From the Principal’s Desk

May I extend a very warm welcome to all of our 2015 students and their families. This year we have a cohort of 430 students with 260 beginning with us for the first time. The four day Orientation Program involved students working through a number of workshops, listening to guest speakers and meeting each of their teachers including their Mentor. I hope that every parent has been contacted by your child’s Mentor during the first few weeks. The Mentor is the key contact and the “first port of call” for the vast majority of issues that may arise during the year.

With a few complete weeks behind us the general opinion amongst the staff is that the 2015 cohort has impressed us greatly. They have settled into their programs well and have quickly picked up on the Swinburne culture and the associated responsibilities.

An initiative implemented this year was to have all Year 11 students undertake a general ability test designed by ACER called the AGAT (ACER General Ability Test). Students undertook this online 40 minute test during the Orientation Program. The results were available immediately and provide teachers with a “heads up” on the general ability of students in their Year 11 classes. Individual student reports of their results have been forwarded by each student’s Mentor.

VAGO Additional School Costs for Families report
You may have read in the press that the Victorian Auditor-General has released a report on school costs for parents.

In response to the report’s findings, the Minister for Education has asked the Department of Education and Training to review its parent payment policy. As a result of any changes to the Department’s policy, we will work with our school council to update our own policy and procedures. We don’t expect any changes until later in 2015 and we will let you know well in advance.

The Department's parent payment policy is what we use to guide us in deciding what we will ask you to pay each year. We review our own parent payment policy, in conjunction with our school council, on a yearly basis and notify you of any changes through our newsletter.

Our aim is to ensure our policy meets parents' expectations, while also ensuring that all of our students are able to participate in the programs we offer. Our policy sets out what we ask you to pay for to support your child's learning, such as books and stationery, and what we ask for optional extracurricular activities.

Our policy also sets out what we ask parents to make voluntary contributions to, and where these funds will be directed (for example, to assist with new building and grounds works, or purchasing library equipment).

As always, if you have any queries, or would like to discuss how the school can support you in financial matters, please call me at the school on 8862 4400.
VCE Results 2014

The results of our 2014 cohort, with a median study score of 28.9, were the best that have been achieved since 2001 (29.1). The performance of students across our broad range of studies was generally above expectations.

The following studies received their best result since 2010:
- Biology
- Business Management
- English
- English Language
- Further Mathematics
- Global Politics
- Industry and Enterprise
- Legal Studies
- Music Performance
- Psychology
- Theatre Studies

Students continuing to further education and training comprised 80% (36% university, 32% TAFE, 12% other provider) of the cohort compared with 69% in 2013.

Fourteen students received a study score of 40 or more in at least one of their studies.

These wonderful results are the culmination of a great deal of hard work from our students, teachers and education support staff. I would like to extend my thanks and congratulations to everyone.

Overall 192 students completed their VCE. Of these, 141 applied for a tertiary place through VTAC with 135 receiving an offer.

Of these 135 students, 71 have been offered a place at university, 49 at TAFE and 15 at private providers (degrees).

The institutions that our alumni will be attending include:
- 28 RMIT (including TAFE)
- 22 Swinburne (including TAFE)
- 14 Deakin
- 13 Victoria University (including TAFE)
- 8 University of Melbourne
- 6 La Trobe University
- 6 Box Hill TAFE
- 6 Melbourne Polytechnic
- 5 Homesglen TAFE
- 4 Australian Catholic University
- 4 Southern School of Natural Therapies

Course Categories

Creative Arts 44 students
Includes: Building Design 2, Creative Arts 1, Design 6, Graphic Design 4, Interior Design 4, Furniture Design 1, Games design and interactive multimedia 1, Fashion 7, Visual Merchandising 2, Visual Art 1, Screen and Media 1, Music 3, Sound Production 1, Music Theatre 1, Specialist Make-up 1, Fine Art and Television 2, Fine Art 1, Photography 4

Sciences 38 students
Includes: Psychology 6, Sciences 2, Biomedical 2, Engineering 3, Health Sciences 9, Justice and Criminology 6, Naturopathy 4, Nursing 3, Environments 3

Humanities 22 students
Includes: Arts 11, Media and Communication 2, Professional Writing 3, Language 1, Teaching 1, International Studies 2, Public Relations 2

Business 9 students
Includes: Business and management courses 9

Others included: Children Services, Events, Fitness Sport, Horticulture, Dental Technology, Tourism, Library Management, Youth Work

School Council
Help Wanted! This year we have vacancies for four parent representatives.

There are 3 vacancies with a term of office from March 2015 to March 2017 (2 years) and 1 vacancy with a term of office from March 2015 to March 2016 (1 year).

Nominations for the four parent vacancies on School Council will be taken from Monday 16 February and will close on Monday 23 February at 4:00pm. If you are interested in standing for school council and would like to receive a nomination form or would like to know more about the role, responsibilities and meeting times please contact Michael O’Brien on 88624400 or email obrien.michael.b@edumail.vic.gov.au

Assistant Principal's News

Welcome back to the 2015 school year. It has been a good start to the year and students have settled into the college routine well.

During the first week all students were involved in the Orientation Program. These sessions focused on learning styles, implications for study and revision approaches as well as their learning environment at home. It also incorporated a session on approaches to your VCE by Dr Karen McGraw a Clinical Psychologist with Andrew Fuller & Associates. A session from Head Space Hawthorn on the work they do with schools to improve mental health and wellbeing of young people was informative and popular.

All students were given a student diary containing our Assessment and VCE Policies. Parents should ensure that
this diary is kept for ready reference by your son or daughter.

Throughout the year please make sure you visit our website as it contains all important dates including examinations, assessment weeks, parent teacher nights, assessment information evenings, Compass Login etc.

I wish all our students success for 2015.

Robert Lewkowicz
Assistant Principal

From the Year 12 Manager’s Office
I would like to welcome everyone back to Swinburne Senior for 2015.

Year 12 Students have started the year well, engaging in a variety of studies that they chose way back in Term 4, 2014. The students have been enthusiastic in the way they have approached their subjects and should be well into the swing of things by now.

Students have had the opportunity to make changes to their programs in the first two weeks, but as of the 11 February we are no longer accepting any more changes to student programs. Each subject has had 4 classes each and we believe that it is too difficult for students to catch up on the work they have missed.

I would like to think that students have set up their year and are working on developing consistent and productive work routines.

Each Year 12 Student should have:
1. A Term Planner/Calendar where all of their important assessments are marked down
2. A Diary where they can map out their week and make lists for each day
3. A designated study area at home
4. The appropriate materials for each of their classes

We are looking forward to meeting some of the parents/guardians at the VCE/VCAL Information evening on Tuesday 17 February at 6:30pm.

Joel Guye
Year 12 Manager

From the Year 11 Managers’ Office
The Year 11 Managers extend a warm welcome to all of the parents and guardians of the new Year 11 students for 2015.

The year has started very smoothly and the new students have transitioned into life at Swinburne very well. Attendance has been high and it has been great to see the students making friends and quickly finding their feet in their new environment. We hope that your son/daughter has been returning home each night with positive stories of their Swinburne journey so far.

By now, you should have received a letter with your log on details for Compass School Manager and are hopefully familiarising yourself with its many functions. You should have also received either an introductory email or phone call from your son/daughter’s Mentor Teacher. The Mentor Teacher will be taking care of your son/daughter throughout the year and you are encouraged to contact them whenever an issue arises or if you are wanting to check on your child’s progress.

The Compass system can be used to email your child’s Mentor and subject teachers. We make it our aim as mentors to keep in close contact with parents and guardians to help students achieve success in Year 11 and prepare to Year 12. For more serious matters you can contact one of the Year 11 Managers.

The VCE Information Night on the 17th of February provides an opportunity to meet and have a chat with your son/daughter’s Mentor Teacher and subject teachers and we all look forward to putting faces to names after the first few weeks of introductions.

Again, welcome to Swinburne, we look forward to working with you and your children for a successful and enjoyable year.

Roy, Mike, Emily
Year 11 Managers

Practical Approaches to Education Booming at Swinburne
The VCAL program at Swinburne Senior Secondary College has grown significantly over the last year with the Senior Program doubling in size in 2015. Part of the attraction of the VCAL program is the College’s ability to meet the demand for a Year 12 certificate that prepares young people for the workplace or a pathway into a trade related course. Students come to the College for many different reasons, a fresh start, greater independence, wider choice and an adult learning environment. This makes Swinburne the perfect setting for those young people who are looking for support in preparing their pathway into their chosen career or trade.

The main focus of the VCAL program is to ensure that students develop the skills needed for a changing economy. The role of technology, increasing competition, global markets and the collapse of a number of industries have all played a role in dramatically changing the
landscape of the workplace. No longer is anyone guaranteed of a ‘job for life’. Young people need to remain competitive in a future economy that relies less on content knowledge and more on developing ‘lifelong and work-related skills’. These include, just to name a few; problem solving, willingness to remain a learner, teamwork skills, enterprise and initiative skills, communication skills and more.

At the end of 2014, during our transition program the VCAL team ran a number of activities to encourage the students to begin to think about basic teamwork, organisational and leadership skills. As many students were new to the school, we began with a practical, but fun activity that would allow students to get to know each other and begin practicing these skills - creating human pyramids and building a ‘vessel’ to protect an egg being dropped from a height. Both activities required students to think outside the box, organise themselves, communicate well and to reflect and evaluate their progress and results.

Throughout the year students will begin to apply these skills to their own areas of interest and future career path through a range of projects and group activities. This will then culminate in a major event towards the end of Term 3 to be held at the College. Additionally students will be required to practice their skills in a workplace. To this end, VCAL students will also begin to seek work placements. This is always a difficult task for young people and we would appreciate any support from parents/guardians who may be able to provide a placement either on a regular weekly basis or for a week block.

The VCAL Team looks forward to an exciting new year and welcomes any parental support or initiatives to support the program.

Elizabeth Reardon
VCAL Manager

Compass School Manager
The school uses a product called Compass School Manager to automate a number of administrative processes. Using our parent portal you will be able to:
- View up-to-date class and school attendance information
- Approve or enter upcoming or past absences for your son/daughter
- Download, print and approve upcoming excursions
- Access information regarding upcoming events and news
- Access your child’s progress reports
- Book your Parent/Student/Teacher conferences

A letter explaining how to access Compass School Manager and login details has been sent to all families.

How to access the SAC/SAT Dates Calendar through Compass School Manager

Step 1. Login to Compass using your username and password which was sent to you via mail.

Step 2. Hover your cursor over the Star on the top toolbar (See picture below).

Step 3. Click on the SAC/SAT Dates menu.

Step 4. You will be asked for a username and password please enter (case sensitive) curric\parent as your username and Access1* as the password (See below).
Step 5. You will arrive at the below screen after you successfully log in. You can navigate through days.

VCE/VCAL Information Evening
Parents, guardians and students are invited to our annual VCE/VCAL Information Evening on Tuesday 17 February. The night will begin at 6.30pm and will provide an opportunity to meet with teachers for informal discussions. From 7.00pm the formal part of the evening will commence, with the Principal introducing staff including key personnel and mentors. This event is a great opportunity for you to learn more about the VCE, VCAL, College Policies and all of the differences between Swinburne and other education providers.

An event has been created on Compass Student Manager through which parents can RSVP to the event. We look forward to seeing you on the evening. We look forward to seeing you.

Hugh Glenn (VCE Manager)
Elizabeth Reardon (VCAL Manager)

Food for thought
Always have breakfast! Breakfast contributes to our general wellbeing, providing us with energy and part of our daily nutritional intake. Studies have found that students who skip breakfast have poorer cognitive functioning in the classroom such as difficulty paying attention (Shaw, 1998).

Eat your way to success! Certain foods have been found to boost brain functioning:

- Walnuts
- Blueberries
- Foods high in omega 3, such as salmon
- Broccoli
- Tomatoes
- Tumeric spic
- Celery

And always get a good night’s sleep! Adolescents need on average 9 ¼ hours of sleep a night. Make sure you have a sleep routine and stick to it! Avoid light-emitting devices, such as your computer or smartphone before going to bed. And never sleep in more than three hours on the weekend, which will make it harder to sleep on Sunday night.

Study Support is available in the library Monday to Thursday. We offer support with organisation, time management, SAC and exam preparation, comprehension and reading skills. If you would like some help or advice please drop in and see Rachel Baxendale or any of the Study Support staff.

Rachel Baxendale
Study Support Manager

Library Latest
A selection of new books just in:

- Rookie Yearbook 3 – 100% created by & for young women with content from Lorde and Sia
- Eleanor and Park – A novel to fall in love with as Eleanor and Park fall for each other
- 100 ideas that changed Fashion – see image below

TOP Shots Award
Congratulations to graduating student and emerging artist Tina Vlahos!

Tina has been selected out of hundreds of entries as a finalist in the 2014-15 TOP Shots award at Monash Gallery of Art.

TOP Shots is the MGA’s annual award and exhibition for the best photomedia work produced by Victorian students of Art, Studio Arts, Media and IB Visual Arts.
In Studio Arts Photography last year, Tina chose to examine different subcultures. In her ‘Cholas and Gangsters’ photographs, she used her friends as models and thoughtfully combined costume, gesture, lighting and suburban settings to convey her ideas.

Tina’s visual diary, along with other exhibition finalists, will be on display showing her progress from concept to final work and all the trials in between.

The exhibition runs from 4-29 March 2015 at MGA, 860 Ferntree Gully Rd, Wheelers Hill.

Below: ‘Card Girl’ from Cholas & Gangstas_Tina Vlahos

Our barista Patrick has been with us for over a year now and will always give you that coffee with a smile! He’s currently studying Design at Swinburne University.

Our business wouldn’t run without you so we will listen to what you want and be more than happy to get what you need. It's early days for us and I look forward to growing our customers and getting to know you all! If you have dietary difficulties and requirements, don't avoid us but come and have a chat and we are more than happy to find suitable foods and options for you. If you’re in the mood for something specific then feel free to come and place an order earlier and we can make it up for you. If you haven’t come to say hi then we look forward to seeing you soon!

Brooke and Patrick
The Café

Special Exam Arrangement Applications
Students may require Special Exam Arrangements due to a physical or psychological condition or for educational reasons.

VCAA have requested that applications for Special Exam Arrangements for Year 12 exams are submitted by Friday 1 March.

The appropriate documentation needs to be provided to the school so we can make an application for the required arrangements for the Year 12 exams. If a student is in Year 11 but doing a Year 12 subject an application will need to be prepared for that one study.

If you have any questions or think your child may need Special Exam Arrangements please contact Hugh Glenn (VCE Manager) or Anne Munro (Welfare Manager) as soon as possible so a timely application can be made.

Ann Munro
Welfare Manager
VET in School Program
VET classes have now commenced for the year. Most students have successfully attended their first class for the year. Attendance at VET programs is important as students are only allowed 4 absences per year without putting the completion of their course at risk. I remind all parents/guardians that the cut-off date for withdrawal from a VET class is 27 February 2015. VET in Schools has program costs that apply to all VET in Schools courses and withdrawals after the cut-off date will still incur these costs.

Gail Bailey
VET Manager

2015 Victorian Public Transport Student Concession Card and Student Pass Application Form
We would like to encourage all students who will need this concession card to travel on public transport to school for 2015 to complete the form and submit it to the general office before the end of the February. It would be greatly appreciated by the office staff if students did this sooner rather than later and not leave it to the last minute.

Change of Personal Details
We are currently working through the process of updating our database with personal details. If you have changed any information please forward the changes to our General Office staff, Florence, Gail or Judy.

Gail, Florence and Judy
General Office

Part-time Work Opportunity
McDonalds is visiting our school on Wednesday 18 February at from 10:00 am to 2:00pm to conduct interviews for entry positions at their outlets. A job with Maccas could lead to a career with them for promising candidates and they provide free training through their Certificate II and III courses in retail as well as Advanced Diplomas in Management. If you are interested, send an email to me by Monday 16 February on menon.gita.s@edumail.vic.gov.au and I will book an interview slot. Please make sure you mention the store location you prefer and have a resume ready.

Gita Menon
Assistant Year 12 Manager