

Achieving Success in Year 11

Below is an edited version of a speech that Jessica Grech gave to year 11 students and their parents at the year 11 information night in 2013.

1. **Organisation, planning and time management** are vital in all aspects of Year 11:
 - Use your diary – it has excellent guides on how to be organized and manage your time.
 - Create weekly study timetables to map out when you will dedicate time to schoolwork and commitments outside of school.
 - Write prioritized lists of the tasks you need to complete – this is something I do all the time and I find it effective.
 - Try not to leave things to the last minute – this is definitely difficult to master, especially when everything is due around the same time. Get ahead to avoid unnecessary stress.
 - Be realistic – plan what you know you are capable of, and only challenge yourself to the stage where you know you can cope.
 - Set goals – have a long-term goal and create short-term goals that will lead up to it in the most beneficial manner.

2. **With homework, assignments and study...**
 - Keep your study notes up to date – a good way to do this is to add to your notes each night. You will be surprised as to how fast the year will pass, and it is very easy to fall behind, so do your best to keep up to date with all schoolwork.
 - Don't 'cram' before exams – it only stresses you out more. Start your study pattern early so you don't find yourself cramming a term's worth of notes a week before an exam.
 - Never throw out your assignments or exams – refer back to them to make the most of your next task and improve on what you did wrong.

3. **In class...**
 - Hand in practice questions regularly – go beyond the basic requirements, and hand in your own work that hasn't been set by your teacher. Sometimes you will find yourself tempted to take the easy way out, but your dedication is worth it in the end.
 - Take notes as your teacher is talking, because everything is beneficial to you – if you can't write fast enough as they speak...learn to write faster – it's all part of the experience.
 - Record all homework, and write down what your classmates have to say, because you will forget, even if you think you won't.

4. **To overcome challenges...**
 - I cannot stress how important it is to talk to your teachers – even if you think you are annoying them, talk to them – stay back after class, ask questions, take their advice, and accept their support. Don't let things get to the point of constant stress – ask for help when you need it, which is something I learnt the hard way. Your teachers wouldn't be here tonight if they didn't want to support you.
 - Support each other through all moments. Help will always be there when you ask for it.

5. **Creating balance in your life** will help you to both focus on your education and enjoy life outside of school:
 - Make time for leisure – it is important to take time out for yourself, and you need to establish an equal balance between the school, social, and family dimensions of your life.

6. **Make the most of senior school:**

- Take opportunities as they present themselves and have fun, but at the same time make sure you can cope with the workload.
- Always have a positive attitude when you enter class – a good frame of mind will help you get through things with less stress and you will enjoy what you are doing more.

7. **And for parents...**

- Us senior students need as much support and understanding as we can get to overcome new challenges. Be mindful of your child's workload – ask questions about how your child is going, and if needs be, give them a little push when they procrastinate.
- Encouragement, guidance and sometimes even a challenge is what we need to be our best – sometimes you know us better than we know ourselves, and it helps to hear your opinions.
- Spend time with your child – don't let them coop themselves up in their study routine all the time – that's what I do and my mum always tries to get me to do things around the house to take my mind off things. Although, it is important to spend quite a lot of time on weeknights and weekends studying because the workload is much higher.
- Ensure your child gets enough sleep and eats well; otherwise they won't concentrate as easily.

There will definitely be times when you feel like throwing in the towel, but your teachers, Mr Lidscombe and your parents are here for you. Learn from your mistakes – Year 11 is the time to make mistakes and always take into account the feedback you receive from teachers – this will help you attain a successful learning path in Year 12.

Senior school is about seeking out the things you know you are good at, and the things that you want to try or be challenged by to succeed. So enjoy it – you only have one shot, and you don't want any regrets. At the end of the day, all your hard work and dedication will be worth it.

Be proud of your achievements – they will encourage you to achieve further. Year 11 is going to be a year of surprise – for example, I received Dux of Year 11, and that was the last thing that I expected after the events I experienced.

I'd like to leave you with a quote that Mr Zakris left for Year 12 this year – “Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land amongst the stars” – always try your best and you will be rewarded for it. I wish you all the best for your senior studies, and I hope that you all achieve your own personal success. Thank you.

Jesscia Grech

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