjects**
Each Year 9 student will study the compulsory subjects; these are: Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Science, Physical education/Health, Arts, and Technology.

**Elective subjects**
In addition to the compulsory studies, students are able to select from a number of elective subjects in the Humanities learning area, and Launch.

Students must select from the **Humanities subjects** listed and include them in preference order on the Subject Selection Sheet. (*Each subject runs for one semester.*)

Students wishing to study French Semester 1 & 2 must include these as their first two preferences.

The handbook should be read carefully before completing the “online subject preference form”, this then needs to printed, signed by both student and their parents, and returned to the Office by the date indicated on the form. Information regarding the online subject preference process and due dates will be distributed to students together with an individual case sensitive login number.
Faith Development

As a Catholic school we are committed to the holistic development of each person in our community. This includes providing as an integral part of college life, opportunities for faith formation. Our college embraces the charism of Mary MacKillop, a woman of great faith whose extraordinary compassion for others is reflected in the values and attitudes of our community. All students at the College are provided with opportunities to help foster their own faith and spiritual development. These include daily prayer, Religious Education, whole-school celebrations of the Eucharist, and social justice activities. These opportunities are integral to the mission of the College, and accordingly, students are expected to participate fully and to enter into these occasions to the best of their ability.

Religious Education Program

The Religious Education program undertaken by all Year Nine students is not restricted to traditional classroom educational experiences. Students are actively encouraged to participate in many Faith and Personal Development activities.

Each Year Nine homeroom class prepares and participates in two celebrations of the Eucharist with college staff and members of the local community in the College Chapel. Students are expected to participate in the Mass regardless of their religious beliefs and are welcomed into an inclusive community where the opportunity to experience and learn is vigorously fostered. Students are also invited at various times to participate in voluntary community work through the Meals on Wheels’ program and College Walkathon, activities that assist students to develop personally and as a member of the wider community.

Units covered in Year Nine Religious Education include The Church through Time, The Eucharist, Death and New life, Stewardship, Making Christian decisions, and Prayer and Meditation. The content of these units is examined at the end of each semester.
ENGLISH
The Year Nine English course involves the study of a range of novels, films and poetry. In addition, students will attempt a range of writing styles such as genre writing; media issue responses, reviews and poetry writing. There is also a strong focus this year on oral work: book and film reviews, play readings, role playing and presentation of a viewpoint on a chosen issue. Basic English skills are consolidated through regular work from the text Go Grammar 3.

MATHEMATICS
The Year Nine Mathematics course covers the following subject content: Pythagoras’ Theorem, Statistics, Probability, Algebraic Expansion and Factorisation, Linear Equations, Trigonometry, Measurement and Exponential Notation. The students’ skills are developed through a range of class work and homework activities. Topic Tests, Application Tasks and Analysis Tasks are used to assess mathematical progress throughout the year, and each semester is concluded with an examination.

SCIENCE
The Year Nine Science course centers its studies on practical and problem solving skills, as well as general scientific knowledge, communication and writing skills. Students study topics including Forensic Science, Chemistry, Microbiology, Light, Sound, Electricity and Geology. The Australian Science Competition offers students the opportunity to test their general scientific knowledge and is available to selected students.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & HEALTH
The Physical Education/Health course is concerned with the physical, personal and academic development of the students. The course involves participation in and development of skills for a wide variety of team and individual sports and games. Year Nine students have an increased amount of time in the area of Physical Education. This extra time allows the inclusion of a wide range of activities and for the delivery of Health and Nutrition theory.
ARTS
Each Year Nine student will undertake the following two Arts units, one in Semester One, the other in Semester Two.

VISUAL ARTS
This course provides students with the opportunity to expand their skills in the application of materials, techniques and new technologies in the production of two and three-dimensional artwork. Together with practice in the use of art elements and principles, students learn to develop artworks from personal experiences, feelings, observations and research; this is reinforced through the examination and analysis of a variety of artwork.

PERFORMING ARTS
This course provides students with an opportunity to further develop skills in the production and presentation of music and drama. Students will prepare for and participate in a number of activities that encourage the development of self-confidence and personal expression. Within the course there will be scope for the students to explore such areas as history, theory, and CD compilation.

TECHNOLOGY
Each Year Nine student will undertake the following two Technology units, one in Semester One, the other in Semester Two.

MATERIALS TECHNOLOGY
This course provides students with the opportunity to expand their skills in the application of materials, techniques and new technologies in the workshop and/or in other projects. Skills in safe and correct use of hand tools, hand held power tools and machines will be practiced as students develop confidence in performing a variety of material processing operations. Students will develop project planning skills and processes to build their own projects.

FOOD TECHNOLOGY
In this course, students will develop hands on experience using the materials and equipment of the kitchen. The focus of this study will be on healthy independent cooking, with students developing skills in planning, ordering and the preparation of nutritious meals. Through this they will explore a variety of food preparation and cooking techniques.

Compulsory Subjects
Humanities & LOTE Electives

In order to provide Year Nine students with a range of choice and the opportunity to actively participate in the design of their course, the elective program includes Humanities subjects that cover History, Geography and Commerce, as well as the opportunity to continue their study of French. Students will complete 2 elective studies per semester. Each elective unit has been designed to operate independently of the others. Because French is a full year subject, students applying for French need to make it their first TWO preferences. Students in Year Nine are required to maintain diversity in their Humanities studies and we will work with each student to ensure they study a balanced course.

SURVIVAL IN SOCIETY (COMMERCE)
The focus of this unit is to provide students with the opportunity to learn some basic skills and gain knowledge that will be directly relevant to gaining employment and functioning as an active and informed member of society. The course encompasses an examination of basic structures and institutions of the Australian political system and legal system.

Also addressed is the topic “Promoting Yourself” - a topic that results in students preparing and writing resumes, letters of application and gaining interview skills.

RAPIDS, RIVERS & RUNOFF (GEOGRAPHY)
‘The Ways of Water’ could be the alternative title for this unit that looks at rivers and water flows. Investigations and field assignments relating to soil erosion and case studies of mighty rivers such as the Murrumbidgee River and the Murray Darling River systems will assist students to expand their understanding of our most basic, yet vital resources.

SUPERPOWERS & SPIES—The Cold War (HISTORY)
From the atomic bomb, through the Cuban Missile Crisis, the fall of the Berlin Wall, this unit covers the length and breadth of the Cold War. We discuss, examine and evaluate one of the few world conflicts not to involve open warfare. Concepts of mutually assured destruction, communism, capitalism, propaganda and espionage are explored through research, investigation and film.
**THIS IS AUSTRALIA**

This unit focuses on Australia’s unique History, Geography and its cultural and social diversity. Students will investigate Australian Society, values and interaction of its natural, political, legal and economic systems.

This is an interesting unit that will assist students in developing a deep-seated appreciation of their Australian heritage and identity, and enhance their knowledge and skills in the Humanities field. Topics Include - Unknown Land, Settlement and Conflict, “Hey, Convict!”, Exploration, The Rush Is On, War, The Local Bloke, New Aussies, The Decades and Fashion, Sport and Recreation, Oz Rocks, Our Place in the World, Where to Now?

**COLOUR CREED & CONFLICT— Race Relations in the 20thCentury (HISTORY)**

Current issues and events from the past are explored in this unit. Students will look at the background to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the existence and aims of the Zionists and Palestinians, and the issues of religion, politics and poverty that are all entwined in their history. Students will also wind the clock back to the 50’s and 60’s in the deep south of America to examine civil rights, Martin Luther King, the Jim Crow Laws, the Ku Klux Klan and the events of Birmingham. This is a unit based upon race relations and the conflict caused as a result of differing religious and political beliefs.

**THE LAST WAVE—Oceans and Coasts (GEOGRAPHY)**

This Geography course examines our coast and oceans, from the dunes systems to the food webs in the depths of the oceans. Want to know which wave to catch or avoid? This unit allows you to learn about the formation, oscillation and refraction of waves. Other topics covered include rips, long shore drift, how islands are formed, El Nino as well as issues such as pollution and over-fishing.

**FRENCH (LOTE)**

The French course for Year Nine students is designed to encourage students to develop the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening within a framework of cultural awareness. Students are involved in a wide range of activities aimed at improving their language skills. These include grammatical and vocabulary exercises, listening and written comprehension and oral work. Students should note that French is a full year subject and need to be aware that places in the French class may be limited. If a student who requests French experiences difficulty in gaining entry to the class due to high demand, students and their parents will be consulted to determine an appropriate course of study.
Some students at Year Nine may be eligible to commence studying a VET (Vocational Education & Training) course. This will allow them to begin working toward an accredited TAFE certificate which would most likely take two years to complete. Further information about VET and the following two courses can be located in the Senior School Handbook.

Students who complete a Certificate II will be eligible for up to four credits towards their VCE: Interested students must consult with the Year Nine Coordinator.

The following two courses may be available to select Year Nine students at Mary MacKillop College next year.

**Building & Construction**

The VCE VET Building and Construction program offered for 2010 is the “Carpentry” stream, which includes Framework/Formwork/Finishing. It is a pre-apprenticeship course suitable for students who are considering a career in the building industry. A pre-apprenticeship is a nationally recognised qualification that has an automatic training and duration credit into the apprenticeship in the same industry area. The training program prepares the student for entry into a trade-based apprenticeship by equipping the student with foundation knowledge and skills. VCE VET programs lead to nationally recognised qualifications, thereby offering students the opportunity to gain both the VCE and a nationally portable vocational education and training certificate. This program functions within the National Training Framework, and is fully recognised within the Unit 1–4 structure of the VCE and therefore may contribute towards satisfactory completion of the VCE. VCE VET units have equal status with other VCE studies.

**Conservation & Land Management**

The VCE VET Conservation and Land Management program offered provides students with vocational training to assist with care for the environment. The program will provide training and skill development in areas such as occupational health and safety, land care, environmental restoration works, plants, trees, and shrubs. Successful completion of this program will provide students with access to a range of entry-level employment opportunities. This may be in general land management, conservation, earthworks, lands, parks and wildlife, natural area restoration, weed management and vertebrate pest management. Completion of this program leads to the award of a qualification that articulates directly to further qualifications within the conservation and land management sector of the natural resource industry. This program functions within the National Training Framework, and is fully recognised within the Unit 1–4 structure of the VCE and therefore may contribute towards satisfactory completion of the VCE. VCE VET units have equal status with other VCE studies.
In keeping with the new Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) structure that has been introduced to Victoria, schools must report on a number of interdisciplinary skills that are not explicitly addressed in the standard curriculum. In response to this, Mary MacKillop College offers a curriculum initiative known as Launch. This program involves all students from Years 7-10, selecting a learning activity that will run for 2 lessons per week, over the course of each semester.

Launch develops students’ ability to work co-operatively and creatively with others, develops personal abilities and explores avenues for self expression and evaluation.

The following descriptors are of subjects which have run previously. These give an indication of the nature and diversity of LAUNCH initiatives that will be on offer to students.

**Lobbying for a better world**  
Are you interested in what is happening in the world around you? What can you do if you care and wish to make a difference? This activity will teach the art and strategies of lobbying in order to draw attention to issues of importance in our society. You will research current local, national and global events, liaise with others to express your personal views and finally, present the information you have found in a range of ways – eg. Speeches, presentations, plays, posters, etc.

**A beautiful place to be**  
The external environment is just as important to our sense of well being as our comfort indoors, and pleasant areas to sit and talk around our school yard help us to feel good about ourselves. In this activity you will learn about the seating options that are suited to a school situation and the techniques involved in seat construction. Having learned how to cost your project, you will design, create and install the seating, working co-operatively with school personal to ensure that everyone is happy.

**The Exhibitionists**  
Photography is a fascinating art form that has endless possibilities for creativity and innovation. Students in this unit will learn valuable photo shooting and developing techniques, in preparation for the organization of a catered photographic exhibition at the College, at which their work will be displayed for sale.