

Strategies for success from the Class of 2025

Meriden recently welcomed back three top-achieving students from the Class of 2025 to share their valuable advice and wisdom as they plan their exciting next chapters. Kaari Ellen, Sophia Sidhom, and Selina Wang, were interviewed by the very teachers who played a significant role in their HSC journeys, providing current students with practical strategies behind their academic success.

Sophia Sidhom, interviewed by Mrs Danielle Galea, reflected on her experience studying French and the value of extending herself beyond the classroom. “I found going outside of what was given to me was actually quite useful in expanding myself and developing my French,” she shared. Seeking additional resources, collaborating with peers, and exploring supplementary materials enabled her to deepen her understanding.

Now beginning her studies in Biomedical Science at the University of Notre Dame, Sophia emphasised the importance of balance. While the HSC year is demanding, she noted that maintaining cocurricular involvement is both possible and beneficial with strong time management.

“Time management is so important,” she said. “If you don’t structure yourself and plan out what you need to do and stick to the plan, your time quickly runs away from you.” For Sophia, structure and initiative were key to both academic success and wellbeing.

Kaari Ellen, interviewed by Mr Jonathan Chan, will attend Macquarie University to study Law and Criminology. She spoke about her decision to continue participating in sport throughout Year 12. For Kaari, sport was not a distraction but a necessary outlet. “It was a designated time where I had to take a break,” she explained, describing how scheduled training and weekend games created space to step away from study and reset mentally.

Kaari also adopted practical strategies to manage stress. If one subject became overwhelming, she would switch to another, take a walk, spend time with her dog, or watch a movie. These intentional breaks helped her maintain focus and avoid burnout. Her experience reinforced the message that sustained performance requires rest as well as discipline.

Selina Wang, interviewed by Mrs Rebecca Fienberg, reflected on the distinctive nature of studying Music for the HSC. “I found Music to be one of the most unique HSC subjects in the sense that I got to demonstrate my learning in multiple different areas,” she said. Studying a diverse range of subjects helped her maintain balance, allowing her to shift her focus when she felt fatigued and return to each subject with renewed clarity.

Selina will commence a double degree in Computer Science and Law at the University of Sydney. She highlighted how cocurricular involvement can strengthen academic performance. In her case, sustained engagement with orchestral repertoire enriched her musicianship and supported her HSC performance and composition work. Her advice to current students was simple yet powerful: choose subjects you are passionate about, as genuine interest sustains motivation.

The Class of 2025 demonstrated that excellence is not achieved through marks alone, but through curiosity, disciplined effort, balance, strong relationships, and a willingness to engage deeply in the process of learning.



Selina Wang, Sophia Sidhom and Kaari Ellen back on campus

We thank Sophia, Kaari, and Selina for returning to share their insights and wisdom. Their reflections offered inspiration and practical guidance to students across all year groups, and their achievements stand as a testament to the vibrant learning culture at Meriden.

