

Welcome and thank you for coming.

I'll start our talk about going from Year 10 into 11 with a brief video—it was created a few years ago when we did have a Year 10 formal and my apologies to those of you who have seen it before but it does summarise quite nicely the key fundamentals of what this evening is about. It is available as well on the senior school section of our website, which also has links to our course guide, academic handbook and the application process for the Senior School Academic Scholarship, so if you haven't checked that page out I would encourage you to do so.

Play video <https://sec.act.edu.au/academic/senior-school/>

Most of the changes from Year 10 into 11 stem from the fact that for Year 11 and 12 students we deliver BSSS courses and then they in turn issue Certifications, including Senior Secondary Certificate, VET qualifications and the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank or ATAR. This all means that we abide by their policy and procedures and it does add a level of formality to academics in Years 11 and 12. In practice, it also means that students will have fewer classes, 6 per semester, and fewer mandatory courses than they did in Year 10, giving them more control over their learning. It's a really great opportunity for students who are ready to take more ownership of their learning and Mr Masters and others, including all those involved in setting up this evening's Career's expo, have been working with the Year 10s to help them develop a sense of where their learning can take them. Hopefully some of those conversations have been happening at home already, and the goal of tonight is to stimulate further discussion between families and with us.

**New Slide** Mr Masters has been busy with the career's expo today but he did ask me to draw your attention to two points

1. The Year 10 students have been completing future education and career pathways targeted lessons in their Personal Formation classes over the last term. Students have access to their own profile on the College Careers website [www.seccareers.com.au](http://www.seccareers.com.au) and this is where they have been completing activities to give them a better insight into possible career pathways for them. The different activities focus on how they learn best, their interests, their values, their skills, and their personality, and each activity generates a report that suggests possible career pathways suited to them based on their answers.

And

2. Next week students will complete their final future education and career pathways targeted lesson that will focus on them selecting a career pathway that they are interested in, and working backward to see the qualifications required to work in this industry, and then the possible subjects in year 11 and 12 that will be best aligned to work towards completing this qualification. The goal will be that by the end of the lesson, students will have a better understanding of the subjects they wish to select for year 11 that they can have discussions with their parent/s about.

**New Slide** Going back to the BSSS for a moment, along with timetable differences there are rules that we as a school have to abide by, and therefore that it's helpful for students and families to be aware of as well. For example, students who miss more than 10% of a class due to unexplained absence, or fail to submit at least 70% of their assessment without valid explanation, can't be awarded a point for that unit, what we refer to as V-grading or voiding the unit. Or, for another example, students who submit work late, if they can't provide documentation of illness or serious

misadventure, must be given a 5% penalty per day. We still can and do support students with special needs and in special circumstances, but we do require up-to-date documentation.

The BSSS also has a website that is quite helpful for students and families both to get oriented in the system as well as to drill down into the nitty gritty of, for example, how the ATAR is calculated, which I will touch upon later but for my sake and yours won't try to comprehensively explain this evening.

**New Slide** So the first main fork in the road is the choice between an ATAR compliant package, commonly referred to as a Tertiary Package, or a non-ATAR compliant package, commonly referred to as an Accredited package. There's also what amounts to somewhat of a middle-ground option in the Sports Academy but Mr Richardson will speak about that separately.

**New Slide** For the non-ATAR compliant (Accredited) Package, 17 points is needed for a Senior Secondary Certificate. This package can be and often is accompanied by an ASBA, that is an Australian School Based Apprenticeship that I know some students here are already engaged in, although that certainly isn't a requirement. Students can begin Year 11 with an ASBA already in place, or it can be set up during Year 11 or 12. That's typically 1 day per week at CIT and 1 day on the job site and we would drop from 6 to 5 classes to help manage workload. An Accredited package can include some Tertiary courses, for example if a student has an interest in being an electrician he might want a more rigorous level of Maths than Essential Maths and that's not a problem. If you are interested in an ASBA, please organise a time to speak with Mr Masters about that process.

Students who are engaged in an Accredited package, whether undertaking an ASBA or not, if they meet their responsibilities, should earn 17 points by the end of Semester 1 of Year 12 and many go on Extended Work Experience after the census date, typically Week 3 of Term 3. Therefore, an Accredited package has a lot of flexibility to support students to transition from classroom-based learning to the workforce when they're ready, and especially if they'll be ready sooner rather than later. It's also a very good option for students who haven't necessarily experienced consistent academic success in the lead up to their senior study. Grades aren't everything or the only thing, but students need to feel that with good solid effort good results are achievable and Accredited units are designed with that notion in mind.

It is worth being mindful that engaging in an Accredited package doesn't preclude students from university. There are bridging courses out there, for example UC Connect, that are designed specifically for students who thought that they wouldn't, but decide later that they do have interest in university. It can in fact be the academic success that students find in their accredited courses, or the realisation having dipped their toes into the workforce that a uni degree does offer a pathway that they'd like to pursue, that leads students to university in the end.

**New Slide** ATAR-compliant or Tertiary packages are also a great option. Tertiary courses are more academically rigorous than Accredited with assignment length, complexity and achievement standards designed to prepare students for university.

Typically for students who are going into a Tertiary package we recommend 5 T and one A course. For ATAR calculations students will utilise 4 Tertiary course scores and three of those must be a majors, a major being a course studied for four semesters, a minor being a course studied for a two semesters. A student's three best major scores each weighted equally, plus either the fourth best major course score, or a minor course score, whichever is higher, is also included but is weighted at .6 relative to the other three. Doing 5 Tertiary courses in Year 11 means that if one of those courses doesn't go as well as the others it doesn't need to be factored into the ATAR calculation and gives more flexibility if students want to make changes going into Year 12. Doing 6 Tertiary classes is okay, but there is a

higher workload to that without a great deal of practical benefit. Doing 4 Tertiary and 2 Accredited can also work, but it can potentially lead to less flexibility if changes are desired going into Year 12.

**New Slide** We do use language with our senior Tertiary students related to ATAR calculation reasonably frequently, especially the terms scaling, parameters and z-scores, that are worth being familiar with. Scaling is how we compare raw scores from different courses. For example, we use scaling to compare a raw score of 65 earned in a Physics to a raw score of 65 in English. Firstly, students need to understand where that 65 places them in the scaling group. A z-score of 0 means that their score is the same as the group mean and that they're right in the middle of the pack. A Z-score of 1.0, for example, means that they're one standard deviation above the mean.

So assessment results create a ranking for each student within a scaling group, a scaling group being a collection of courses that we group together. We group courses together as standardisation doesn't work well when there are too few students. Then we have to establish parameters to compare the scaling groups to one another. We use data from a trial AST that Tertiary students will sit towards the beginning of Year 11, plus additional data such as common tasks and meshing tests, to establish these parameters. It is worth noting that in terms of final scaling the parameters that we use are essentially just placeholders that are overwritten by the students results in the actual ACT Scaling Test, or AST for short, and that's what makes that test so important. We don't have the HSC like New South Wales as our system is designed to prioritise two years of course work over a couple of weeks of high stakes testing. That being said, the AST does have a strong bearing on the final ATAR. In Year 12, ATAR seeking students will use their Elevated Learning class time in preparation for the AST and they'll also have the opportunity to do supplementary preparation, which typically has run before school once a week. This year it's on a Thursday morning.

**New Slide** The key takeaways from all of this are that raw scores across classes aren't comparable. Seeing this, students can get the impression that a course like Physics scales well. That's not wrong exactly, but it's more precise to say that students who choose a course like Physics tend to perform well on tests like the AST. Looking at the data from the 3 Maths courses. We see that yes, being in the middle of the Specialists Maths course contributed a higher scaled score than being in the middle of Maths Methods or Apps. But, we can also see that more than half of the students in Methods performed better than the lowest performers in Specialists, and more than half of the Apps students performed better than the lowest performers in Methods. At the other end, the best performer in Apps scored higher than the median score in Methods, and the same again for the best performer in Methods performing better than the Specialists median score. These students likely had a much better learning experience, and certainly would have achieved more pleasing grades, than a student who might be overwhelmed going into a course that they're not fully prepared for. On the other hand, a student who was really capable in Maths could potentially cruise to a good grade in Apps, but that wouldn't contribute as much to his ATAR as if he pushed himself and worked to the top of the group in Methods or Specialists.

**New Slide** I used Maths as my example here as it is one discipline where there are distinct levels of difficulty for the courses to make a point about scaling more generally, but in terms of Maths specifically we will provide advice as to which Maths course to choose, and if a student does want a maths course higher than their recommendation we will provide bridging work that a student can complete.

Broadly, however, challenging courses that bring out the best in you are your best path to maximising your ATAR, plus your best path to a good learning experience. The balance will be different for each student in the room. Speak to your teachers and head of faculty here this evening to help you

understand how to find your sweet spot. If you do want to unlock you're highest possible ATAR, you need to work to your very best. Your work will put you in position relative to your cohort and your course work and your AST will set the upper limit for your ATAR.

**New Slide** That is about all from me. Mr Richardson will say a few words about the Sports Academy and then we'll invite you to mingle with and ask any questions you might have to me or our Heads of Faculty or our student leaders Dev, Damian and Hamish who were kind enough to stick around after the Expo to offer a student's perspective. Last thing from me then is about the upcoming interviews. There was a bit of a snafu with the email but you should have received an email with instructions about nominating times for the 10 into 11 interview. Please go onto the Eddies Dashboard and nominate a preferred meeting time for the 19<sup>th</sup> of June, or let us know if you can't make that date, and we'll organise and send confirmation of your appointment. If you can do that by the end of this week—that would help us with our organisation for the day. As a note, there won't be Year 10 classes on the day but students definitely need to attend the meetings and should be in uniform. You'll have the opportunity to discuss further your son's goals and different pathways they might be considering, as well as go through some of the differences between Year 10 and 11 in terms of expectations, but for parents and students please don't hesitate to ask any questions of us in the meantime.