

ZHENG SONG

My Story



When I first started my VCE in Year 11 with Unit 3/4 Biology and Maths Methods, I dedicated around 25 hours a week to studying outside of school. I spent the majority of my time on my Unit 3/4 subjects by working ahead through the textbooks. Thanks to this, I managed to finish the courses way before my school, which gave me a lot of time to do practice exams. I found this especially helpful since I didn't have to drastically increase my study time in the weeks leading up to exams, and this decreased my stress levels.

However, I think that this study method wouldn't have worked without TSFX, which allowed me to revise learned material on a regular basis and also exposed me constantly to a range of exam questions so that I was aware of the depth of learning required and also deepened my understanding of the theory. Without the help of The School for Excellence, I don't think I could have remembered and understood the material really well which meant that after I had finished the course, I would have needed to re-do some of the questions from the textbook just so that I could remember the theory. But thanks to TSFX, I could spend this precious time doing practice exams, which I believe are one of the most beneficial resources for VCE students.

My timetable meant that I had little time for a personal and social life, especially since I had to spend around two hours travelling from school everyday. So I took advantage of recess and lunchtimes to relax and meet up with my friends by participating in co-curricular activities.

In Year 12, I continued the study method that I had used in Year 11. In the summer holidays before Year 12 started, I worked through the textbooks for the majority of my subjects so that I could get a headstart when school started. When I went back to school, I was much less stressed than I had been in Year 11 mainly because I now had the experience of doing Unit 3/4 subjects, and for a while everything went really well.

Then in the middle of the year, I got really sick and didn't go to school for nearly a month. Because I missed so much content, I felt that I could no longer catch up. This was especially true for Chemistry, which had a lot of theory to learn.

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So I decided to go to the TSFX chemistry revision lecture, hoping that it could help me catch up a little. The benefits of that lecture were actually much greater than I expected. Since the lecture notes provided clear and simple summary of the key points, I felt much less overwhelmed, and because the lecture gave me a really good overview of the course, I now felt like I wasn't that much behind. All this motivated me to start studying Chemistry again.

Another thing that really helped me was the (Master Class) extension classes. In Year 12, I couldn't do as many practice exams per subject as I had done in Year 11. Thanks to the extension classes, I was exposed to many exam style questions even though I wasn't able to complete the same number of practice exams as I had in Year 11. Since most of the questions required a really deep understanding of the content, I cleared up several misconceptions and had a clear understanding of the topics.

To sum up, try to do as many practice questions as you can on a regular basis but make sure that you have a really good understanding of the concepts before you tackle the questions. When reviewing materials, I found that I understood the concepts better if I discussed them with friends instead of re-reading the textbook or copying notes. ‘

And lastly, don't get discouraged if you didn't perform as well as you wanted to in a SAC. For instance, I was getting really average SAC marks for Biology and Maths Methods, but I was able to maintain focus and prepare for the final exams leading to scores of 50 in Biology and 42 in Maths Methods. So if you are not happy with a SAC mark, simply find out where you went wrong and clear up any misconceptions, and in the end, that one mark is unlikely to have a huge impact on your overall study score.

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