



# Academic Highlights 2025



## HSC Highlights for Meriden Students

**6 state placings** in a course, including **three 1st in course**

**53% of students** received an ATAR of 90 or more

**29 students** (14%) named **All-Round Achievers** (highest band possible for at least 10 course units)

**154 students** (73%) recognised as **Distinguished Achievers** (highest band possible for one or more courses)

**28 nominations** for **ENCORE, OnSTAGE and ARTEXPRESS**

Multiple offers for places at **leading Australian, UK, USA and South-East Asian universities**

**2025**

Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank

ATAR	% OF MERIDEN STUDENTS
99+	10%
95+	35%
90+	53%
80+	80%

Median ATAR 91.25  
(State median 70.75)

Class of 2025

# HSC highlights cont...

Meriden's HSC Results Celebration



## All-Round Achievers

All-Round Achievers are those students who have achieved results in the highest band possible in at least ten units of HSC courses. Twenty-nine students (14% of the cohort) were named on the 2025 All-Round Achievers List.

Medha Aiyer	Sophie Tan
Charlotte Butler	Selina Wang
Sabrina Cao	Elena Whitfield
Melody Chia	Isabella Wong
Olivia Choi	Aiyang Wu
Calleigh Chow	Cordelia Xie
Prudence Iu	Emma Xu
Anjana Kailasanathan	Meredith Xu
Alexandra Katanasho	Emily Yang
Olivia Lee	Victoria Yenson
Angel Long	Sophie Yi
Isabella Morkos	Maggie Zhang
Mikayla Rodger	Samantha Zhou
Parneet Sandhu	Lena Zhu
Sophia Sidhom	

## Top Achievers in a Course

NAME	COURSE	POSITION IN THE STATE
Selina Wang	Music 2	1st
Selina Wang	Music Extension	1st
Sally Zhang	Japanese Beginners	1st
Selina Wang	Chinese Continuers	5th
Elena Whitfield	Spanish Beginners	5th
Selina Wang	Mathematics Advanced	14th

## Celebrating Excellence



Olivia Choi, Mrs Lisa Brown, Selina Wang and Melody Chia

### Excellence in the 2025 HSC

Meriden's Class of 2025 has once again demonstrated exceptional academic achievement in this year's HSC. These performances reflect the students' commitment to their studies and the unwavering support of their teachers and families.

Meriden's top ATAR was achieved by Selina Wang, who scored a perfect 99.95. She was closely followed by Melody Chia and Olivia Choi, who both earned 99.9. "I was a little surprised as I didn't think I would do so well! I'd really like to thank my teachers who have given me such amazing support, as I could not have done it without them," she said. Selina is set to study a Law and Computer Science degree at UNSW.

These achievements not only reflect academic excellence but also embody the values of resilience and integrity that define the Meriden community. In addressing the Class of 2025, Principal Mrs Lisa Brown reminded students that their worth is far greater than any grade, encouraging them to embrace the future with confidence. Mrs Brown said, "I am particularly proud of the many girls who have overcome personal challenges to soar above their own expectations. The strength in adversity they developed through their time at Meriden will serve them well in the years ahead."



### Excellence in Languages

Yet again, Meriden students excelled in HSC Languages delivering some of the strongest results in the state. Sally Zhang achieved 1st place in the state in Japanese Beginners, while Selina Wang and Elena Whitfield achieved 5th in the State for Chinese Continuers and Spanish Beginners respectively.

The top band was attained by 100% of the cohort in five subjects: Japanese Continuers, Japanese Extension, Chinese Continuers, Chinese Extension and Latin Extension. This was particularly commendable in Japanese Continuers and Japanese Extension as this is the first year Meriden has offered the courses.

All students who studied Chinese in Context, Chinese and Literature, Spanish Beginners and French Extension achieved in the top two bands.

Languages students (back row) Margot Bass-Tracy, Charlotte Butler, Claudia Brown, Selina Wang, Elena Whitfield, Amia Bardsley, Sienna Li, Annabel Yuen, Sophie Yi, Sophie Tan, Emma Bruce, (front row) Ellie Dong, Priya Sukh, Claire Sun, Melody Chia, Abbey Cameron, Olivia Lee, Cordelia Xie and their teachers Mr Ken Lu and Head of Languages Mrs Teresa Alonso-Lasheras



### Excellence in Mathematics

Mathematics students (back row) Erin Tan, Elena Whitfield, Natasha Laggas, Sanvi Srinath, Selina Wang, Katrina Ling, Leah Har, Kaari Ellen, Maggie Zhang, Victoria Yenson, Sophie Yi, Emily Yang; (front row) Sara Hawley, Josephine Graham, Natasha Laggas, Gabrielle Germanos, Imogen Woolger, Abbey Cameron, Calleigh Chow, Olivia Choi, Melody Chia, Anjana Kailasanthan, Isabella Wong and Keira Nguyen

Meriden students again overachieved in Mathematics, with a remarkable 51% of girls achieving the top band in Mathematics Extension 1 and 56% of girls achieving in Mathematics Extension 2.

Advanced Mathematics heralded a perfect score of 100 for Selina Wang, who was one of the 81% of the cohort to achieve a Band 5 or Band 6. The results in Mathematics Standard were equally strong, with 23% of girls achieving Band 6 (versus 8.5% across the state).

## Excellence in Performing Arts

Led by first in state performances from Selina Wang in Music 2 and Music Extension, Meriden girls shone in the Performing Arts subjects.

In both Music 1 and Music 2, 100% of students attained a Band 5 or Band 6. In Music Extension five students recorded a perfect score of 50/50; part of a cohort where 12 out of 15 students scored in the top band.

Our musicians also excelled in their HSC performances, compositions and musicology works. A total of 19 students were nominated for ENCORE, the annual showcase of exemplary HSC performances and compositions held at the Sydney Opera House. The nominees included: Ingrid Benz, Joyce Chung, Annabelle Desmond, Ellie Dong, Josephine Graham, Molly Grogan, Selina Wang, Maddy Wood, Meredith Xu, Alina Yuan and Amanda Zhong for Performance; Margot Bass-Tracy, Annabelle Desmond, Lauren Kim, Celeste Ryan, Selina Wang and Sophia Youssef for Composition; Arshia Nanda and Sophia Youssef for Musicology.

Annabelle Desmond has been selected to perform her Music 2 composition at the Opera House.

In Drama we again saw 100% of girls achieve Band 5 and Band 6 results, on top of four individual and three group nominations for OnSTAGE.

Individual nominations included: Ella Cho for her heartwarming performance, Journey; Abbie Elzinga for her powerful performance of The Literati; Anastasia Ibrahim for her performance of Christine from Phantom of the Opera and Eva O'Dell for her moving portrayal of Angela in Natural Shocks.



**1** Drama students Sara Hawley, Josephine Graham, Angelina Joannou, Grace Hargreaves with their teacher Miss Tara Graetz

**2** Ellie Dong, Alina Yuan, Selina Wang with Music teacher Mrs Rebecca Fienberg

Three of Meriden's Group Performances also earned nominations. They were:

- Mila Burdett, Abbie Elzinga, Arshia Nanda, Eva O'Dell and Keira Rippon for their satirical performance, *The Federal Underground Committee of Knowledge and Espionage*.

- Joyce Chung, Louise Kim, Mikhayla Lobo and Celeste Ryan for their take on Renaissance artists in *The Art of Sabotage*.

- Ella Cho, Josephine Graham, Grace Hargreaves, Sara Hawley and Angelina Joannou for their exploration of libraries and AI in *Shhh! Secret Society of Scholars*.

### Excellence in History and Legal Studies

This year saw a high watermark for History and Legal Studies results at Meriden, a testament to outstanding teaching and strong student dedication. It was led by History Extension where every student received a result in the top band.

In Ancient History, a massive 77% of students received a Band 6 (versus 9% of the state), where Meriden girls scored 17 marks above the state average. Modern History was a similar success story, with marks 11 above state average.

In Legal Studies 13 out of 15 students achieved a Band 6, and 100% of the cohort achieved a Band 5 or 6.

**1** History students (back row) Elena Whitfield, Sophie Tan, Olivia Lee; (front row) Matilda Koo, Alina Yuan, Sydney Nguyen, Natasha Laggas, Gabrielle Germanos, Alyssa Stamson and Alana Ikladios, with Mrs Danielle Newman and Mrs Carlee Richardson

**2** Legal studies students Gabriella Protopsaltis, Kaari Ellen, Sara Hawley, Rachael Hall and Natasha Laggas with Head of History Mrs Danielle Newman



### Excellence in Academic and Sport Performance

Several graduates are considering offers from overseas universities in the USA and UK. Sophie Pethers will be attending the University of the Pacific, in California, to play NCAA Water Polo. Anjola Ige has been accepted into Portland State University for Tennis.

Sophie Pethers



## Excellence in Design and Creative Arts

This year in Engineering, 100% of students achieved a Band 5 or 6 result. This is part of a continued focus on STEM-based subjects, where Meriden is one of a few girls schools to offer HSC Engineering. The legacy of this is a growing number of Meriden girls pursuing STEM studies at university.

Our Visual Arts students continue to create exciting work, with 95% of students achieving in the top two bands. Ivy Chen produced an outstanding short video and was selected for the prestigious ARTEXPRESS exhibition and will be showcased at art galleries across NSW. The work produced by Sabrina Cao was nominated for inclusion in the exhibition.

In Food Technology, Isabella Wong received an impressive mark of 97 – one of five Band 6 scores in total.

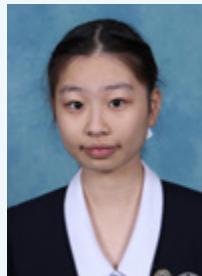


**1** Engineering students – Kaari Ellen and Anjana Kailasanathan

**2** Food Technology students Isabella Wong, Gabriella Protopsaltis, Annabel Van Ede and Nita Churcher with their teacher Mrs Vicki Sheehan



# Some of Meriden's high flyers...



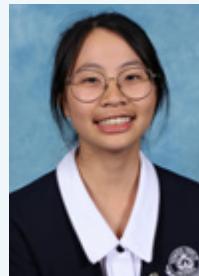
**Selina Wang**

**ATAR 99.5**

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
1st in the State in Music 2 and Music Extension  
5th in Chinese Continuers  
At Meriden since Year 4  
Nominated for ENCORE  
*Music Prefect 2025*

**SUBJECTS STUDIED**

English Advanced  
Chinese Continuers  
Mathematics Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Music Extension  
Music 2  
Physics



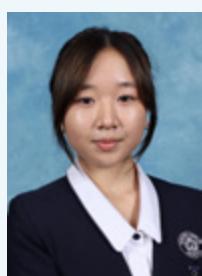
**Melody Chia**

**ATAR 99.9**

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
Dux of the School  
At Meriden since Pre-Kindergarten  
*Prefect 2025*

**SUBJECTS STUDIED**

English Advanced  
Chemistry  
Latin Continuers  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2  
Physics



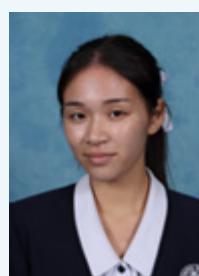
**Olivia Choi**

**ATAR 99.9**

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 7

**SUBJECTS STUDIED**

English Advanced  
Chemistry  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2  
Physics



**Cordelia Xie**

**ATAR 99.85**

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 7  
*Prefect 2025*

**SUBJECTS STUDIED**

Chemistry  
English Advanced  
French Continuers  
French Extension  
Mathematics Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2



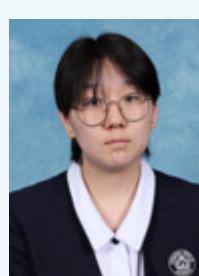
**Sophie Yi**

**ATAR 99.8**

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 7

**SUBJECTS STUDIED**

Chemistry  
English Advanced  
English Extension 1  
Latin Continuers  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2



**Sabrina Cao**

**ATAR 99.7**

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
Nominated for ARTEXPRESS  
At Meriden since Year 7

**SUBJECTS STUDIED**

Biology  
Chemistry  
English Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2  
Visual Arts



**Lena Zhu**

**ATAR 99.6**

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 7

**SUBJECTS STUDIED**

Chemistry  
English Advanced  
English Extension 1  
Latin Continuers  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2



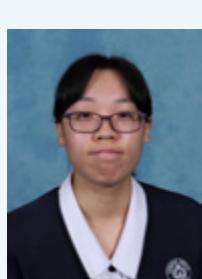
**Victoria Yenson**

**ATAR 99.55**

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Pre-Kindergarten  
*Deputy Head Prefect 2025*

**SUBJECTS STUDIED**

Biology  
Economics  
English Advanced  
Chemistry  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2



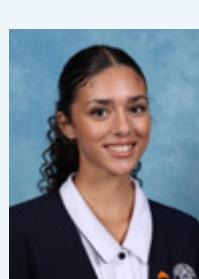
**Samantha Zhou**

**ATAR 99.55**

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 7

**SUBJECTS STUDIED**

Chemistry  
English Advanced  
Latin Continuers  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2  
Physics



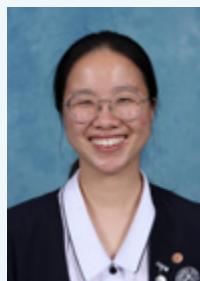
**Sophia Sidhom**

**ATAR 99.5**

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 6  
*Prefect 2025*

**SUBJECTS STUDIED**

Chemistry  
English Advanced  
French Continuers  
French Extension  
Mathematics Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2



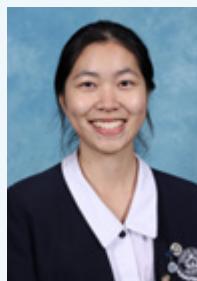
### Meredith Xu

ATAR 99.5

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
Nominated for ENCORE  
At Meriden since Year 7

#### SUBJECTS STUDIED

Chemistry  
English Advanced  
English Extension 1  
Latin Continuers  
Latin Extension  
Music Extension  
Music 2



### Emily Yang

ATAR 99.45

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 7  
*Prefect 2025*

#### SUBJECTS STUDIED

Chemistry  
Economics  
English Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Physics



### Annabelle Desmond

ATAR 99.4

Selected for ENCORE  
At Meriden since Year 2  
*Prefect 2025*

#### SUBJECTS STUDIED

Biology  
Chemistry  
English Advanced  
Mathematics Advanced  
Music Extension  
Music 2



### Mikayla Rodger

ATAR 99.3

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 3

#### SUBJECTS STUDIED

Chemistry  
English Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2  
Latin Continuers  
PD/Health/PE  
Physics



### Sophie Tan

ATAR 99.3

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 7  
*Prefect 2025*

#### SUBJECTS STUDIED

English Advanced  
English Extension 1  
English Extension 2  
Latin Continuers  
Latin Extension  
Mathematics Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1



### Maggie Zhang

ATAR 99.2

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 7

#### SUBJECTS STUDIED

Biology  
Chemistry  
English Advanced  
English Extension 1  
English Extension 2  
Mathematics Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1



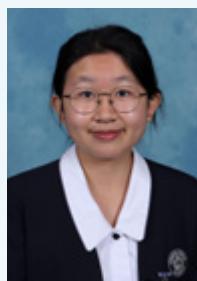
### Angel Long

ATAR 99.15

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 7

#### SUBJECTS STUDIED

Biology  
Chinese in Context  
English Advanced  
Mathematics Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2



### Prudence Iu

ATAR 99.1

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 10

#### SUBJECTS STUDIED

Biology  
Chemistry  
English Advanced  
Mathematics Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2



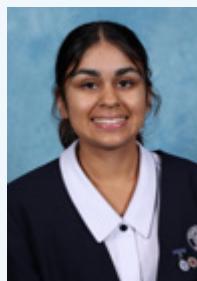
### Angela Li

ATAR 99.1

At Meriden since Year 8

#### SUBJECTS STUDIED

Chemistry  
Economics  
English Advanced  
Mathematics Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1  
Mathematics Extension 2



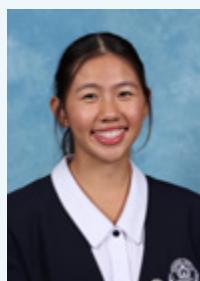
### Parneet Sandhu

ATAR 98.95

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 7

#### SUBJECTS STUDIED

Biology  
Chemistry  
Economics  
English Advanced  
English Extension 1  
Mathematics Advanced



### Isabella Wong

ATAR 98.95

*HSC All-Round Achiever*  
At Meriden since Year 7  
*Prefect 2025*

#### SUBJECTS STUDIED

Biology  
Chemistry  
English Advanced  
English Extension 1  
Food Technology  
Mathematics Advanced  
Mathematics Extension 1

# Performance in HSC subjects

The performance of each girl in each of her HSC subjects is indicated in levels, called Bands, from 1 to 6. Bands 5 and 6 are the highest levels. The table below shows the HSC subjects studied at Meriden in 2025, and achievement levels of the girls in these subjects.

COURSE	% IN BANDS 5 & 6 AT MERIDEN	% IN BANDS 5 & 6 IN STATE	MERIDEN'S TOP MARKS IN EACH COURSE	COURSE	% IN BANDS 5 & 6 AT MERIDEN	% IN BANDS 5 & 6 IN STATE	MERIDEN'S TOP MARKS IN EACH COURSE
Ancient History	84.61	35.05	97	Hospitality	71.42	36.04	93
Biology	78.21	35.59	95	Japanese Beginners	80	35.65	99
Business Studies	89.46	37.23	96	Japanese Continuers	100	55.78	97
Chemistry	74.64	37.90	95	Japanese Extension	100	95.53	47*
Chinese Continuers	100	78.74	98	Latin Continuers	88.88	80.13	96
Chinese in Context	100	94.54	94	Latin Extension	100	97.50	49*
Chinese and Literature	100	79.34	92	Legal Studies	100	44.28	93
Chinese Extension	100	100	48*	Mathematics Advanced	80.89	51.35	100
Community and Family Studies	64	32.45	95	Mathematics Extension 1	88.88	77.24	99
Design and Technology	92.85	48.78	89	Mathematics Extension 2	100	84.35	99
Drama	100	58.35	97	Mathematics Standard 2	66.65	29.65	95
Economics	81.81	52.60	96	Modern History	82.34	35.64	94
Engineering Studies	100	28.64	95	Music 1	100	66.50	98
English Advanced	87.10	65.18	98	Music 2	100	85.97	100
English EAL/D	37.50	23.26	88	Music Extension	100	98.22	50*
English Extension 1	100	95.07	49*	Personal Development, Health Physical Education	59.25	35.04	94
English Extension 2	100	88.39	46*	Physics	64.47	37.61	97
English Standard	22.22	12.81	86	Science Extension	100	76.31	43*
Food Technology	85.71	31.66	97	Society and Culture	100	46.52	89
French Continuers	75	62.87	97	Spanish Beginners	100	58.73	98
French Extension	100	87.49	47*	Studies of Religion 1	66.66	46.18	46*
Geography	68.75	41.06	93	Studies of Religion 2	64.70	48.10	93
History Extension	100	87.3	46*	Visual Arts	95	64.11	96

\* MARK OUT OF 50

# HSC highlights from previous years

ATAR	2024 % OF MERIDEN STUDENTS	2023 % OF MERIDEN STUDENTS	2022 % OF MERIDEN STUDENTS	2021 % OF MERIDEN STUDENTS	2020 % OF MERIDEN STUDENTS
95+	42%	38%	31%	36%	38%
90+	65%	63%	52%	56%	58%

**Over recent years, Meriden students have received top placings in the state in the following subjects:**

## 1st Place

- Biology
- Chinese and Literature
- Chinese in Context
- English EAL/D
- Food Technology
- Hospitality
- Japanese Beginners
- Music 2
- Music Extension
- Senior Science
- Science Extension
- Spanish Beginners

## 2nd Place

- Chinese and Literature
- Chinese in Context
- Community and Family Studies
- English Extension 1
- Japanese Beginners
- Latin Continuers
- Physics
- Science Extension
- Spanish Beginners
- Spanish Continuers

## 3rd Place

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Chinese Continuers
- English Extension 1
- History Extension
- Japanese Beginners
- Mathematics
- Spanish Beginners

## 4th Place

- Business Studies
- Chinese and Literature
- Chinese in Context
- Chinese Extension
- Community and Family Studies
- English EAL/D
- English Extension 1
- Latin Extension
- Mathematics Standard 2

## 5th Place

- Chemistry
- French Continuers
- Hospitality
- Modern History
- Music 1
- Music 2
- Physics
- Science Extension

## 6th Place

- Biology
- English as a Second Language
- Food Technology
- Senior Science

## 7th Place

- Food Technology
- History Extension

## 8th Place

- English Advanced
- English EAL/D
- Mathematics Extension 1

## 9th Place

- Community and Family Studies
- Economics
- Engineering Studies
- History Extension
- Latin Continuers
- Mathematics Advanced
- Studies of Religion II

## 10th Place

- Community and Family Studies
- English EAL/D
- Food Technology
- Mathematics Extension 2

## Tertiary study

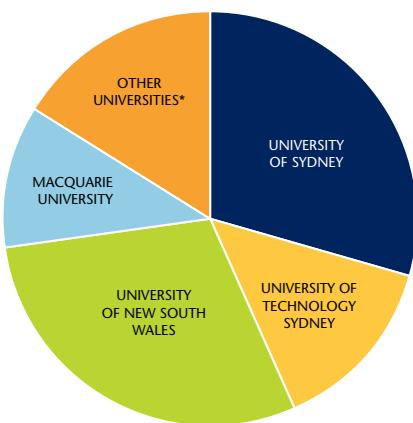
### Tertiary Courses

The most popular tertiary courses chosen by Meriden students over recent years (in alphabetical order)

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| – Architecture  | – Law, International Studies    |
| – Arts, Communications, Media                               | – Liberal Studies               |
| – Commerce, Business, Finance                               | – Medicine                      |
| – Design, Architecture                                      | – Nursing, Occupational Therapy |
| – Economics, Accounting                                     | – Music, Performing Arts        |
| – Education   | – Science, Psychology           |
| – Engineering – aeronautical, civil and mechanical          | – Speech Pathology              |
| – Human Movement, Exercise Science, Nutrition and Dietetics | – Sport Science                 |
|   | – Visual Arts and Fine Arts     |

### University Offers

Preferred university destinations for Meriden's HSC students over recent years



\* Includes local, interstate and international universities

# Excellence abounds...

## Debating

### Archdale Debating

Two Meriden teams won their respective divisions in the Archdale Debating Competition, and three teams were runners-up in their divisions.

The victorious teams were 7A: Sophia Le, Lorena Tram, Zoe Tu and Julia Yun; and 8B: Kate Le, Elvia Lin, Vicky Qian and Maya Vojvodic.

This year, all of Meriden's eight teams qualified for the quarterfinals. Overall, Meriden finished second in the Archdale Shield.

### Harvard Schools Debating Competition

Year 10 student, Annie Li, was named a winner of the prestigious Harvard College World Schools Invitational tournament, competing against some of the world's best high school debaters. Annie and fellow Year 10 student, Jasmine Yang, were selected to represent the Speaker's Corner team in the rigorous international final of the competition earlier in the year.

**1** 7A – Zoe Tu, Lorena Tram, Julia Yun and Sophia Le  
**2** 8B – Elvia Lin, Maya Vojvodic, Kate Le and Vicky Qian

## Drama

### Sport for Jove Shakespeare Carnival

Meriden Year 11 Drama students achieved excellent results at the Sport for Jove Shakespeare Carnival, a competition celebrating Shakespearean literature and performance. The girls secured first place in the Composition category for their original musical piece, *Apotelesma*, written by Amy Chen and Diya Maninathan and performed by a large ensemble. Additionally, Indiana Cheung, Aishani Datta, Celeste El-Khoury, Sneha Hasanat, Sienna Howard, Nicole Li, Steffi Trinh, Yichen Wu and Sophie Yang earned second place in the Smartphone Film category for their short film featuring "Mr Macbeth". Both winning entries qualified to advance to the State Carnival.



1



2

## English

### ICAS English Awards

ICAS English is conducted in over twenty countries around the world and tests students' reading and language skills in a range of contexts.

This year, 19 Meriden students received High Distinctions in ICAS English: Rosie Chen, Sophia Le, Kaitlyn Xi and Muyao Zhang, Year 7; Emma Hu, Ivy Lin and Lily Yang, Year 8; Kayla Chiu, Emma Rose Koeswandy and Rochelle Tao, Year 9; Merridy Bardsley, Nicole Cen, Luna Duan, Katherine Fanning, Yiru Li, Riana Puri, Ashley Shu, Chloe Tam and Anusha Viswanathan, Year 10.

Muyao Zhang



## High Potential Learning

### da Vinci Decathlon

The da Vinci Decathlon is a rigorous academic competition designed to challenge and stimulate the minds of high potential students in Years 7 to 11 in ten different subjects.

The Meriden Year 10 team, comprising Lisa Chen, Eva Gao, Olivia Kim, Yiru Li, Vivian Liao, Amelia Von, Jasmine Yang and Chloe Zhou, was named State Champion for the second successive year against 54 other teams, earning them progression to the National Championship.

At the National Championship, the team placed first in English, Ideation, and Art and Poetry, securing the well-deserved title of National Champion.

### John Locke Essay Competition

Five Meriden students were shortlisted in the prestigious John Locke Essay Writing Competition, which attracts submissions from talented students globally and is known for its rigorous judging process.

Students who achieved this honour were: Alice Feng, Year 9, Iris Gai, Year 10, Tracy Hu, Year 8, Serena Li, Year 9, and Muyao Zhang, Year 7.

Muyao went on to receive a Certificate of Commendation at the global Prize Awards Ceremony for her essay, which argued that everyone's freedom of speech holds equal weight. This was the third consecutive year that a Meriden student has been shortlisted for this international competition.

**1** Tracy Hu, Iris Gai, Serena Li and Alice Feng

**2** Yiru Li, Eva Gao, Jasmine Yang, Lisa Chen, Amelia Von, Chloe Zhou, Vivian Liao and Olivia Kim



## History

### Australian History Competition

Year 8 student, Angel Chen, was named a National and NSW State Champion of the Australian History Competition after achieving the highest score in the Grade 8 division.

This year, all Meriden students in Years 8 and 10 entered the competition, with 41 students achieving High Distinctions and 58 students earning Distinctions.



Angel Chen

## Languages

### National Latin Examination

The National Latin Examination is an online examination conducted annually to over 100,000 Latin students in 27 different countries. Meriden's Year 9 Latin class sat this examination, obtaining some outstanding results; 12 students received a summa cum laude certificate as well as a gold medal, the highest possible award.

The Year 9 students who achieved this honour were:

Elaine Chen, Erika Cheng, Adeline Hu, Danielle Kim, Chloe Li, Serena Li, Yvonne Qian, Mandy Shi, Bethany Sidhom, Yumi Takusagawa, Rochelle Tao and Gabriella Wu.

Ariana Zhang, Year 9, received a silver medal.

### The Australian Computational and Linguistics Olympiad

The Australian Computational and Linguistics Olympiad (OzCLO) is a two-hour competition where students work in teams of four on a range of challenging language-analysis problems. Year 9 students, Alice Feng, Adeline Hu, Serena Li and Mia Wu, excelled in Round 1, earning Gold Certificates for their Division and Region. This outstanding result placed the team in the top 8% of NSW competitors.

### ACER Assessment of Language Competence

The ACER Assessment of Language Competence (ALC) draws on students' sociocultural knowledge, cognitive skills and knowledge of the structure and purpose of language. It comprises two sections: Reading and Listening. To achieve a High Distinction in both sections of the ALC is a hallmark of an outstanding Languages student.

In Chinese, 30 students achieved High Distinction in both Reading and Listening: Angel Chen, Anne Corbett, Eliana He, Lucy He, Phoebe Ho, Emma Hu, Eva Hu, Tracy Hu, Cara Li, Suri Lin, Mia Liu, Victoria Lo, Isabella Lu, Lillian Mai, Mo Su, Tiana Tang, Katherine Wang, Michelle Wu, Estella Yan, Cynthia Yu, Merry Zhai and Bonnie Zhou, Year 8; An An Chen, Ella Chen, Joanne Chen, Joy Deng, Ashley Poon, Avery Sun, Luyin Wang and Sophia Xu, Year 9.

In French, 15 students achieved High Distinction in both Reading and Listening: Claire De Lany, Kate Deng, Vivian Lin, Suyu Ma, Chloe Noiret, Victoria Pineda, Lila Powell, Amber Worden, Samantha Yan, Clare Yang and Lily Yang, Year 8; Elizabeth Deller, Alice Feng, Bethany Sidhom and Mia Wu, Year 9.

In Japanese, four students achieved High Distinction in both Reading and Listening: Kayla Chiu, Lucy Wang, Maegan Wong and Xinghui Zhong, Year 9.

## Mathematics

### 63rd Annual UNSW School Mathematics Competition

The UNSW School Mathematics Competition has run each year since 1962 and assesses students' mathematical insight and ingenuity in a three-hour open book examination. A Distinction or Credit in this competition is an outstanding achievement.

Lillian Shen, Year 10, achieved First Prize in the competition, while Cindy Shen, Year 10, earned a Distinction.

### Australian Mathematics Competition

The Australian Mathematics Competition is an engaging thirty-problem competition that demonstrates the importance and relevance of mathematics in students' everyday lives. Five students achieved a Prize, placing them in the top 0.3% of all participants in the competition, while 19 students received a High Distinction.

The students who earned a Prize were: Grace Yan and Irene Zhang, Year 7; Yiru Li, Cindy Shen and Lillian Shen, Year 10.

The students who earned a High Distinction were:

Asha Fox, Ashley Lin, Emma Sun, Kaitlyn Xi and Chloe Xiang, Year 7; Yuri Han, Isabella He, Elvia Lin, Angel Yang and Ella Zhang, Year 8; Alice Feng, Chloe Li, Valentyna Rosa, Mia Wu, Xylia Yang and Bella Yao, Year 9; Emily Ng, Amelia Von and Isabella Zhu, Year 10.

### AMT Maths Challenge

The AMT Maths Challenge aims to foster a greater awareness and interest in the power of Mathematics, as well as a joy in solving unusual problems. The challenge runs over several weeks, with girls solving six individual problems. This year, Meriden received outstanding results with 37 students receiving a High Distinction.

The students who earned a High Distinction were:

Allison Chang, Claire Fanning, Eano Gu, Ginny Li, Ashley Lin, Emma Sun, Kaitlyn Xi, Chloe Xiang, Grace Yan, Annabelle Yu, Julia Yun, Irene Zhang, Muyao Zhang and Claire Zhu, Year 7; Alissa Chen, Angel Chen, Annie Fang, Zoe Gao, Isabella He, Emma Hu, Mila Ke, Katie Lam, Kate Le, Vicky Qian, Angel Yang, Cynthia Yu and Ella Zhang, Year 8; Mia Wu, Year 9; Eva Gao, Olivia Kim, Suan Lee, Yiru Li, Vivian Liao, Anna Satchithananthan, Cindy Shen, Ashley Shu and Amelia Von, Year 10.

### Australasian Problem-Solving Mathematical Olympiads (APSMO)

The APSMO Mathematics Olympiad is an inter-school competition designed for students in Years 7 and 8. It consists of four separate 30-minute competition papers.

Grace Yan, Year 7, achieved a perfect score in the Olympiad. Over 15,000 students sat the competition and only 29 students achieved a perfect score.

### Australian Intermediate Mathematics Olympiad

The Australian Intermediate Mathematics Olympiad is a challenging four-hour test designed to stretch talented students and enhance their enjoyment and knowledge of mathematics.

Year 10 students, Yiru Li, Cindy Shen and Lillian Shen, achieved a High Distinction in this prestigious competition. Special mention goes to Yiru, who earned a perfect score and received a Prize Certificate.



1 Grace Yan

2 Cindy Shen, Yiru Li and Lillian Shen



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## Performing Arts

### AMEB Examinations

The Australian Music Examinations Board's qualifications are recognised as a national benchmark in musical education across Australia.

Three students received their Licentiate Diplomas (LMusA) this year: Emma Rose Koeswandy on violin – Year 9, Sarah Lin on piano (Distinction) – Year 9, and Connie Liu on violin (Distinction) – Year 11.

Five students earned their Associate Diplomas (AMusA) this year: Kayla Chiu on piano – Year 9, Yolanda Dolenac on double bass – Year 10, Jenny Li on cello – Year 7, PeiQing Ling on violin – Year 9, and Catherine Meng on cello – Year 7.

### Sydney Eisteddfod

Meriden ensembles claimed five first places at the 2025 Sydney Eisteddfod. Meriden's Big Band, Jazz Combo, Junior School Wind Ensemble, Senior Singers and Junior School Chamber Strings won their divisions. Meriden's Symphony Orchestra, Wind Symphony and Senior School Chamber Strings earned second place for their performances.

The Senior Singers went on to perform at the John Lamble Foundation Australasian Championship for Youth Choirs, where they placed first for the third consecutive year.

Year 9 pianist, Symphony Shi, won the 2025 Sydney Eisteddfod Kawai Junior Piano Scholarship after an incredible performance at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

1 Sarah Lin

2 Connie Liu and Symphony Shi

3 Sharon Zhao

4 Nerissa Du



### Music competitions and programs

Year 11 violinist, Connie Liu, was awarded Second Prize at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Kendall National Violin Competition, receiving the Richard Pollett Award and a \$3,000 prize. Connie also won the Multiple Instrument Concerto Award in the Ku-ring-gai Symphony Orchestra NSW Schools Concerto Competition, performing with Symphony Shi. Finally, she achieved outstanding results at the Sydney Eisteddfod, winning both the Violin (15 - 20 Years) section and the String Sonata (15 Years and Over) section, competing against several university-aged students.

Sharon Zhao, Year 11, won the prestigious John Curro National Youth Concerto Competition, performing with the Queensland Youth Symphony Orchestra.

This competition is known for launching the careers of Australia's finest young string players. Sharon was also honoured with the Veronika Butta Memorial Prize.

Symphony Shi, Year 9, won the Multiple Instrument Concerto Award in the Ku-ring-gai Symphony Orchestra NSW Schools Concerto Competition, performing the first movement of Mendelssohn's *Concerto for Violin and Piano in D Minor*.

Year 11 student, Nerissa Du, performed with the Australian Youth Orchestra (AYO) Flagship Orchestra in their Summer Season program. She was then selected to join the Australian Youth Orchestra International Tour. The orchestra, conducted by British conductor David Robertson, performed at prestigious venues in Berlin, Vienna, and Amsterdam, with a final concert held at the Sydney Opera House. Nerissa was one of only eight attendees under the age of eighteen, with the ensemble mostly comprised of university and conservatorium students.

Eight Meriden musicians—Annabelle Desmond, Tina Dong, Nerissa Du, Eva Gao, Molly Grogan, Connie Liu, Gabriella Wu, and Sharon Zhao—were selected for the highly competitive Australian Youth Orchestra (AYO) National Music Camp in Adelaide. This two-week intensive program features the top musicians aged 22 and younger from Australia and New Zealand.

## Research and Critical Thinking

### Sydney Philosothon

The Sydney Philosothon is an interschool event hosted by the Philosophy in Schools Association of New South Wales.

Students engaged in three Community of Inquiry discussions, exploring whether it is ethical to breach someone's privacy for the sake of safety and security, whether it is ever reasonable to exclude people and whether we have an obligation to 'de-extinct' animals.

The Meriden team was awarded third place overall. The team consisted of Mila Ke and Cynthia Yu, Year 8; Alice Feng and Katherine Kljajic, Year 9; Olivia Kim and Jasmine Yang, Year 10; Ila Bains and Anjali Popuri, Year 11.

### Philosophy in Schools Essay Competition

Ila Bains, Year 11, was awarded first place in the NSW Philosophy in Schools Essay Competition, and Olivia Kim, Year 10, was awarded third place. Ila's achievement marks the second consecutive year that she has been awarded a place in this competition, coming third last year. This year also marks the seventh consecutive year that Meriden students have placed in the top three in this rigorous competition.

Organised in collaboration with the Royal Society of NSW Southern Highlands, the state-wide competition challenges students in Years 10 to 12 to tackle complex philosophical questions.

1 Ila Bains and Olivia Kim



## Gold Parnassus Awards

Meriden students who have demonstrated deep learning through an original and evaluative critical analysis, report, creative work or invention that is based on extensive research are eligible for a Parnassus Award.

A Gold Parnassus Award is given to a student whose work displays outstanding rigour and merit, in both the finished product and the research process behind it. The quality of the work exceeds normal expectations for outstanding work at the student's present level of enrolment.

The recipients of Gold Parnassus Awards in 2025 were: Ila Bains, Year 11; Ashley Chan, Year 11; Amy Chen, Year 11; Chloe Chen, Year 11; Luna Duan and Vivian Liao, Year 10; Diya Maninathan, Year 11; Kristy Thapa, Year 11; and Cynthia Yao, Year 11.

2 Front Row: Ila Bains, Amy Chen, Chloe Chen, Kristy Thapa and Diya Maninathan.  
Back Row: Cynthia Yao, Vivian Liao, Luna Duan and Ashley Chan



## Science

### Big Science Competition

The Big Science Competition is a fifty-minute exam for students in Years 7 to 10, testing students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Questions are set in real-life, contemporary contexts, making the exam relatable and interesting.

This year, 23 students achieved High Distinction, placing them in the top 5% of the state: Allison Chang, Rosie Chen, Carolyn Cui, Maggie Geng, Eano Gu, Summer Pathammavong, Shannon So, Elizabeth Walker and Grace Yan, Year 7; Emma Hu, Mila Ke, Zoe Liddell, Alice Mi, Angel Yang and Ella Zhang, Year 8; Kayla Chiu, Alice Feng, Emma Rose Koeswandy, Luyin Wang and Emma Zhang, Year 9; Luna Duan, Katherine Fanning and Mila Vujcic, Year 10.

Special mention goes to Alice Feng, Mila Ke, Zoe Liddell, Alice Mi, Ella Zhang and Emma Zhang for achieving a second consecutive High Distinction, and to Luyin Wang for achieving a third consecutive High Distinction in the competition.

### Junior Science Olympiad

The Junior Science Olympiad is a science enrichment program for highly motivated Australian high school students in Years 7 to 10. The program is designed to inspire and challenge young science enthusiasts.

This year, 13 Meriden students achieved a High Distinction, placing them in the top 10% of entrants: Grace Yan, Year 7; Angel Chen, Tracy Hu, Mila Ke, Alice Mi, Jessie Xu and Ella Zhang, Year 8; Erika Cheng, Kayla Chiu and Serena Li, Year 9; Kitty Gai, Yiru Li, and Lillian Shen, Year 10.

Following their impressive results, Kayla Chiu and Serena Li participated in the 2025 Junior Science Olympiad Talent Development Program. This prestigious, invitation-only national program is offered to a handful of high-performing students in Years 9 and 10.

### Australian Science Olympiad

The Australian Science Olympiads national program is for top-performing Science students and culminates in the International Science Olympiads.

High Distinctions were awarded to Fay Dong, Year 11, in Earth and Environmental Science; Zara Naidoo, Year 11, in Physics; and Qianqi Zhou, Year 11, in Biology.

Following her High Distinction in the Physics Olympiad, Zara Naidoo has been selected to attend the Physics Olympiad Summer School in 2026.

### ICAS Science

The ICAS Science competition test students' scientific and analytic skills, requiring them to identify patterns and relationships in data, interpret the data and draw conclusions, as well as analysing data from secondary sources. The achievement of High Distinction in this competition places students in the top 1% of the state. The following girls received High Distinctions: Carolyn Cui, Grace Yan and Muyao Zhang, Year 7; Emma Hu, Alice Mi, Adelle Naidoo and Vicky Qian, Year 8; Annabelle Kenyon, Zoe Liddell and Rochelle Tao, Year 9; Iris Gai, Year 10.

Furthermore, Year 7 students Muyao Zhang and Grace Yan were awarded a highly prestigious ICAS Science medal. These medals are reserved for students who achieve the highest mark in Year 7 ICAS Science in NSW.

### STA Young Scientist Awards

The Science Teachers' Association of NSW Young Scientist Awards celebrates the scientific and technical innovations of school students. Budding scientists receive awards for specific scientific projects across a number of different categories.

Exceptional projects from the STANSW Awards receive nominations to progress to the national ASTA iCubed Awards. This year, Meriden students received seven STANSW Awards and two nominations to the ASTA iCubed Awards.

The following girls were presented with their awards at a ceremony held at the University of Technology Sydney: Mai Bui, Year 8, second in Chemistry Years 7 to 8; Luna Duan and Vivian Liao, Year 10, first in Chemistry Years 9 to 10 and nominated for the ASTA iCubed Awards; Mihika Garg, Year 8, third in Physics Years 7 to 8; Ella Hou, Year 8, second in Physics Years 7 to 8; Alice Mi, Year 8, first in Biology Years 7 to 8; Maya Vojvodic, Year 8, first in Chemistry Years 7 to 8 and nominated for the ASTA iCubed Awards; Chloe Zhou and Cindy Shen, Year 10, second in the AARNet Use of Technology Secondary Award.



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**1** Zara Naidoo  
**2** Serena Li  
**3** Kayla Chiu  
**4** Maya Vojvodic, Luna Duan, Mihika Garg, Chloe Zhou, Vivian Liao, Alice Mi and Ella Hou

## Social Science

### Australian Geography Competition

The Australian Geography Competition assesses students' geographical knowledge and skills.

Meriden students participated in the Australian Geography Competition this year with some outstanding results, including Year 9 students, Elisia Arfianto, Alice Feng, Sophia Kanbour, Serena Li, Sarah Lin, Juliet Maroun and Matilda Reen, finishing in the top 1% in Australia.

### Teens in Business Awards

Amanda Ambanavos, Year 11, was nominated as a finalist in the Impactful Entrepreneur category in the Teens in Business Awards. Amanda was nominated for her company, Beds by Aladdin, which produces sustainable and ethical dog beds.

**1** Amanda Ambanavos  
**2** Sarah Lin, Elisia Arfianto, Juliet Maroun, Matilda Reen, Serena Li and Alice Feng



## Speech

### Plain English Speaking Award

The Plain English Speaking Award is an annual competition that aims to encourage the use of clear and effective spoken English. Following a successful semi-final win in her division, Anna Satchithananthan, Year 10, was named a state finalist for this prestigious award.

### Rostrum Voice of Youth Competition

The Rostrum Voice of Youth Competition is one of Australia's premier youth public speaking events, challenging students to address contemporary issues with clarity and persuasion. Alice Feng, Year 9, won the Local Final with a compelling speech focused on how young people are utilising social media platforms to help break the cycle of domestic violence.

### Junior Secondary Speaking Award

The Junior Secondary Speaking Award is a rigorous statewide challenge designed to test the impromptu and prepared speaking skills of students across NSW. Mia Wu, Year 9, demonstrated outstanding clarity and persuasive ability, resulting in her selection as one of ten state finalists.

### IGSA Festival of Speech

The Festival of Speech is a debating and public speaking event that gives students the opportunity to speak up on issues they are passionate about.

In the individual sections, Veronica Xie, Year 10, placed first in Senior Soapbox and Rochelle Tao, Year 9, placed fifth in the Junior Poetry section.

**1** Veronica Xie and Rochelle Tao  
**2** Anna Satchithananthan and Alice Feng  
**3** Mia Wu



## STEM

### Life on Mars UNSW Young Women in Engineering Challenge

Year 9 student, Kate Nguyen, won the Life on Mars UNSW Young Women in Engineering Challenge for her innovative Mars habitat. The challenge invited participants to explore the potential for human life on Mars by designing a conceptual habitat capable of supporting human existence. Participants addressed the unique conditions of Mars – its atmosphere, temperature, radiation and gravity – while considering sustainability, essential resources and innovative technologies.

### International Astronomy and Astrophysics Competition

Meriden students participated in the International Astronomy and Astrophysics Competition (IAAC), a prestigious global event that challenges high school and university students to apply advanced problem-solving skills in astronomy and astrophysics.

Kaitlyn Xi, Year 7; Mila Ke and Ella Zhang, Year 8; Victoria Cung, Danielle Ho, PeiQing Ling and Shion Nam, Year 10, achieved Bronze Honours.

Luyin Wang, Year 9, achieved a Silver Honour, placing her in the top 25% of high school and university students worldwide.

- 1 Kate Nguyen
- 2 Luyin Wang
- 3 India Whip
- 4 Muyao Zhang



Meriden girls  
make their *marks.*



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