

VCE Student Profile: Kirsty Macfarlane

Question 1

Please state your name.

Kirsty

Question 2

Which year did you complete your VCE?

2009

Question 3

Did you study any Unit 3/4 subjects in Year 11? If yes, please list the subject(s).

Yes – Literature

Question 4

At which school did you complete Year 12?

Swan Hill College

Question 5

What scores did you obtain for each of your Unit 3/4 studies? Please indicate both the raw scores and scaled scores.

Subject	Raw Score	Scaled Score
English	42	41.74
Psychology	50	50
Legal Studies	50	50
Health and Human Development	50	50
Philosophy	43	44.02
Literature	34	35.54

Question 6

What was your final ATAR?

99.65

Question 7

Which tertiary course did you enrol into?

Bachelor of Arts

Question 8

Which university/tertiary institution are you enrolled in/planning to attend?

La Trobe University



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The following questions relate to a typical week where there were no major examinations forthcoming:

Question 9

How many hours did you dedicate to study (outside school) across a typical week?

An average of 4 hours every weeknight (always aimed for a minimum of 4, rarely did less than three hours of study after school)

Anywhere from 6-12 hours on each day of the weekend, the average would probably be about 14 hours on a typical weekend.

Overall, on average about 34 hours a week

My time off was generally taken between my study sessions, I would study for about an hour or a little less then take a 5-10 minute break, and take about half an hour to an hour off for meals. Once or twice a week I tried to take half an hour off on a weekday evening or on the weekend to go for a short walk. I didn't have any specific days or times I took off as I frequently reminded myself I would only have to study this hard and make the sacrifices for one year so the lack of free time would be worth it in the end.

Question 10

What was your typical weekday routine?

I would wake up approximately three quarters of an hour before I had to leave for school so that I could get ready (eat breakfast etc). For half of the year this was at 7 as my bus left at 8, for the second half of the year I would wake up about 7.30 and leave about 8.15am. The travel time was about 30 minutes by bus or 15 minutes driving. During my spares at school I would do the 'easy' homework as it was generally slightly noisier at school than at home. School finished at 3.18 and my bus left at 3.30 so I would get home at 4, alternatively when driving I would get home about quarter to 4pm. I would have a 15 minute to half an hour break before beginning to study. I would generally study for about an hour or so before having a five minute break then get another hour or so of study in before eating tea. After tea I would study for another few hours, depending on how much homework or study I wanted to get done, having short breaks in between. I would typically be studying until about 10.30 to 11pm when I would go to bed.

Question 11

Where did you engage in the bulk of your study on a day to day basis?

I had a desk in my bedroom which was where the majority of my study took place. At school in my spares I studied in the school library.

Question 12

How many hours did you dedicate to study across school holidays?

During the first two lots of holidays I took about two days at the start of the holidays off to replenish myself and to give myself a break. After that I worked pretty steady, generally studying during the times I would normally have school (about 9 or 10 in the morning to 4 or 5ish in the afternoon). On weekends this routine was pretty much the same. If my family went anywhere during the holidays I took my books with me and studied whenever I could, often at night when we weren't doing anything, and increased the hours each day while I was at home (for example doing 8-12 hour days). The September school holidays were more full-on as they were getting close to exams, so I spend basically the whole holidays studying. I studied consistently during normal school hours (taking half hour or so breaks in between the hours) and also did a few hours (2-4) of an evening. On weekends during the September holidays I would fit in as much study as I possibly could without 'doing my head in' which would range from about 8-12 hours.

Question 13

Did you engage in any extracurricular activities across Year 12? If yes, please indicate the activities and how much time was dedicated to each activity.

I didn't really do any extra-curriculum activities during year 12, instead I made the choice to give up other activities and to make the sacrifices for one year, so that I would never regret not having done my best.

Question 14

How did you balance/organise your study with other commitments like work or sport or family?

I basically sacrificed most other areas of my life for my school work in year 12. My family supported me and were happy to work around me (i.e. I spent time with them during my breaks). Likewise I would see my friends at school and on the odd occasion catch up with them out of school. School became my main commitment and I was determined not to let anything stop me doing my best. I knew once year 12 was over I would have long holidays and a more relaxed timetable at Uni to enjoy other aspects of life, such as the social side I neglected during year 12 in determination to achieve the marks I wanted.

The following questions relate to a typical week where there were major examinations forthcoming:

Question 15

How did you approach the task of preparing for the exam? (For example, would you start the process by writing notes? If so, which resources did you use to compile materials etc).

I started my exam preparation on the first day of the school year. I knew I needed a consistent approach so that come exam time, I would be less stressed out because I would be fully prepared, and by doing things that way I ended up being more prepared than I would have been if I had been cramming in information in the last few months before the exam. So what I did was I had a booklet for each subject and as we covered each area of study I compiled detailed study notes into the booklets. I organised the notes around the dot points for each area of study in the study design, so I knew there was nothing I could be tested on in the exam that I didn't know. The notes were compiled from the notes we were given or wrote down in class, from different resources given to me from my teachers, from the textbook, and most prominently from a range of different study guides (for example the A+ study notes). From these resources I created my own set of notes which I understood and which covered every dot point in the study design. I would use these booklets to study for SACs and also for the exam. Throughout the year I then continually referred back to the booklet and read over the notes and in this way kept revising the stuff I'd learnt even from the first area of study, throughout the year. By the end of the year I had pretty much memorised everything in the booklets, and because I made sure the notes within them were detailed and comprehensive, I knew everything I needed to know so I could focus on doing practice questions in the lead up to the exams.

Question 16

How many hours did you dedicate to study (outside of school) in the weeks leading up to the exams?

My routine didn't alter that much when it got closer to exams because I was already studying pretty much as much as I could. The hours increased slightly but not significantly. I would probably have been doing 4-6 hours on a weeknight after school and about 8-12 hours each day of the weekend. When we had 'swot vac' where we had time off before the exams I would have studied about 6-12 hours each day. I didn't take a specific day or evening off, rather my breaks were in between study sessions to give my head a rest. If I had been studying all morning with 5-10 minute breaks for example, I would often take an hour or two off around lunch time before studying consistently again throughout the afternoon.

Question 17

What was your typical day to day routine when studying for the exams?

When we had school I would fit in as much study as I could during my spares, and sometimes I would also study in the half hour before school started and during part of lunch time. After school I would divide my time up between my subjects, and would usually study for about two subjects a night, evening out the days I studied for each subjects throughout the week. On Weekends I would typically spend just under half a day on each subject so that I spent a significant amount of time studying for each subject on the weekend. I would usually try to divide my subjects up according to how easy they were and what the content was like. For example I found both psychology and health fairly easy as they just required memorising information, and they were also fairly similar, so I would study for those subjects on different days or study a different subject in between them to break it up.

Question 18

Did you continue your extracurricular activities in the weeks leading up to the exams?

I wasn't really doing any extra-curriculum activities throughout the year, however I definitely spent even less time with my family in the lead up to the exams and the situation was the same with my friends as I spent even more time studying and so didn't have time for much else.

Question 19

Which technique(s) did you use to learn materials "off by heart"? (eg. writing notes, re-writing, reading texts etc).

My techniques for psychology, legal studies and health and human development were pretty much the same since they each predominantly required you to memorise large amounts of information and to be able to answer questions well. For each of these subjects I wrote comprehensive study notes aligned with the 'key knowledge' dot points in the study design and I continually read over these until I knew the material off by heart. Then I would write out questions using the dot points and attempt to answer them without referring to my notes, checking what I had forgotten using my notes after I had completed the questions. Then I would revise the aspects of the content I had forgotten. I also recorded lots of my study notes onto my mp3 and listened to myself reading them so that I was receiving the information in a different way (i.e. verbally rather than reading it). This all helped me to remember the materials I needed to know off by heart. I also completed a lot of practice questions and then I would study the answers, especially aspects of an answer I hadn't included in my own so this was another way of learning material off by heart. Since I seemed to remember things best by writing things down, I also wrote out the notes a number of times, in more condensed versions, to help me remember the material.

Question 20

If applicable, when did you start preparing for your Unit 3 exams?

Psychology: *I started preparing for the psychology mid year exam from the first day of the year, writing notes and revising them to ensure I knew the material. I also did one of the practice exams about two months before the exam to familiarise myself with the type of questions and the format of the exam. Then in the last month or so before the exam, when I had learnt all the content off by heart from constant revision throughout the semester, I completed as many exams as I could. By the time it was about a week before the exam I had done all the exams and questions I could get my hands on so I had a break and stopped stressing so much, and my revision was mainly reading over my notes and reviewing the questions and answers I had completed.*

When did you start preparing for your Unit 4 exams?

Psychology: *as soon as the second semester began I started a new booklet with unit 4 notes and compiled these as we completed the areas of study in class, revising them frequently throughout the semester. This meant I knew the content well and in the last few months before the exams I began to focus on completing practice questions and exams.*

Legal Studies: *I began studying for legal from the start of the year. I created study notes and continually revised these throughout the year. My teacher also gave us many exam questions to do before each SAC, so I was practising exam questions from virtually the start of the year also. I kept all my answers to these questions and my teacher's comments on them and revised them along with my study notes throughout the year. When it got closer to the exam (1-2 months) I began doing timed questions using the formula two minutes for every mark and I was still continually revising my study notes which were organised according to the key knowledge dot points in the study design.*

Health and Human development: *I was creating exam study notes organised according to the key knowledge dot points in the study design from the start of the year, adding to the notes as we covered each area of study. Throughout the year I then revised these notes so that I was learning them off by heart. As there weren't that many exams/questions out there for health, I left them until the lead up to the exam when we had covered the entire course. This especially worked well for health because many of the questions cover multiple areas of study. In the last month before the exam I began to complete these exams and questions and to go through the answers.*

Question 21

Did you suffer from anxiety attacks or mind blocks in any of your exams? What did you do to alleviate or get through these situations?

Before I went into my exams, especially my English exam as this one was first, I was a nervous wreck. I couldn't eat and I was almost shaking. When I got into the exam room and we began, however, I found that I was fine, my anxiety diminished and I just got on with the job. I knew the content and I knew how to answer the questions, because I had done so much practice, and so I just got on with doing the exam. Even though after some of the exams I struggled to remember what I had written it seemed like I completed the exams in 'auto-pilot' and because I had prepared myself so well, knowing all the content and having done hundreds of practice questions, I was able to complete the exams and do really well on them even though I might not have been completely with it. Therefore my lack of anxiety attack/mind blocks was associated with having prepared so well that there was no way I would forget the information anyway.

Question 22

Did you throw yourself back into study after the mid-year exams, or did you take a significant study break?

I took a day off I think, but I basically threw myself back into study. I still had other subjects that I did not have mid year exams for that needed a consistent effort throughout the year.

Question 23

Did you study across the Term 2 school holidays? If yes, what did you spend the bulk of your time doing?

Yes I studied across all of my holidays. I spent my time revising over the material we had already covered during the year, and reading ahead to get an idea of what we would be covering in the next few SACs. I also had a lot of homework out teachers had given us which I completed. Most of my time was spent revising and trying to memorise the information.

Question 24

If you did not study across the Term 2 school holidays, do you believe that your workload and stress levels would have been reduced if you did engage in some study?

I definitely think studying over these holidays and consistently throughout the year helped reduce my stress levels, as I knew I was doing the best I possibly could so I was happy with myself and not stressing about how I could have been doing better.

Questions Relating to the Subject You Have Been Asked to Write About

Question 1

Which subject does this report relate to?

Psychology; Legal Studies; Health and HD

Question 2

What sort of marks did you get in this subject across the year?

Psychology:

Overall mark for SACs: A+ Exam Unit 3: A+ Unit 4: A+

Specific SAC marks: Unit 3 –

Brain and nervous system: 40/40

Visual Perception: 28/30

States of Consciousness: 29/30

Unit 4 –

Memory: 39/40

Learning: 40/40

Research Investigation: 20/20

Legal Studies:

Overall mark for Unit 3: A+ Unit 4: A+ Exam: A+

Specific SAC marks: Unit 3 –

Parliament and the citizen: 29.5/30

Constitution and the protection of Rights: 40/40

Role of the Courts: 27/30

Unit 4 –

Criminal Cases and civil disputes: 36/40

Court processes and procedures: 60/60

Health and HD:

Overall mark for unit 3: A+ Unit 4: A+ Exam: A+

Specific SAC marks: Unit 3 –

Understanding Australia's health: 49/50

Promoting health in Australia: 48/50

Unit 4 –

Development across the lifespan: 39/40

Global health: 59/60

Question 3

Based on your results and performance throughout the year, were you confident that you would obtain a perfect Study Score? If not, what Scaled Score were you anticipating/hoping to receive?

Psychology

No I was not confident I would get a perfect study score although my marks had been really good and I was very confident going into the exam. I hoped for a score above 45, it was a vague dream that it might be possible to get a 50 but I more realistically expected a maximum of 46/47.

Legal Studies

I did not expect to get a perfect study score despite my good marks and the fact that I knew the content really well and was very good at answering the questions and therefore doing very well on the practice exams. I was expecting something around 45.

Health and HD

I did not expect a perfect study score in health at all. Though my SAC marks had been good I never felt confident I knew all the content as there was just so much you needed to know. I was hoping to get over 40 in health, with a score of 45 being the maximum I expected.

Question 4

Which section/topic from Unit 3 and 4 did you find most challenging?

Psychology

I actually didn't particularly find any of the areas in psych more challenging than any of the others. There were topics I didn't like as much (i.e. I didn't really enjoy visual perception very much) but I didn't find any specific topic more challenging than the rest. For psych I found that the content itself was easy to grasp and understand, what was difficult was memorising it.

Legal studies

I found that the court processes and procedures area of study in Unit 4 was the most difficult to grasp. Maybe it was because the area of study was so big but I just found it not as interesting and also more challenging to understand/learn and memorise. This doesn't correspond to my SAC mark for the topic because I guess since I found it more challenging I put more work into learning this topic and it paid off as it was one of my best SACs.

Health and HD

I found the section on promoting health in Australia more challenging than the rest of the course. This was largely because there was lots to learn (i.e. a lot of different guides you needed to rote learn) and it was also fairly boring so it was difficult to find ways to make it stick in your mind.

Question 5

How much time did you spend preparing/working on SACS?

***Psychology; legal studies and Health and HD (all very similar):** I spent many hours preparing for each SAC. Having spent time learning the information I would revise it by writing out my notes over and over again, and I would complete all the practice questions I could from different books (i.e. from study guides). I would spend a good two weeks preparing for each SAC, studying for it at least every couple of nights. In numerical terms my SAC preparation may have been about 35 hours all up, however SAC prep also doubled for the exam prep I was doing throughout the year.*

Question 6

What was the best source of help/information for the SACS?

Psychology

During Unit 3 I had a brilliant teacher who was a wonderful source of information. I would get her to explain concepts to me over and over in different ways until I understood and she also made general class work interesting and fun so that you remembered the material. She also gave me many practice exam questions before each SAC to do as practice and she would correct the questions for me. She was definitely one of the most valuable resources however the textbook was also very useful and I read it quite a few times.

During Unit 4 I had a different teacher with a different style of learning and I therefore relied on friends a little more as we would discuss the topics but during unit 3 and especially unit 4 study guides would probably have been one of the best sources of help I had for SACS, as they provided summary notes I could use to make my own notes, and questions with answers I could complete.

Legal Studies

My legal studies teacher was fantastic. She explained concepts really well and was always willing to find a different way of explaining things until we got it. She also gave us heaps of practice questions to do in the lead up to SACS and she would mark my questions so I knew how to improve when I got into the SACS. The teacher also had a different year 12 legal textbook and so I borrowed that frequently and between my textbook and that one attained a much better overview and understanding of the topics, so these were valuable sources of information. Study guides however were a particularly crucial source of information as I was able to find extra questions to do and different ways of explaining information.

Health and HD

My health teacher was really willing to do anything she could for me, so she found me a lot of extra resources to help me prepare for SACS, from quizzes to questions or other activities. She also would answer long lists of questions on things I wasn't sure of when I emailed her which was incredibly invaluable. Study guides were also a helpful source of information although there weren't as many guides out there or as many good ones for health compared to other subjects, but the ones I got hold of were definitely helpful.

Question 7

Did you regularly use a private tutor in this subject? If so, did you find this assistance beneficial?

I did not use a private tutor at all for any of my subjects. I used my teachers as much as I could and did the rest myself. I was willing to work hard enough of my own accord so a tutor wasn't necessary.

Question 8

Did you attend a tuition college/tutorial classes/lectures to assist in this subject? Did you find this assistance beneficial?

I attended revision lectures for each of my subjects before the exams and found them incredibly useful. I went to a number of different lectures for each subject and as they were all given by different lecturers this meant I got a range of different perspectives and a lot of hints and tips from different assessors which all helped me know what to study or how to approach certain topics. Hearing from assessors themselves really helped me understand what was required in exams and helped make me feel confident that I had covered all the content I needed to.

Question 9

If applicable, do you feel that you would have obtained the same score if you did not use tutors/coaches/lectures/tuition programs?

I'm honestly not sure. I found the lectures I went to really helpful and got a lot of hints and tips which would have helped me, but the majority of what got me my scores was my continual hard work. I very much doubt there would have been immense differences in my scores if I did not go to lectures, though they may have made a slight one point or two difference.

Question 10

What was your best source of help across the year (teacher, tutor, lecture program etc)?

Psychology

Overall study guides would have been the best source of help, though my unit 3 teacher would have been the best help for first semester.

Legal studies

My teacher would have been the greatest source of help as she made sure I knew all the content, taught us really well and corrected all the hundreds of practice questions I gave her which allowed me to improve.

Health and HD

I would say my teacher's persistent efforts to help me and do whatever she could; including finding out anything she didn't know, was the best source of help during the year.

Having said that for each subject I was focusing on actual resources, The overall best source of help I got for each subject was my own persistence and determination and continual efforts/hard work. The other resources were only helpful on top of my own motivation.

Question 11

Did you do anything differently study wise in comparison to your peers at school?

Psychology; legal studies and health and HD (all same): *I definitely did do different things study wise compared to my peers. I actually studied. I studied continually. I was always working and I did much more than I had do. While some people (not even all) did the homework the teacher set, I did the homework plus revision of what we were studying in class, I read the textbook even if we weren't told to and I found extra resources (ie. Study guides) to help me improve. I made my own revision notes are revised continually throughout the year without being asked. Overall I was just a lot more motivated than most of the kids. I didn't want to have regrets about how much I studied like the majority of people from my school did so I worked as hard as I could and I put school before everything else, not last like most of my peers did.*

Question 12

Do you feel that you had an advantage over other students in this subject? If so, what was this advantage?

Psychology

In some ways I felt like I had an advantage. I really enjoyed the subject and so studying for it wasn't a chore. I was also probably naturally smarter than a lot of the students (however this only applies to my school not in relation to the state). The main thing that set me apart was motivation and hard work so in that way there wasn't really an advantage – everyone could have tried hard most just chose not to.

Legal studies

I wouldn't say I had much of an advantage over other students. The only thing that led to different scores was me working harder and using the available resources (i.e. the teacher) a lot more.

Health and HD

In some ways I had an advantage in that I didn't find the content difficult whereas some student did and so all I had to do was memorise it, not try to understand as well. I also have a good memory which helped me out a lot compared to other students. Basically, however, my main advantage was that I wanted to do well and I set my goals higher than most other students and so I worked harder to achieve them and ultimately the work resulted in better marks.

Question 13

Compare the subjects for which you obtained your lowest and highest Subject Study Scores.

The subject I attained my lowest study score for was Literature, which I accelerated and completed in year 11. Most of the reasons I believe this score was considerably lower than my other scores are related to the fact that I accelerated it. As the exam for Literature was the first year 12 exam I did, I was incredibly nervous and I was actually shaky while in the exam and couldn't think straight. My essays weren't near as good as those I wrote for SACs. During the exams for psychology, legal studies and health and HD which were my best subjects, however, I was much more relaxed and more confident that I knew what I was doing – I didn't have to deal with being in a first exam as well as the exam itself. I think the difference in study score was also related to the actual subjects. Even in year 12 English was my lowest study score. This certainly wasn't due to the amount of work I put in as I would say I actually did more work for English than for any other subject. And my teacher was brilliant – my favourite teacher over all. So it wasn't so much what I did differently as who I am. I think I am much better at doing subjects where you can memorise information (as I have a good memory) and where you do short answer questions. The differences in my scores was basically, in my opinion, because I'm not so good at writing essays, especially under exam conditions whereas I can rote learn information for a content based subject like legal or psychology or health. I think this is why I achieved higher scores in those subjects.

Question 14

As part of your exam preparation for this subject, did you spend time writing up a comprehensive set of notes from which to learn? If yes, how many hours do you believe you invested into this task?

Psychology

Yes I certainly did have a comprehensive set of notes for psych. It is really hard to say how many hours I spent on this task because I was working on it throughout the year, but writing the notes for each topic probably took about 6 hours, so as there are six areas of study I would guess around 35 hours spent writing up notes.

Legal studies

I was developing a comprehensive set of notes for legal from the start of the year, adding to my notes before each SAC after covering each area of study. It took quite some time to write out my legal notes for each topic because there was a lot to cover and it could take up to a week so I would guess something like 8-10 hours for each area of study, or about 45ish hours all up.

Health and HD

I spent considerable time making notes for health and this was my main form of revision. I probably spent about 8-10 hours writing up the notes for each area of study as the areas of study are quite large. It might have equated to about 40 hours of note writing time.

Question 15

Did you purchase/acquire quality notes to assist in your examination preparation? If yes, did you find this acquisition beneficial?

When I went to lectures we were given comprehensive notes to assist in exam preparation. I also purchased many study guides which contained summary notes for each subject. I definitely found these notes to be beneficial as I could read them alongside my own notes and they would usually be slightly different and it's always good to get a different perspective or to see things written in a slightly different way. However though they were useful I found that my own notes were more useful as I had written them myself, so the acquired notes were only useful as supplementary notes to

my own, they would not have been overly useful on their own. The notes I acquired were however useful in helping me to write my own notes as they provided different tables or ways of presenting the information and I often referred to them to make sure I had covered all areas of a topic.

Question 16

How many examination papers did you work through as part of your exam preparation?

Psychology

I worked through as many exam papers as I could get my hands on. I did all of the past VCAA exam papers even those from the old study design as well as as many different externally written exam papers as my school brought in that year or had collected from previous years. Overall I did all 7 exams available on the VCAA website for each exam and probably about 30ish extra exams each semester so it would have been about 37 exams all up for both the unit 3 and the unit 4 exam.

Legal studies

I did as many practice exams as I possibly could. There were 7 VCAA exams available on the website and I also completed a fair few other exams which my school got or which I sourced myself in different books or from lectures I attended. Overall there might have been something like 30 extra exams, so I probably did about 37 all up.

Health and HD

I did all the exams I could possibly find for health, though there wasn't that many out there. There were 7 VCAA available online though they weren't all relevant to the current study design and maybe about 6 extras which was all I could find, so I probably did about 13 exams for health.

Question 17

Which exam papers did you work through?

Psychology

VCAA; neap; stav ;lisachem; tssm; psych notes; checkpoints; A+

Legal Studies

VCAA; insight; tssm; tsfx; legal notes; A+; checkpoints

Health and HD

VCAA; insight; tssm; checkpoints

Question 18

Did you work through any exam papers under exam conditions? If yes, how many?

Psychology

Yes I worked through quite a few of the exams under exam conditions, probably the majority of the ones I did (about 20 or so)

Legal Studies

Yes I worked through a fair few exams under exam conditions, probably about 15 or so.

Health and HD

I probably worked through about 8 exams under exam conditions.

Question 19

If applicable, how much time was invested into preparing for the Unit 3 examination?

Psychology: I spent many hours preparing for the unit 3 exam as throughout the semester I was revising in preparation for the exam. I probably did about an hour a week for most of the semester revising for the exam, and as it got closer it would have been more like ten hours a week. In the last week or two I would have done a couple of hours each night. Overall I probably did about 60 hours revision for the unit 3 exam.

How much time was invested into preparing for the Unit 4 examination?

Psychology I also spent a considerable amount of time preparing for the unit 4 examination for psychology though it would have been less time than for unit three due to the demands of my other subjects. Overall it might have been about 45 hours preparation time.

Legal Studies and Health and HD (very similar amount of time spent preparing): I spent a lot of time preparing for the exam. Excluding time I spend doing general homework or SAC preparation, I spent about an hour a week revising specifically for the exam throughout the year. In the last few months I spend considerably more time as I was doing practice exams and practice questions in the lead up to the exam. Overall I probably spent close to 90 hours preparing for the exam all up, including the study I did throughout the exam, the more intense study in the two or so months before the exam and the constant study I did in swot vac and the week before the actually exam.

Which examination did you find more difficult and why?

Psychology I didn't find either of the exams overly difficult as I had covered all the content. Neither exam was considerably more difficult than the other.

Question 20

Had you previously covered all the questions/concepts that appeared in the exams or did the exam paper contain materials that you had never seen before? If so, did this make you panic in the exams?

Psychology; legal studies and Health and HD (all the same): As I had covered every dot point in the study design in incredible depth and made sure I knew all the material that could possibly be tested, I was confident knowing they could not possibly ask anything I didn't know. And my confidence turned out to be well founded. Everything in the exams was familiar to me and there was nothing I had not seen before so no cause for panic. The way questions were asked and knowledge tested was on a couple of questions not exactly how I had expected but the actual concepts were all familiar.

Question 21

If applicable, did you complete every question in the Unit 3 exam? If no, please estimate how much of the paper you did address.

Psychology I answered every question in the unit 3 exam so I address 100% of the paper.

Question 22

If applicable, did you complete every question in the Unit 4 exam? If no, please estimate how much of the paper you did address.

Psychology, legal studies and health and HD: yes I answered every question in detail for each exam so I addressed 100% of the paper. Even if I wasn't entirely sure my answer was right I had an educated guess and made sure I fully answered the question as best I could.

Question 23

Did you use any special exam techniques when working through the actual exams?

In the psychology paper which had multiple choice questions, I answered the short answer questions first while I was fresh and left the easier multi-choice questions until I had completed the short answer questions.

For the other subjects I read over the paper during reading time but as I was confident with all the questions, having covered all the key knowledge thoroughly, I simply worked through the paper from front to back. I made sure I took a water bottle to each exam to keep my hydrated and to stop me getting a headache and I frequently had drinks and shook my hand as a quick break while working through the exams.

Question 24

If applicable, what mistakes did you make when preparing for the Unit 3 exams?

I wouldn't say I made any mistakes preparing for the mid year exam; I think I made mistakes preparing for the exam the year before in the subject I accelerated (overstudying, stressing out too much, not feeling confident).

Did you do anything differently when preparing for the Unit 4 examinations?

When I was preparing for the unit 4 exams I made sure I was confident, knew everything I had to know and was prepared well in advance so that I wouldn't stress. Therefore I went into the exam relatively calm and ultimately knowing I had done my best while preparing so it was just a matter of seeing what happened.

Question 25

Which resources did you find most helpful when preparing for the exams?

My teachers were very helpful as they encouraged me to relax and feel confident and helped me deal with my stress. They also helped ensure I was well prepared. Revision lectures were also a very important resource and they went over all the topics and therefore it was like a revision session where I was also getting hints and tips. Study guides were also important resources for notes and questions as were the VCAA exams. The assessors reports on the past VCAA exams were an incredibly useful resource as they give you answers, common faults and also notes to study from when they explained specific concepts.

Question 26

What advice would you provide to those students aiming for a 50 in this subject?

Psychology

Be motivated and work hard. Make sure you revise from the start of each semester and cover all the dot points in the study design – use them as your study guide because it is only questions relating to those points which can be covered in SACS of exams. Have the attitude that if you work as hard as you can, you will get the best score you possibly could and whatever score you get it will be better than if you hadn't worked as hard. Also don't be disheartened if your scores on SACS aren't perfect, mine certainly weren't for every single SAC but I still got a perfect score over all. Even if your SACS aren't in a format similar to the exam (if they aren't multi choice or short answer), make sure you complete questions in this form relating to that topic so you are prepared for the exam.

Legal Studies

There is a lot of content to memorise in legal studies so you have to put in a consistent effort throughout the year. Make study notes and continually revise them throughout the year. Also make sure you cover each area of study fully before the SACS so you don't need to learn anything new for the exam. Make sure you have covered every key knowledge dot point in the study design as it is from these points SAC and exam questions will be created. Also make use of your teacher or find another teacher if at all possible who will correct questions you have answered. Legal is as much about how you answer the question and whether you have included the correct information as about the content so answering as many questions as you possibly can and getting as many of them corrected as you can is really beneficial.

If you do not get perfect scores on every SAC don't be disheartened, it is possible to get a perfect study score without perfect SAC scores. Work as hard as you can and do your best, then you will have nothing to regret whether you get the scores you want or not, and this attitude will certainly help keep you motivated to keep working hard.

Health and HD

One of the important things about health is that there is a lot of content and it can be overwhelming, you may feel like you could never remember it all. But the important thing is not to give up. Make yourself detailed study notes and keep revising them throughout the year. Find ways to make the information relevant to you or the society in which you live and this will make it easier to remember. Ultimately health is about remembering vast amount of information to it just takes a lot of hard work. Make sure you go through the key knowledge points in the study design and have covered all of them as these are the points from which exam and SAC questions are set. If you know everything in the study design, have confidence that there will be nothing you don't know on an exam or SAC. If something seems perfect scores to get a 50. Just work as hard as you can consistently throughout the whole year so you don't have to

do it all at the end of the year, and do your best, then you will feel confident you have done all you can do and confidence is very important going into exams.

General Advice

Question 1

What was the most difficult aspect of completing your VCE studies and how did you overcome this?

It was very difficult to stay motivated throughout the year and to continue working so hard, especially when people around you don't have as high aspirations as you have so don't encourage you as much as you encourage yourself. Making sacrifices ie. Giving up social life and leisure activities is hard and motivation wavers throughout the year but I overcame this by having the right attitude. I constantly reminded myself that it was only one year and that the sacrifices would be worth it. I told myself that if I did my best and made the sacrifices I could never regret not having done so. Even if I didn't get the scores I wanted I told myself the scores I would get would be better than if I hadn't continued to work so hard.

Question 2

If you had your time over again, would you do anything differently across Year 11 and/or 12?
Why/Why Not?

No I think I would do things exactly the same. The years of VCE might have been horrible in terms of involving no fun and lots of stress, but the scores I got and how proud I am of myself for my achievements makes it all worth it. I don't regret anything because I did my absolute best and I will always be proud of myself for achieving and even surpassing my goals.

Question 3

Is there anything that you wish you had known about before entering the VCE?

I wish I had known that it is possible to achieve incredible scores (perfect study scores or enters of 99+) even if you don't go to a fancy private school or get tutoring or have assessors as teachers. I never believed it was possible to achieve such scores at my regional, public school but I did achieve them and the truth is its more about hard work and dedication than the school you go to or your teachers – I would have had a lot more confidence if I had known this before entering the VCE.

Question 4

Are there any resources/services/products that would have assisted you in your studies had they been available?

I think all the resources I needed were available to me. I had good teachers and I was able to get lots of different study guides. Though it was difficult to travel to Melbourne to attend lectures I managed to do so. There was nothing I needed that I couldn't or didn't make sure I got.

Question 5

If you had one piece of advice to give future students, what would it be?

You can do it. Don't let things like your school, your teachers, your family or the fact that your friends are all enjoying parties and having fun stop you if you really want to do well. If you are willing to put in the work it will pay off. If you make the sacrifices it will be worth it in some way or another. Even if you think there is no way on earth you could get a certain score and believe it is just a dream, don't lose hope or stop working because the seemingly impossible can become the possible if you set your mind to it and work hard enough.