

ST CATHERINE'S SCHOOL

ACHIEVEMENTS



Sydney

CLASS OF 2024

THE CLASS OF 2024: LEADERS WITH HEART

Courage to lead with conviction and a heart to serve with humility will enable our students to make a meaningful difference. As the Class of 2024 stands at the brink of adulthood, we know they face a world full of both challenges and opportunities.

All we can do is hope that the lessons and values we have taught them will equip them well for the journey ahead. As our girls embrace life, nurturing their passions and building strong relationships, we encourage them to carry forward our new tagline: “Courage to Lead, Heart to Serve.” This simple yet powerful principle will be key to not only navigating the road ahead but thriving in it.

Every day, our students have witnessed authentic leadership from staff, parents and their peers. They’ve learned that true leadership requires courage — the strength to stand up for what is right, even when it’s difficult or unpopular. It means making tough decisions that prioritise the greater good over personal comfort.

Courage in leadership isn’t always about grand gestures. It might be speaking out against injustice or owning up to mistakes when it’s easier to shift the blame. Each act of integrity builds trust and respect. Courage doesn’t mean the absence of fear but the resolve to act in spite of it. To the Class of 2024, I urge you to embrace life’s uncertainties and challenges with this spirit. True leaders inspire others by pushing through doubt and showing what’s possible.

But courage alone is not enough. To lead effectively, you also need a heart to serve. This means prioritising the wellbeing of others and using your leadership to uplift those around you. Service is about empathy, kindness, and a genuine desire to make a positive impact. Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai beautifully captured this sentiment when she said, “When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful.” Her advocacy for

girls’ education in the face of extreme adversity highlights the profound impact of leading with a heart to serve. It’s about listening to the needs of others, understanding their struggles and working towards solutions that benefit everyone.

A heart to serve involves creating environments where others feel valued and empowered. It’s about finding ways to contribute positively, whether through small acts of kindness or larger commitments to causes you believe in.

Think of the many unsung heroes in our communities — nurses, social workers, soup kitchen volunteers — whose quiet dedication leaves a lasting impact on the world.

As the Class of 2024 prepares to take the next steps in life, whether it’s higher education, a gap year, or exploring other opportunities, remember that both courage and service are crucial. They are not mutually exclusive but complementary. Courage to lead with conviction and a heart to serve with humility will enable you to make a meaningful difference in

your communities and beyond.

Each student in the Class of 2024 began the year with a challenge, a goal that she hoped to achieve by the end of the Higher School Certificate (HSC). Now as we stand at the end of that journey, we hope that each one of you feels incredibly proud of what you achieved — I know that we are!

Mrs Judith Poole
Headmistress

“
Service is about
empathy, kindness,
and a genuine desire
to make a
positive impact.”



OUR 2024 HSC RESULTS



2024 TOP ATAR

ATAR: 99.6

Sylvia Rothwell



ATAR ABOVE

99.00

7 students



SMH STATE

SUBJECT RANKING

2nd in English Studies, English EAL/D
and English Standard



ATAR OF 90

AND ABOVE

46.9% of students



CREATIVE ACCEPTANCES

& NOMINATIONS

22 nominations and 4 selections



STUDENTS WHO ACHIEVED

ATAR ABOVE 80

74.2% of students



SMH STATE

RANKING

24th in New South Wales



PROXIME ACCESSIT

ATAR: 99.55

Lauren Griffiths



ALL ROUNDERS

90+ IN AT LEAST 10 UNITS

11 students

WONDERFUL ACHIEVEMENTS ALL ROUND

We teach our girls that there's nothing they can't achieve when they set their minds to it. The outstanding results achieved by the Class of 2024 are truly a testament to the power of hard work.

The 2024 Year 12 cohort has excelled in the HSC, showcasing exceptional academic achievements and embodying the spirit of dedication and perseverance. This remarkable group of young women has demonstrated excellence across a range of disciplines, with standout performances from both high achievers and those who have reached personal milestones.

This cohort demonstrated a strong sense of collaboration, coming together to support each other's successes. Their collective effort resulted in 109 students out of 129 achieving marks above 90 in at least one subject. Furthermore, an impressive 46.9% of students achieved an ATAR above 90, surpassing the NSW state average of 17.8%. As a cohort, our students were ranked 24th in the state by the Sydney Morning Herald. The publication also ranked us seventh in English (Advanced), Ext 1 and Ext 2 and second in English Studies, English EAL/D and English Standard.

There are several students who deserve special acknowledgement for their hard work. We congratulate Sylvia Rothwell, our top ATAR recipient, Lauren Griffith, our Proxime Accessit, and the five other girls who received an ATAR over 99 — Victoria Phonniwat-Funge, Annika Pearse, Anastasia Nguyen, Scarlett Edyvean and Julia Mallam. Congratulations also to our 11 All Rounders — Scarlett Edyvean, Lauren Griffiths, Holly Lewis, Yixuan Liu, Julia Mallam, Madeleine Manins, Sophia

Martin, Annika Pearse, Misia Podgornik, Ava Pudney and Sylvia Rothwell — who all achieved marks above 90 in at least 10 units of study. As a school that encourages students to pursue their passions, it is inspiring to see these students thrive across a diverse range of subjects. We also congratulate Victoria Phonniwat-Funge who was recognised among the top-performing students in the state in both English Advanced and English Extension 1. Given the thousands of students who sit the HSC each year, the achievements of these students are nothing short of remarkable.

Our creative students also excelled this year, earning 22 separate nominations for state-wide showcases across Drama, Design and Technology, Music and Visual Arts. We are especially proud of the four students who were selected to appear in these prestigious showcases: Sophia Markovic, Lola Scotts, Ruby Simmonds and Eleanor Yang. Again, to be selected from thousands of students across the state is an incredible achievement that the girls should feel very proud of.

In sport, our students represented the school with pride in state, national and international competitions in everything from Rowing to Tennis and Water Polo.

Overall, we congratulate the Class of 2024 cohort on their results. They are a testament to hard work, resilience and talent. Congratulations on your incredible success — we could not be prouder!

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

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- 60 students received an ATAR above 90.
- 11 students received a 90+ in at least six units of study.
- 7 students received an ATAR over 99.
- Victoria Phonniwat-Funge ranked eighth in the state in English. Advanced and 10th in the state in English Extension 1.
- A Median ATAR of 89.32 compared with a NSW median ATAR of 71.55.
- 46.9% of students achieved an ATAR above 90, compared with 17.8% across NSW.
- 74.2% of students achieved an ATAR above 80, compared with 35.50% across NSW.
- 22 creative showcase nominations and four selections across six separate subjects.
- Jasmine Abela, Leila Gaston, Madeleine Manins, Madeleine Swain and Bianca Rupnik Williams, raced at the Henley Royal Regatta.
- Chelsea Isaac represented Australia at the World Aquatics Water Polo Championships.



2024 HIGHEST ATAR



SYLVIA ROTHWELL
ATAR: 99.60

Q. What achievement are you most proud of this year?

A. I'm proud of how I worked to get to my last exam. My exam block was very drawn out so by the end I could feel myself getting a bit burnt out and my emotions were crashing all over the place. I'm really proud of myself for pushing through and doing my best. I had my expectations when it came to my results, so to surpass them was incredible. I think I was in shock at first and then elated.

Q. What has been your family's response to your result?

A. There was definitely a little bit of crying and hugging. It was surreal. My family were very happy and proud, which meant so much as they have been incredibly supportive the entire year. They have

been by my side for the whole journey so it was wonderful to be able to share my results with them.

Q. How important do you think it is for students to find a study-life balance?

A. It is so important to have a balance. I probably got halfway through the HSC without it and I had to take a step back to focus on my life. I found that by doing that, I was able to study more effectively. Just hanging out with friends and making memories is so important in a year of so many milestone moments. I'm really glad that I prioritised that and now have amazing memories to look back on.

Q. What advice would you share with students beginning their HSC journey?

A. I would say just take it slow and enjoy the process. There will be a lot of ups and downs throughout the year, but don't forget the finish line. It truly is a marathon. But it's important to remember

that so many people have gone before you, and so many will do it after you, so make sure you take the time to enjoy the moment. The HSC is undeniably stressful but just try to have fun – that's the best way to get through.

Q. What is the most important lesson that you've learned at St Cath's?

A. I would say that the most important lesson that I learned is to prioritise your community. This is a place to learn, but it's also a place to meet new people and form connections. When I remember my time at St Cath's, it won't be marks or assessments that I remember, it's going to be those moments with my friends. St Cath's taught me what it means to have a community and a support network. St Cath's is an incredible school and I'm just so proud of everyone in my cohort. Everyone's results were just incredible and I'm so proud of all of us!

Q. What are your career aspirations and what steps are you taking toward these?

A. I'm planning to go down an engineering path, ending up as either a mechatronics engineer or a biomedical engineer. The ultimate dream is to be designing things with my own firm. Next year, I will be going to UNSW to do a Bachelor of Mechatronics Engineering (Honours) and a Masters in Biomedical Engineering.

GETTING TO KNOW SYLVIA

Sylvia joined St Cath's in Year 7 and became an integral member of our Robotics Club. She was a regular competitor at the FIRST Robotics competition and was STEM Captain in Year 12. Sylvia also participated in music, playing in our Symphonic Winds ensemble.



LAUREN GRIFFITHS
PROXIME ACCESSIT
 ATAR: 99.55

Q. How did you prepare for Year 12?

A. I completed the accelerant Mathematics course in Year 11, so I was able to do Advanced and Extension 1 Mathematics a year earlier. I get quite nervous before exams so doing the accelerant course was a really amazing opportunity for me to experience the HSC system earlier and understand it. I was able to get into good study habits and set out what I wanted to achieve much earlier, which was really helpful. It also allowed me to focus on my other subjects in Year 12.

Q. What motivated you throughout your Year 12 journey?

A. I really enjoy learning and school so I had a drive to do well. My teachers made me want to do better and work harder. They saw the potential I had and saw I was interested in certain subjects and they really nurtured this. They made me want to learn more about all my subjects. At the beginning of the year, I set out goals for myself and I just wanted to achieve them. I was planning and preparing for the final HSC day from the beginning.

Q. What advice would you share with students beginning their HSC journey?

A. I'd suggest that they spend time learning about themselves. By doing

that, they will be able to work out what they need to do in order to get through Year 12. Also, remember that everyone is here to help you and guide you. Rely on the people around you and let them support you. Year 12 can be a difficult time but everyone just wants you to do your best.

GETTING TO KNOW LAUREN

Lauren joined St Cath's in Kindergarten and was part of the 2024 Prefect leadership team. She's also represented the school in everything from Athletics to Water Polo. A proud member of Casterton house, Lauren was the 2024 compère at Clubs and Choirs. She was awarded The St Catherine's Foundation Prize for the Best All-Rounder in Year 12, as well as prizes for General Achievement and Studies of Religion 1.



BOBBIE LEE DEBUS
 ATAR: 98.85

Q. What is the most important lesson you've learned at St Cath's?

A. It's really easy to fall into the habit of thinking that hard work always leads to success. But St Cath's taught me how to get up again after you work hard and still fail. Learning to get over those hurdles helped me grow as a person.

Q. What are your career aspirations and what steps are you taking toward these?

A. I really want to study overseas, so I'm hoping to study English, Philosophy and Science in either the UK or France so I can continue my French. I've been accepted to the University of St Andrews and The University of Edinburgh and I'm interviewing at the University of Oxford.



LEILA GASTON
 ATAR: 87.45

Q. What achievement are you most proud of this year?

A. I'm most proud of winning three gold medals at the Australian Rowing Championships. We had worked so hard all year together. Everyone had put in so much effort, time and dedication, so finally achieving that goal with a team you've gone through all the highs and lows with was such an amazing moment.

Q. What are your plans for life after St Cath's?

A. I've been recruited to row with the University of Texas, which is such an amazing opportunity. It's such an amazing feeling knowing that I am going to the best Rowing program in America and can continue my studies at such a high-level school. It is such an accomplishment and I'm so grateful to everyone who helped me reach this goal.







ANNIKA PEARSE
ATAR: 99.3

Q. What was key to achieving your excellent results?

A. I knew it was going to be a tough year, but mentally I just prepared myself to do my absolute best. I knew at the end of the day, whatever I achieved, if I tried my hardest then I couldn't have changed anything, I couldn't have put in more effort than I did. I wanted to make sure I didn't finish the year with regret that I should have done more than I did. I didn't start the year aiming to be Dux. In fact, I was so overwhelmed when I found out I was Dux because I wasn't expecting it at all.

Q. What do you think you will remember most about St Cath's?

A. I will remember the relationships for sure. You come to school and get to see all these people that make your day. It just means so much having that support system around you. You're with the same friends throughout your whole six years of high school. You build really close relationships with your teachers as well. I could always go to them to get help and to look at things in a new way.

Q. How important do you think it is for students to find a study-life balance?

A. Obviously, I did spend a lot of my time studying, but it wasn't the only aspect in my life. I made sure to keep up with

my social life and do physical activity because, without it, that's just a one-way ticket to being drained and burning out.

Q. What did you learn about yourself throughout your time at St Cath's?

A. I learned that I am capable of more than I give myself credit for. At this school, I've learned not only to have faith in myself but also to aim higher and push myself beyond my comfort zone.



HOLLY BOWES
ATAR: 98.6

Q. What motivated you throughout your Year 12 journey?

A. Just knowing that I only had one chance at this year, so no matter what I had to give it my all. The idea that I couldn't retry or get another shot really inspired me to keep going and keep pushing through even when it got tough and when it seemed like the year would never end.

Q. What does it mean to you to be a St Cath's girl?

A. To be a St Cath's girl means an opportunity to be part of a warm and welcoming community. To learn beyond the classroom and gain new skills, to be challenged and pushed to achieve your best, all while building lifelong friendships that will extend beyond the four walls of St Cath's, out into the world.



SOPHIA MARKOVIC
ATAR: 80.9

Q. What achievement are you most proud of this year?

A. My proudest moment was my final HSC performance, where I was able to implement the feedback I had gained from my trial exams to improve on the technical aspects of my pieces. Working with a live band was an incredible aspect of this experience that taught me the intricacies of building a piece with an ensemble that I will take into my tertiary studies of Music.

Q. What is the most important lesson you've learned at St Cath's?

A. I learned to appreciate the work that goes into performance, composition and musicology. This year, music was both a creative outlet and a challenge for me.

GETTING TO KNOW SOPHIA

Sophia joined St Cath's in Year 5 and quickly captivated audiences with her musical talent. As a dedicated member of the Senior Choir, Chapel Band and Chamber Strings, she has also starred in numerous productions. In 2023, Sophia won the prestigious Singer of the Year award at the Sydney Eisteddfod. In 2024, she was named Music Captain and was selected for the ENCORE showcase.



HAYLEY PADDOCK
ATAR: 80.7

Q. What is the most important lesson you have learned at St Cath's?

A. The most important lesson that I learned is that it is OK to ask for help. I used to think that I could carry everything on my own plate and if I wasn't doing it myself I wasn't truly working hard. However, I came to realise that there are so many people who are looking out for me at school. Asking for help is what allowed me to do my best and achieve my goals.

Q. How important do you think it is for students to find a study-life balance?

A: It is extremely important to figure out a good balance between study and free time, as overworking can lead to burnout which is the last thing you want during such a busy year. Creating a schedule to block in time for both comes in really handy during Year 12 and allows you to maximise both study and free time.

Q. What advice would you share with students beginning their HSC journey?

A: I would suggest that they find a balance between school and life, as well as maintaining a support network, which is what truly helped me throughout Year 12. I'd also suggest spending time at the Research Centre with friends, which helped me. We would be there to lift each other up when we were feeling stressed and motivate each other to study harder.

Q. What does it mean to you to be a St Cath's girl?

A. Being a St Cath's girl means being there for others. Everyone is going through the school journey together and it is important to be there for everyone, no matter what year group or leadership position you are in. Being a St Cath's girl doesn't only mean you are a student, but it also means you are a part of a larger family and community, so it is important to lift everyone up together.



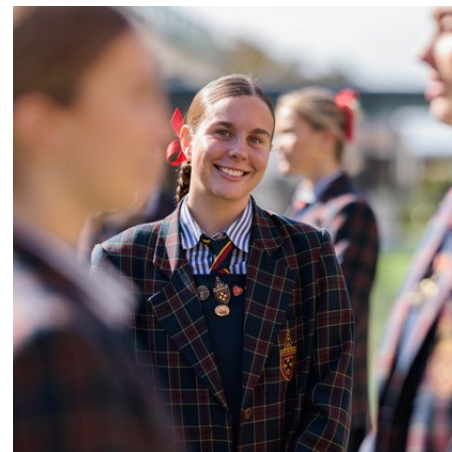
ARIEL VIVIAN
ATAR: 98.5

Q. How did your teachers help you to achieve your goals this year?

A. My teachers really made me want to study their subjects more. They helped me see how I was doing and how I could improve. I'm especially thankful for Mr Campbell, my academic mentor. Whenever I was struggling, I could always go talk to him. It was really helpful to have that extra support.

Q. What are your plans for next year?

A. I'm taking a gap year next year to avoid burnout before university. I'll live in Paris and work as an English assistant at the school St Cath's partners with for French exchange (Notre Dame Sainte-Croix). I've received early entry to ANU and will study a Bachelor of Neuroscience, Psychology and Philosophy on an academic scholarship.



ELODIE JEWELL
ATAR: 86.1

Q. What motivated you throughout your Year 12 journey?

A. I didn't start the year aiming to get a certain mark. I just wanted to work my hardest and see what I could achieve from that. I wanted to make my parents proud of how much effort I put in.

Q. What is the most important lesson you have learned at St Cath's?

A. I learned that marks don't define you, it's about how much effort you put in. If you don't do as well as expected, obviously you get down about it, but there's nothing you can do to change it. Instead, I learned to get straight back to it and work towards how to improve for next time.

GETTING TO KNOW ELODIE

During her six years at St Cath's, Elodie immersed herself in a wide range of cocurricular activities, including Dance Company and Concert Band. However, it was in the pool where she truly excelled. Elodie worked hard to balance her studies with her achievements as a state swimmer, earning the title of Senior Swimming Champion in 2024. She also taught swimming lessons as part of our Learn to Swim program.



CREATIVE EXCELLENCE AT CATH'S

The Class of 2024 excelled creatively as a year group. Undertaking a major work is no small feat, yet these students embraced the challenge of bringing their ideas to life, setting aside everything else to focus on seeing their projects through to completion.

Across a range of separate subjects — English Extension 2, Drama, Design and Technology, Music 1, Music 2 and Music Extension, Textiles and Design and Visual Arts — our girls dedicated hundreds of hours of hard work to create projects of a professional standard. It wasn't always an easy road; there were many tears, mistakes and days they just wanted to give up. But they persevered and emerged from the other side to present their masterpieces to the world.

In August, we hosted a series of showcases to allow students the chance to share their work with our school community. From performances about the unsung heroes of World War II and Alabama sororities in Drama to original ensemble compositions in Music, sensory study pods and red carpet gowns in Technologies and works exploring ecological destruction and cultural displacement in Visual Arts, the standard of work produced by our students across the board was exemplary.

This talent was also recognised beyond the gates of St Cath's. This year, the Class of 2024 achieved a record 22 nominations and four selections for state-wide creative showcases.

Having so many students acknowledged from a single cohort is a rare accomplishment, and the students should be immensely proud of their achievements.

Highlights include Lola Scott's selection for the prestigious SHAPE showcase as part of our inaugural Textiles and Design cohort. We are thrilled to see Lola's dedication pay off. Another standout was Abby Johnston's nomination for the ENCORE showcase for her bluegrass Music 1 composition. Abby's nomination is particularly inspiring, as she only started studying Music in Year 11, where she also learned to read music for the first time.

We were also delighted to learn that Ashleigh Wong had received a nomination for the Young Writers Showcase for her English Extension 2 project, *Mourning Sickness*. Being shortlisted for this event, which forms part of the Sydney Writers' Festival, is an incredible honour.

Finally, there were two students in the Class of 2024 cohort who were nominated for multiple showcases: Chloe Smith and Sophia Markovic. To be shortlisted for one showcase is a huge achievement, so receiving multiple nominations is nothing short of remarkable. If that wasn't impressive enough, Sophia was one of our four students selected to appear in a state-wide showcase. She will perform on the Opera House stage in 2025 as part of the ENCORE concert, an extraordinary accomplishment that fills us with pride.

We extend this sense of pride to each and every one of our creative students for their phenomenal efforts this year. We are so proud of you for dedicating yourself to your crafts and pushing through the difficult times to create something truly beautiful. We hope you carry these skills with you into the future and we look forward to seeing how you continue to use your exceptional talents.

CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

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ArtEXPRESS

- Francesca Betts
- Claudia McIntosh
- Ruby Simmonds (selected)
- Eleanor Yang (selected)

ENCORE

- Marni Beville
- Abby Johnston
- Sophia Markovic (selected)
- Ava Pudney

OnSTAGE (Group)

- Scarlett Edyvean
- Mia Irvin
- Sienna Julian
- Madeleine Miller
- Willow Pratley

OnSTAGE (Individual)

- Taya Cohen
- Mia Irvin
- Sienna Julian
- Audrey Kitchen
- Sophia Markovic
- Madeleine Miller
- Willow Pratley
- Gina Schubach
- Cate Small
- Chloe Smith

SHAPE

- Chloe Smith
- Lola Scotts (selected)

Young Writers

- Ashleigh Wong



Ruby Simmonds
ArtEXPRESS

"My work is a collection of watercolour and graphite pencil pieces, inspired by the fond memories I have of growing up in Singapore, alongside the beauty of the countries we were fortunate enough to travel to throughout Asia. It is the remembrance of these moments, these days in the sun, that shine enough light to bring me right back to myself, even in the darkest of times. For me, the hardest part of creating my practical body of work was overcoming my perfectionism and self-critique. By taking the pressure off myself, I was able to rediscover the endless joy of the making process once again."



perform; an upbeat pop song accompanied by a band, two ballads and a jazz rendition of a Beatles song. I was very shocked and extremely grateful to learn that my work had been nominated. I was especially excited to tell my singing tutor who has worked so hard to help me achieve my results. It also really gave me such a boost in my confidence when singing in front of people."

Abby Johnston
ENCORE

"I wrote a composition inspired by the bluegrass genre, featuring violin, cello and piano. The inspiration for my work came from a conversation I had with my teacher about bluegrass, where I saw the potential to create something unique by blending traditional elements with some modern twists. Composing was completely new to me as I only started studying Music in Year 11 and couldn't read music before then. So this composition came together through a lot of research, experimentation and trial and error. There were definitely moments of frustration, but through constant revision and tweaking, I was able to refine it until it felt right. When I learned my work had been nominated, I was absolutely full of excitement. I was thrilled to know that others enjoyed listening to it as much as I loved working on it."

Sienna Jullian
OnSTAGE

"I was completely overwhelmed when I learned that both my individual and group performances for Drama had been nominated for OnSTAGE. My individual project was quite explicit on covering themes of grief, loss, desire and complex relationships. It was a challenge to find the right amount of authenticity to balance with the dramatics of the script. But after weeks of practice and support from my Drama teachers, I learned to improvise with the material and be free on stage to create the best performance possible. My group project was based on the *James Bond* franchise, where we created five female lead characters to portray the complexities of feminist ideologies that are not mentioned in male-led films. I'm especially proud of our script as it took a lot of hard work to pull it off."

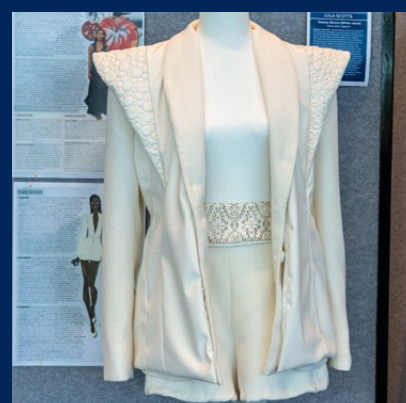
Marni Beville
ENCORE

"To prepare my pieces, I spent a good amount of time with my singing tutor who really helped guide and encourage me vocally. My Music teachers were also a great support, providing compassionate help through all the decisions that were made. I listen to music from various genres, so I found it difficult when it came time to pick songs for my final performance. But my Music teacher, Mr Martina, reminded me about the 'paradox of choice' and the importance of committing to our choices, which ended up being extremely helpful. I chose four songs to



Lola Scotts
SHAPE

"My major Textiles project was a four-piece ensemble with a sophisticated blazer, tailored shorts, a fitted vest and a laser cut belt. I am very proud of my whole project and how well it cohesively works together, but the circular embroidery across the shoulder panels of the vest and sides of the shorts is probably my favourite component, not just because it took me so much time to hand sew each individual circle perfectly but because of how they provide both visual and tactile texture to the garment."







SCARLETT EDYVEAN
ATAR: 99.05

Q. What motivated you throughout your Year 12 journey?

A. The main thing that motivated me was wanting to do my best not only for myself, but for all the people around me who have invested so much time and energy into my education.

Q. What achievement are you most proud of this year?

A. The achievement that I'm most proud of was coming first in the Economics course. Economics is my favourite subject, so placing first in that course was a goal that I set for myself in Year 11 and I directed a lot of focus and time into achieving it. While I'm not entirely sure what I want to do in the future, I'm planning to study a double degree in Law and Commerce next year, so placing first in Economics sets me up well for that.

Q. What has been your family's response to your results?

A. My family were definitely both proud and happy for me, as they knew the amount of work that I had put in for over two years to achieve these results. But in a way, it was also their hard work that had paid off as well. I wouldn't have been able to achieve any of this without their constant support and guidance. I'm so incredibly grateful for my family.

Q. How important do you think it is for students to find a study-life balance?

A. The best way I found to achieve balance was by participating in regular cocurricular activities and making time for friends. While it was difficult to maintain this balance, especially during exams, I think it's vital for managing Year 12 and achieving the best results.

GETTING TO KNOW SCARLETT

Scarlett joined St Cath's in Kindergarten, quickly embracing all our school has to offer. She was part of our Water Polo, Football and Dance teams and also found time to star in multiple dramatic productions. Scarlett was Phillips House Captain as part of our 2024 Prefect leadership team. She was awarded The Margaret Ashton Prize for Outstanding Achievement Throughout her School Career.



ELEANOR YANG
ATAR: 85.5

Q. What was key to achieving your results?

A. Getting through the HSC was something I had been fearful of for many years. But by enjoying my subjects and the occasional video of *Animal Crossing* characters while studying in cafes, I was able to achieve my results. This

approach helped me get selected for ArtEXPRESS, which I'm so proud of.

Q. What is the most important lesson you've learned at St Cath's?

A. It might sound a bit cliché, but the most important lesson that I have learned at St Cath's is that the friendships and relationships you have and the environment you are in during school are so valuable and make such a difference.



TAYA COHEN
ATAR: 93.4

Q. How important do you think it is for students to find a study-life balance?

A. It is so important to have a balance. I danced three times a week, played Soccer twice a week and spent time with friends. I feel like you need to live your life rather than studying 24 hours a day. Studying takes up a lot of brain power, so you need to give yourself a break.

Q. How did your teachers help you to achieve your goals this year?

A. Our teachers were always positive, no matter what the results were. They would encourage us to think about how we could do better next time, rather than focusing on the past. They were just so supportive throughout the whole HSC journey. I always knew that I could talk to my teachers and ask for help if I felt like I was struggling at any point.



LUCINDA ISLES
ATAR: 96.05

Q. What was key to achieving your excellent results?

A. I was driven by fulfilling the goals I had set for myself throughout the year and becoming a role model for my younger sister. I was most proud that I came first in Chinese as it was very challenging and I worked really hard throughout the year. My family was shocked and proud of my result as initially I was not going to continue Chinese as a Year 11 subject. My mum encouraged me a lot along the way and was really proud of what I was able to achieve this year.

Q. What is the most important lesson you have learned at St Cath's?

A. The most important lesson I have learned is the power of working as a team and always having each other's backs including the girls in your year group you may not be as close to. Through working together with girls I didn't initially think I would become friends with, I was able to achieve marks I never thought I would, as well as really enjoy my last few years of high school.

Q. What advice would you share with students beginning their HSC journey?

A: My advice would be to just aim to do the best you can and always listen to yourself when you need a break because studying shouldn't replace your

wellbeing. Also, make sure to value all the moments at school and get involved in activities to make your last year memorable as it goes by very quickly.

Q. What does it mean to you to be a St Cath's girl?

A. To be a St Cath's girl means to be part of an inclusive and loving community where what you achieve is not the main focus but rather the effort and commitment you put in. St Cath's girls are able to strive to do their best but the process is valued rather than the outcome. It is an honour to be a St Cath's girl and it has allowed me to grow into who I am today.



AVA SAUNDERS
ATAR: 94.7

Q. How did your teachers help you to achieve your goals this year?

A. We are so lucky to have some of the best teachers in the state at St Cath's. I've never spoken to anyone at another school that has been able to relate to the way our teachers are. The way they teach us and support us is unlike any other school. Our teachers are definitely one of the reasons that St Cath's is such an incredible school.

Q. What are your plans for next year?

A. I'll be going to TAFE to become a personal trainer and then on to university to become a human rights lawyer.



MELANIE KANG
ATAR: 97.4

Q. What achievement are you most proud of this year?

A. I'm most proud of achieving a top mark in English Extension I and my Science Extension results. English is one of my strongest subjects, but Science was a bit out of my comfort zone, so to perform well in both was a wonderful surprise.

Q. What did you learn about yourself throughout your time at St Cath's?

A. I learned that whenever I'm presented with an opportunity, I should just go and try it. The school encouraged me to take lots of extracurriculars and different subjects. It didn't really matter if I wasn't necessarily good at them to start, because I had a lot of support and help around me. And it turned out so well!!

GETTING TO KNOW MELANIE

Melanie joined us in Year 3, where she immediately became involved in both our STEM program and Christian group. Melanie maintained these connections throughout her entire schooling, competing at the FIRST Robotics Competition and taking part in the Adelphi Leadership Program. Melanie placed first in English Extension I and plans to use her love of writing to create policy.







VICTORIA PHONNIWAT-FUNGE
ATAR: 99.4

Q. What achievement are you most proud of this year

A. I'm most proud of my English results. I'm so proud of how hard I worked and the results that I got. I started off in Year 11 not doing the best in English, but my teachers knew what I could achieve and mentored me to get there. The teachers really built the entire cohort up, helping us to improve and encouraging us to do our best. The way that they helped us was profound.

Q. What has been your family's response to your results?

A. I opened my results with my dad, step mum and little brother and sister. I opened them first and then showed them around the table. My dad and step mum both burst into tears. They were super proud and excited to see where I go from here. I've been accepted to the University of St Andrews in Scotland. I also recently had an interview at Oxford and applied to study Law here in Australia, so we will see how that all goes but it's all very exciting.

Q. What defines a St Cath's girl?

A. To be a St Cath's girl is to be part of a supportive community. I describe the school as my academic family because we all support each other. It is a community based on love.

Q. What advice would you share with students beginning their HSC journey?

A. I would recommend focusing on the subjects that you love and feel passionate about studying. For me, that was English so I did three different subjects of it for my HSC. I found that knowing where you are the happiest and what you are excited to learn about makes such a difference. It's true that if you are excited to learn, studying becomes fun.

GETTING TO KNOW VICTORIA

After joining us in Year 1, Victoria has enjoyed being part of the supportive St Cath's community. She has participated in everything from Dance, to representative Rowing and ISDA Debating. In Year 11, she was a House Official for Hulme-Moir, where she helped them to win Spirit Day. Victoria plans to continue her studies overseas, with a focus on English literature.



TAHLIA O'HALLORAN
ATAR: 96.2

Q. What is the most important lesson you have learned at St Cath's?

A. I've learned the importance of balancing work and life, keeping your friends close and having a strong support system.

I've also learned the importance of being part of a strong community.

Q. What advice would you share with students beginning their HSC journey?

A. I would remind them to make sure they take breaks when needed and focus on their mental health throughout the year. I would also advise them to make realistic goals in their subjects.



RUBY SMITH
ATAR: 72.75

Q. What achievement are you most proud of this year

A. I'm most proud of being the 2023/2024 Boarding Captain. I always wanted to be Boarding Captain, but in my younger years I thought others in my year would be more worthy of the title and job. When I found out I got it, I was very pleased and proud! My experiences organising boarding activities are some of my most cherished memories of my time at school.

Q. What defines a St Cath's girl?

A. To be a St Cath's girl is to be kind and caring but also ambitious and intelligent. St Cath's has taught me to not let others stop you from achieving your goals, especially in this male-dominated society. At St Cath's, I've learned to become ambitious and to strive for what I want.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

The Class of 2024 have approached the rapidly changing landscape of the modern workforce with determination, intelligence and genuine excitement.

Our 2024 graduates are well-rounded and enthusiastic learners, who are eager to use their unique gifts to help shape a brighter future. As they prepare to take the next steps of their educational journeys, the majority will be attending university. We have seen 78% of students enrol to attend various Australian universities, while six adventurous souls are spreading their wings to study overseas in the UK and the US. Remarkably, 50% of our students who applied to university received an early offer either through direct entry or through the SRS scheme. Of those, approximately 64% accepted that offer.

The tertiary studies chosen by the Class of 2024 cover a wide range of fields. Commerce is the most popular choice, with 13.5% of students planning to equip themselves with skills for the business world. Communications and Arts are equally prominent, with 9.5% of students choosing to pursue these fields. Law is another strong contender, attracting 8.7% of students who are keen to explore justice and critical thinking. Society and Culture, chosen by 7.9% of students, provides opportunities to delve into Politics, Philosophy, Economics and International Relations, fostering a deeper understanding of the human experience. Health, Medicine and Nursing follow closely, with 7.1% of students aspiring to make meaningful contributions to healthcare.

Notably, over 25% of our students are planning to undertake double degrees, revealing a trend towards combining traditional fields such as Medicine and Law

with Commerce, Science, Engineering and Economics to expand future employment opportunities. This trend also reflects this cohort's broad interests, demonstrating a balance between creativity, innovation and practicality. From solving global challenges to designing functional and beautiful spaces, our students are stepping into fields where they will shape the future and contribute to the world in impactful ways.

Additionally, 12 students from this cohort have been honoured with a scholarship, ranging from the prestigious Tuckwell Scholarship at The Australian National University to Elite Athlete Scholarships in Australia and overseas. Noteworthy recognitions include the Southern Cross High Achievers Scholarship, the UTS Academic Excellence International Scholarship, the USYD International Student Award and the UNSW Faculty of Engineering Women in Engineering Scholarship.

As our graduates venture into the next chapter of their lives, my hope is that they embrace each new challenge with open minds and hearts. These young women have the power to shape their own paths and contribute their talents to create a brighter future for all of us.

Ms Ramona Lobo
Tertiary Advisor

VOCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

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- Bobbie-Lee DeBuse has been accepted into University of St Andrews in Scotland and has been awarded a scholarship to attend the University of Oxford Junior Summer School for Philosophy, Politics and Economics in Singapore.
- Holly Bowes received the prestigious Tuckwell Scholarship to study Law and Economics at The Australian National University.
- Leila Gaston has been recruited to row as part of the champion University of Texas crew.
- Ariel Vivian has received an academic scholarship to study a Bachelor of Neuroscience, Psychology and Philosophy at the Australian National University.
- Chelsea Isaac has been recruited by Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles to play Water Polo.
- Abby Cunningham received a High Achiever Scholarship to study a Bachelor of Occupational Therapy at Southern Cross University.





Sydney



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