



"Educating young women in the Franciscan tradition"

News & Views

Issue 1, 25 January 2017

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Quick Dates

Tue 31 Jan	7.00pm Elizabeth Hayes School Information Night (San Damiano Centre)
Thu 2 Feb	Year 7 Reflection Day
Fri 3 Feb	Year 12 Accounting excursion 3.30pm Year 7/11 Little Sister/Big Sister Afternoon

Franciscan value this term: **TRUST**

Welcome to all new students and families!



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from the desk of **Kerrie Tuite**, Principal



Thought of the Week:

Believe you can and you're halfway there.

Theodore Roosevelt

Dear Parents and Carers, Staff and Students, and Friends of Mount Alvernia College,

Welcome to 2017. I have difficulty believing that this is the start of my ninth year at Mt A—the years have gone past swiftly—and that we are now at the start of another academic year.

On Monday, we welcomed new students to the College. Not only did we have Year 7 students begin, but also a number of young women in other year levels. Yesterday, when the whole student cohort returned, the Year 12s received their senior ties and badges during a lovely prayer ceremony whose theme was *Gifts*. During the ceremony and the blessing of badges and ties, Sister Catherine White mfc spoke of the tragedy that unfolded in Melbourne last week and the positive responses from bystanders, while I encouraged the community to use their gifts to make a positive difference in the world.

One person who has had an enormous difference to the community that is Mount Alvernia is **Mr Michael McDonald** – College Deputy. This week marks 30 years that Michael has been in leadership at the College. During this time, he has seen the College more than double in size, change curriculum direction, and develop into the beautiful community of which I am so proud. Congratulations on this amazing milestone, Michael. As a community, we are grateful for your loyalty and commitment to the growth and development of staff, students and parents.

As we contemplate the beginning of a new year, it is important that we acknowledge the great results that our seniors of 2016 achieved. They worked exceptionally hard and were rewarded with success. You may have seen the Facebook post. They were a testament to the thought for the week. I am certain that this year's group will be just as successful.

I look forward to another busy and productive year this year, and I am looking forward to meeting old and new parents at the various activities this term.



Pax et bonum

Kerrie

tuitk@mta.qld.edu.au



From the College Deputy

Welcome to our 2017 school year. It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces as we welcomed our new students and their parents on Monday and all students on Tuesday.

All students received their timetables on Tuesday and these are available via Moodle for students. There was a small technical problem for some students so Year 7 students were given a paper copy of their timetables on Tuesday. All other students received a paper today.

Parents of students in Years 8 to 12 may access their daughter's timetable via Igloo in the same way you accessed your daughter's report at the end of last year. Parents of students in Year 7 will receive information about the Igloo Portal next week.

Students in Years 8 to 11 made their choices last year and were informed of their subjects at that time. They were then given the opportunity to make any changes before the beginning of school this year. Therefore, students were informed that subject changes were no longer possible. If they believe that there is a mistake on their timetable, then they are able to ask for this to be checked. We then allocate students to classes. Students in each class are decided by the College administration. We do this taking care to ensure that class sizes are reasonable. It is not always possible for girls to be in a particular class with their friends.

In our support of students and their learning, we have certain procedures which we ask parents to follow when they may be raising issues concerning their daughter's school life. I would like to outline for you the procedures we ask you to follow if you have any concern about Curriculum and Learning issues. This informs you when you should contact the Subject Teacher, Learning Area Advisor (the person responsible for a Learning Area across the whole school) and the Teaching and Learning Guardian (the person responsible for your daughter's general learning across all her subjects).

It is important that parents follow this process and contact the individual Subject Teacher firstly.

Subject Teacher

- Classroom Behaviour
- Teaching and Learning issues eg
 - Homework
 - Progress/Achievement level
 - Learning Needs
 - Work Program
- Student Progress
 - Achievement
 - Learning Needs
- Student Engagement
 - Motivation
 - Expectations
 - Assessment
- Student Teacher relationship
- Student-Students relationships in the class

Teaching Learning Guardians

- Learning Strategies
- Overall Student Progress and Tracing
- Subject Choices
- Special Consideration
- Student Handbook

The Learning Area Advisors and their areas of responsibility are:

Ms Lorella Masci	The Arts – Art, Music, Drama
Mrs Rachel Hollyman	Business and Technology – Accounting, Business Studies subjects, Design and Technology, Information Processing and Technology subjects
Mrs Michelle Popplewell	Health – Home Economics subjects, Physical Education, Fashion
Ms Annie Fischer	Languages – English, English Communication, Italian, Japanese
Mr Dan Martin	Mathematics – Mathematics A, B and C, Yr 7-9 Mathematics, Pre-Vocational mathematics
Mrs Denise Shaw	Religious Education, Cert III in Christian Ministry and Theology, Religion and Ethics
Ms Jennifer Gibbons	Science – Science Yrs 7-10, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Science 21
Mr Wayne Stafford	Social Sciences – Ancient History, Modern History, Geography, Legal Studies, Study of Society, Social and Community Studies, Study of Religion
Mr Terry Donaghue	VET – all TAFE Courses

I look forward to working with you this year.

Have a great week.

Michael McDonald



From the Deputy Principal: Mission and Community



Welcome!

This week has been a week of welcoming. We have welcomed the Year 7 and other new students to our community, and we have invited our Year 12 seniors to model in word and action our Catholic values and the Franciscan spirit that is Mount Alvernia.

New students each year are given a symbolic key to the College. On this key are the core values that help those who journey through our school to appreciate what it means to live like a Mount Alvernian. As the year begins, I invite you to ponder over the intentions of these values as they were presented to the new students on Monday. Each one offers a conversation for you and your daughter on how she plans to live these values in 2017.



Love...

When we live this value we will have an active concern for the life and the growth of that which we love. Love is a response to the beauty and worth of others, the environment and all of creation. Out of respect and understanding, love will grow.

Compassion...

When we live this value we start to listen more, judge less, and begin to recognise the essence of each person we meet. With compassion we have the capacity to understand ourselves and others. We show an appreciation of the achievements of others, and are honest, respectful and selfless in all we do and say.

Simplicity...

When we live this value we begin to enjoy the simple things – time with family and friends, the beauty of nature, the joy of realising God's love for humankind. We take time to simply BE and not be consumed by the need to possess things to such a degree that we become possessed ourselves.

Peace...

When we live this value we begin to feel peace, to think peace, to speak peace and to do peace. We proclaim peace by the actions and the words we use when talking to our friends and family; we allow our gentleness to encourage all to become peace-makers in our world.

Trust in God...

When we live this value we will be open and ready to allow our world to unfold as it should, trusting that God knows us intimately and will provide all we need. We see God in others and in ourselves.

Joy...

When we live this value we will feel happy and contented because our ordinary actions, choices, decisions, and thoughts will emerge from what we have created. We will be thankful in all circumstances and approach all that happens with joy.

Respect...

When we live this value we will have established guidelines which protect the human dignity and well-being of each person. We will enable ourselves and others to grow as individuals with unique capabilities. Like Francis, we believe everything is our brother and sister. Therefore this value also calls us to respect the sacredness of ourselves, of others, the environment and all of creation.

Service...

When we live this value we will be a 'person-for-others'. We will act in ways which say that we see the face of Christ in all we meet. Service grows our social conscience which is sensitive to the needs of all. We will become involved in special programs and opportunities to offer service to others.

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From the Deputy Principal: Mission and Community

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At the Welcome Assembly for the whole school on Tuesday, the seniors were invited to recite their pledge for their final year at Mount Alvernia. A copy of it is provided below. With the excitement of acknowledging that they are in their last year of secondary school, all Year 12 students are tasked with the journey of leading by example in all aspects of College life, echoed in this pledge. The sentiments of the pledge provide another opportunity for you to talk to your daughters about what it means to live in the spirit of Saint Francis and Saint Clare and to go well on their journey as they finish their formal years of schooling.

2017 Senior Pledge

As the 2017 leaders of Mount Alvernia College, we pledge to be women of integrity, upholding the values on which this college is founded. We promise to be role models, demonstrating qualities of selflessness, respect and compassion, each and every day.

In our final year at this school, we will continue to strive for success, to be ambitious and to consistently serve with the utmost dignity and authenticity. It is our mission as your leaders to inspire you to have pride in our school, empowering you to achieve excellence beyond your perceived potential.

Being women of passion, we will strive to continue the Franciscan tradition in order to motivate you to flourish in your own individual way. We commit to furthering the legacy of this college through both word and deed.

Save the Date!

Liturgical and/or Community Upcoming events:

Opening Mass – Thursday 9 February (San Damiano Centre)*

2017 College Captains' Commissioning Ceremony – Thursday 23 February (San Damiano Centre)*

Ash Wednesday Liturgy of the Word – distribution of ashes and launch of Caritas Project Compassion – 1 March (San Damiano Centre)

Caritas Ks Walk (reflecting International Women's Day) – Friday 10 March (After school through the streets of Kedron)

Easter Liturgy - Friday 31 March

*Please be aware that there is limited seating at whole school events.



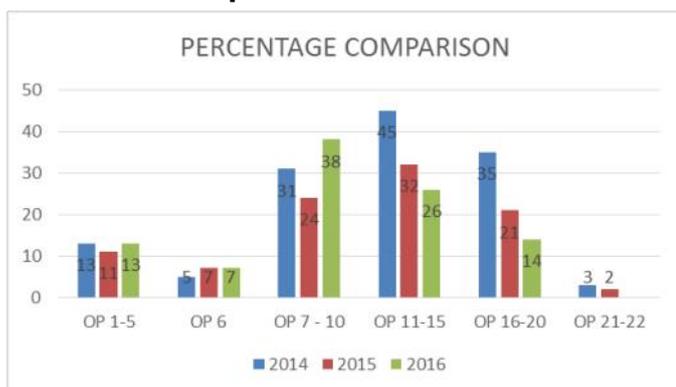
Annette Butterworth

From the Assistant Principal: Student Learning

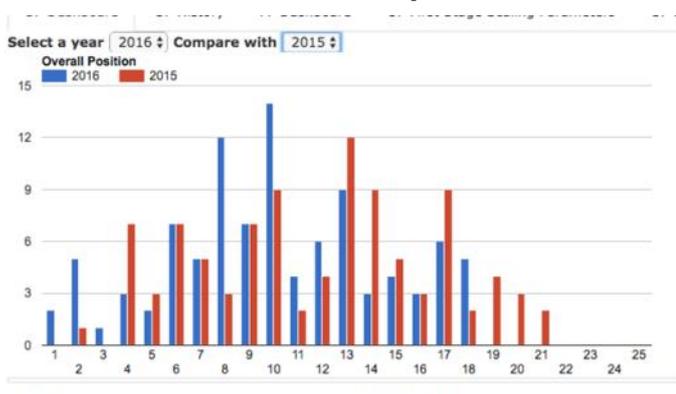
Transitioning into 2017

It is such a joy to welcome everyone back to the New Year. 2016 was very successful for our students and the College. Our seniors of 2016 achieved excellent results which have enabled them to be offered, in most cases, their first choices for university pathways and TAFE. They have set themselves up well for their futures and have done Mt A proud. I congratulate the girls again on their efforts and success and wish them all the very best in their individual pursuits.

Some Data—2016 Senior OP results overview and comparison



OP distribution 2016 compared with 2015



It is important to note that, whilst some of our OP distribution ranges appear similar over the past few years, we see from the second graph a strong upward shift. In all bands, the upward trend was significant, with far fewer students in bands between 16 and 20. No student attained over 18. In all, our girls have achieved excellent results. QCS results for 2016 were outstanding, much improved on the past two years.

We have started this year very well; there is such an energised feeling within the College. The buzz is palpable. The girls are excited and enthusiastic, and there is a real feel for working hard and being successful. I look forward to seeing how the year unfolds and, in particular, how our young women achieve their own levels of success this year.

It is important for us all to understand that each student in the College is transitioning into a new year level. For some it is momentous, and for others it is taken in their stride with confidence. For parents too, there are transitions, with new experiences, new teachers, and new subjects and activities for your daughters. The best way to make these transitions as smooth as possible is to keep the channels of communication open between you and your daughter, the teachers, and all the people who are playing a role in enabling your daughter to settle in, to work and to thrive as she begins or continues her learning journey here at the College. I provide some tips that may be useful as your daughter begins her new year.

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From the Assistant Principal: Student Learning

Transitioning into 2017

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For our Year 7s

The transition into secondary school can be challenging for many children. It is important that you attend any orientation and meet-the-teacher events that we offer. It will make the year easier if you know what to expect, how we work, and who to talk to about issues. Staying in touch with your daughter's progress is much harder now she has a variety of teachers, so do utilise the student planner to contact teachers if needed, or use the [Silver Pages](#) which provides details of all the people who have a connection with your daughter.

- Get to know the student study planner – Is your daughter using it? Check it weekly. If she isn't using it find out why. Some students will prefer scheduling homework and setting reminders on their device, but you still need to check on their homework and study weekly.
- Talk to your daughter and share in her work to check if she is keeping up in class, completing set work. The demands of Year 7 can overwhelm some students – without parents even suspecting it. These reviews keep you informed and help nip issues in the bud.
- Really monitor your daughter's technology use. Is she on Facebook or other social media while trying to do her homework? Is she receiving or making texts or calls late at night? Sleep requirements start to change this year and sleep deprivation is a big problem for many children. Midnight texts from friends will only make this worse.

Francis School—Parent Information Evening
Tuesday 14 February, commencing 7.00pm in
San Damiano Centre

Our Year 8s

- Your daughter should be settling into Mount Alvernia by now. If she seems to be struggling with the difficulty of the work or the organisation involved in getting it done, do contact the Teaching and Learning Guardian.
- Remind your daughter that, the minute she finds out she has an exam or assignment due, she should write the date in her student planner and schedule study time in the weeks and days before it is due. This is an important habit for students to learn now.

Our Year 9s

The girls have now left their Learning Group of Francis School and will be challenged by having new teachers and new classmates, as well as new subjects. It is important that they step up to this challenge and get to know their new teachers. This is a significant time in their lives and development, socially, emotionally and academically.

- Encourage your daughter to read for pleasure, and to try different genres and more difficult books. This continues to build her vocabulary and exposes her to different styles of writing – helping her with comprehension and her own writing.

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From the Assistant Principal: Student Learning

Transitioning into 2017

Our Year 9s

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- Year 9 can be an interesting year developmentally, particularly for some girls, as they seem to swing from one extreme to another. Relationships are changing with their peers and their families. They are asserting their independence but often without the good judgment that comes with maturity. Experts describe the teenage brain as a "work in progress"; the brain structure is changing and teens are flooded with hormones. The habits they learn now – good and bad – will stick, and so we need to instill in the girls a love of learning and desire to maintain effort.

Clare School—Parent Information Evening

**Tuesday 21 February, commencing 7.00pm in
San Damiano Centre**

Our Year 10s

- Year 10 may feel like a big step up from Year 9, so encourage your daughter to continue to be very organised and focused. Encourage her to start working immediately and stay on track. It will set her up well for the senior years.
- Distraction is a common problem for many teens, but it's essential they pay attention during class. Missing important information in class (or missing the opportunity to ask for explanations) will make study time at home much harder and less efficient. make study time at home much harder and less efficient.

Welcome to the **senior years**. Your daughters have already thought about their choices and their possible pathways and their futures. For some they will feel confident in these choices whilst, for others, they are still deciding. That is fine! We must remember to encourage your daughter, support and guide her as she moves forward. It is important that she is studying subjects she enjoys and may be passionate about, and that we are all focused on her needs and desires for her future.

Year 11

- Physical activity is still important when study ramps up at school. This is the age many girls drop sport, but it's important for them to continue to incorporate exercise into their schedule to help them manage stress as.
- In Year 11 your daughter will be expected to be more proactive in her study. It can be a big step up from Year 10.
- It is important that you attend parent-teacher information events this year. You'll receive important information about exactly what's happening this year and how you can help your daughter cope and succeed.
- Monitor your daughter's technology use. It is noted that the quality of study and learning suffers when students are frequently interrupted by texts, emails, phone calls or by flicking between

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From the Assistant Principal: Student Learning

Transitioning into 2017

Year 11

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homework and Facebook screens. Instead, tell her to schedule ten-minute breaks every hour to catch up on her social life, if need be. For information highlighting some research undertaken in this area, peruse this article about [multi-tasking](#).

Elizabeth Hayes School—Parent Information Evening

Tuesday, 31 January, commencing 7.00pm in the San Damiano Centre

Year 12

- Year 12 is a continuation of Year 11 in terms of learning and study. Your daughter may start to feel anxious about the QCS, OPs and achieving well, so assist her to plan a weekly schedule that includes enough study, activity, social activities and sleep. Seeing it all planned out, and sticking to the schedule, can really help calm anxious students or motivate laidback ones.
- Good nutrition is particularly important for your daughter right now.

- A good balance of work and play is important for your daughter's wellbeing this year. If she has a part-time job, make sure it's manageable and fits in with all the other responsibilities she has. Ensure that her employers are flexible and understand that Year 12 is your daughter's priority.
- Stay in contact with us, especially if there are concerns. Year 12 teachers want their students to achieve the best possible results and it is so important that we all work together to support your daughter in her studies.
- Be sure to contact your daughter's Pastoral Guardian if there are personal issues, or the Teaching and Learning Guardian for all things relating to learning.

NSW Education., (2017). Year by year tips for high school., Retrieved from: <http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/homework-and-study/planning-for-the-future/tips-for-starting-years-7-12>

In all cases, whether your daughter is beginning, continuing or coming to the end of her time at Mount Alvernia College, I am always available to assist you and your daughter, and look forward to a successful academic year, continuing our focus on enabling excellence for all in all avenues.

Debra Evans



From the Program Leader—Careers

Last year was a fantastic year for our Year 12 graduates, and the following provides a snapshot of just how well they went, and where they went:

Summary of Offers to students from Mt A:

Total Students who have applied: 108

Total Offers: 108 Students requesting deferment: 3

Preference Number	Offers
1	76
2	17
3	12
4	1
5	2
6	0
Total Offers	108

With so many girls receiving top offers in the first major QTAC round, it was also interesting to look at where they applied, and in what industry areas. The following institutions are listed in order of most popular, with the top areas for applications:



Business, Creative Industries, Justice



Nursing, Exercise & Sports Science, Commerce, Paramedicine.



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

International Studies, Arts, Science, Advanced Finance and Economics



Criminology, Psychology



Nursing, Early Childhood

The girls are to be congratulated for these wonderful results, which are only possible with hard work, determination, and organisation. I look forward to working with the current seniors, and hope they, too, are inspired to excel.

*Melissa Loveday
Program Leader*

From the Program Leader—Careers

Another fortnight, another Careers update!

Melissa Loveday

Nation of dropouts: University completion rates drop to a new low

JANUARY 18, 2017 12:14PM



Liz_Burkenews.com.au@lizeburke



MORE Australians are making the wrong decisions about their future when it comes to education.

University student completion data, released by the federal government, has revealed the university dropout rate is worsening with around one in three students failing to complete their studies within six years of enrolment.

The worrying figures have prompted the government to encourage thousands of prospective students to think long and hard about enrolling when they receive their course offers this week, and have also raised the question, who's to blame?

Putting responsibility on universities, the data has also prompted the government to reveal for the first time the worst offending institutions.

The universities with the worst dropout rates have been exposed, with some well below the already concerning average.

The Northern Territory's Charles Darwin University boasted the most shameful completion rate with only 41.8 per cent of students who enrolled in 2009 wrapping up their studies by 2014.

The bottom five universities, including Western Australia's Murdoch University, The University of New England in NSW and two regional universities in

Queensland — the University of Southern Queensland and Central Queensland University — all saw less than half of the cohort graduate.

The top performers saw up to 88 per cent of students complete their studies within the measured period, but high completion rates were found to be rare. Only seven out of Australia's 43 universities boasted completion rates above 75 per cent.



Education Minister Simon Birmingham suggested a lack of transparency from universities was to blame, and said it was time our institutions were straight with prospective students.

"We've heard too many stories about students who have changed courses, dropped out because they made the wrong choices about what to study, student who didn't realise there were other entry path ways or who started a course with next to no idea of what they were signing themselves up for", he said.

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From the Program Leader—Careers

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“Students should be looking for feedback on the reputation of the university they want to attend, how well-known they are for particular courses, how satisfied current students are with the resources and teachers on offer and the employment outcomes of graduates from those universities and courses.”

Mr Birmingham said the government was committed to lowering dropout rates, and announced he had asked the Higher Education Standards panel to review attrition and completion rates and “consider what further reforms are required to help improve student success”.

“While there will always be a number of students who don’t complete university for a variety of reasons, our ambition to protect both students and taxpayers from a waste of time and money is to keep this number as low as practical,” he said.

The government is pressuring universities to present information that is easily understood to prospective students to help kids the best choices for them, rather than simply boost enrolment numbers.

Better defined ATAR thresholds and clearer data on student experiences, outcomes and employment prospects are also on the way.

But universities may not be solely to blame.

Commentators regularly cite a culture in high schools and among parents pressuring school leavers into enrolling in university courses, as well as a disconnection between what kids are learning at university and other institutions and the “real world”.



Speaking with news.com.au, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry’s education and employment director said the key to boosting completion rates was a better informed market, and greater focus on jobs.

“There needs to be more effort by the government to promote that information about where the jobs are likely to be”, she said.

“When people start their university degree they may have an over-inflated expectation that everyone out of university gets a job.”

Employment outcomes for university graduates are falling and, while it’s too early to tell whether that’s a fixed change or if it’s just the labour market adjusting to the numbers of university graduates coming through, Ms Lambert said it’s something students and prospective students need to be aware of.

“Students should be looking at certain courses, certain universities that might be above and below the average for employment outcomes, and all that data is available through student surveys; it’s just about better informing the market.”

Ms Lambert said it was also important that parents and schools were better informed as well as wannabe university students. She said there were also reasons outside of the institutions’ control that people failed to complete their degrees.

In a previous interview with news.com.au, Universities Australia Deputy Chief Executive Catriona Jackson said the biggest factors for students who consider leaving university are often related to issues beyond university.

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From the Program Leader—Careers

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“Research suggests attrition rates are higher for mature age and part-time students — and, if you think about it, they’re the ones who may often be juggling university study with jobs, children and caring for elderly parents,” she said.

“Students battling disadvantage — including those who are first in their family to attend university — area also more likely to have thoughts about leaving.”

The Education Department’s report found students older than 25 were three times more likely to drop out in their first year of study than school-leavers under 19.

Completion rates were also affected by students’ admission scores as well as their locations — if they were from remote locations or low socio-economic areas, and whether they were indigenous.

Increasingly popular online courses were also found to be a contributor to the growing dropout rate with one in five students who studied externally dropping out in their first year, compared to fewer than one in 10 who were based on campus.

Worst universities by completion rate (based on 2009 cohort)

1. Charles Darwin University — 41.8%
2. Central Queensland University — 42.5%
3. University of Southern Queensland — 44.4%
4. The University of New England — 49%
5. Murdoch University — 49.6%
6. Federal University Australia — 51.3%
7. Southern Cross University — 52.5%
8. University of the Sunshine Coast — 53.3%
9. Charles Sturt University — 53.5%
10. Edith Cowan University — 55.4%

Best universities by completion rate (based on 2009 cohort)

1. The University of Melbourne — 88%
2. University of Sydney — 81.9%
3. The Australian National University — 81%
4. Monash University — 79.3%
5. The University of New South Wales — 78.1%
6. University of Technology Sydney — 77.1%
7. The University of Wollongong — 76.7%
8. RMIT University — 74.8%
9. The University of Western Australia — 74.5%
10. Macquarie University — 71.3%



What will your 2017 memories be? With a WEP student exchange they could include visiting NYC, Paris or Rome! Imagine!

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE? ATTEND A WEP STUDENT EXCHANGE INFO SESSION!

FEBRUARY
22

FULTON TROTTER LOUNGE
129 LEICHHARDT STREET, SPRING HILL
7:00PM

COMING? LET US KNOW!

WEP.ORG.AU
CALL 1300 884 733
SMS 'RSVP' TO 0428 246 633

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Important Safety Notice:



Please remember that it is illegal to park or stop on yellow lines. Cars that stop on the yellow lines are obstructing other drivers being able to view pedestrians when approaching the crossing on Cremorne Road.

Thank you for considering the safety of all at Mount Alvernia and the wider community.

School Photos:

Photo envelopes were distributed in Home Room today. If you would like to have a family photo taken, please ask your daughters to collect that envelope from the office next week.



Photo day is Friday 10 February. Students need to bring envelopes with them on that day.



Open from 7.00-11.00am/noon-3.30pm Monday to Thursday, and 7.00-11.00am/noon to 3.00pm Friday. Staff, parents and friends are very welcome to drop in for coffee—\$3.50; \$3 in own cup.

La Cucina

Roster Term 1

Monday 30 January

Jacqueline McLindon, Julianne Rzepka

Tuesday 31 January

Anne Marie Sams, Debra Dotto

Wednesday 1 February

Michelle Leonard, Gianna Di Virgilio

Thursday 2 February

Anna Smith, Natalie Mills

Friday 3 February

Trisha Kerrin, Melanie Horswill

Any enquiries: please call Jane or Jo in the College Office—3357 6000.

Remember to place your orders [online](#) and beat the queues

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THE GAP NETBALL CLUB

The Gap Netball Club 2017 Season

Register now at <http://thegapnetball.org>

The Gap Netball Club is the biggest in Queensland and has a strong community and competitive dual focus. 2017 registrations are now open online, and Sign-On will be 9-11am on Saturday 28 January at Hilder Road State School at The Gap.

Netball is the most popular team sport in Australia and The Gap has teams for all abilities and ages from 8 year olds to adults, plus NetSetGO for 5-7 year olds.

Teams train on weekday afternoons and evenings at Hilder Road State School and play at Downey Park on Saturdays from March to August.

The Club will also run NetSetGO at Hilder Road for 8 weeks from Monday 30 January. NetSetGO is an introductory program for 5-7 year olds, teaching netball basics in a fun and safe way.

Registrations & further information:
<http://thegapnetball.org>
registrar@thegapnetball.org

Background image: Gap20 11Div1 celebrating winning 2011 Grand Final (courtesy Chris Stockton)