



Monday 4 October

Dear parents and carers,

Today's update will primarily be focussed on the implementation of the General Achievement Test GAT, which is happening tomorrow for all students undertaking a Unit 3-4 subject. There is also some general information which all families should be aware of.

## General Information

### Bell times

Until Tuesday 26 October, bell times will remain the same for on-site and off-site learners. All students will follow these times throughout the day whether or not they are learning from home.

Bell times are as follows:

9.00 – 9.15: Mentor 'Check in'

9:15 – 10:00: Period 1

10:00 – 10:45: Period 2

10:45-11:15 –Morning Break

11:15 – 12:00: Period 3

12:00 – 12:45: Period 4

12:45-1:45 – Lunch Break

1:45 – 2:30: Period 5

2:30 – 3:15: Period 6

### Uniform

From Wednesday 6 October, all students who attend on-site will be expected to wear full school uniform. This includes any students who are attending for the purpose of on-site supervision. All students have had their uniform incidents on Xuno reset to zero to allow for a fresh start this term. This is usually only done at the beginning of each semester.

### Face masks

For all school settings, the Victorian Chief Health Officer:

- Directs secondary school students aged 12 or older to always wear a face mask indoors and outdoors at school, unless a lawful exception applies.
- Directs secondary school students aged 12 or older to always wear a face mask when travelling to and from school on public transport, taxis or ride share vehicles.

There are a [number of lawful reasons for not wearing a face mask](#), including for staff and students who are unable to wear a face mask due to the nature of their disability, medical or a mental health condition. The previous list of students who have a mask exemption will be reinstated. If you have a lawful reason why your child cannot wear a face mask and have not previously told the college about this. Please notify the Front Office as soon as possible.

A face mask must cover the nose and mouth. Face shields, scarves or bandanas do not meet these requirements. Refusal to wear a mask without a lawful exemption is a breach of the Victorian Chief Health Officer Directions.

## 2021 VCE General Achievement Test (GAT)

- When:** Tuesday 5 October 2021  
Students should arrive 9:00 - 9:30 am  
The GAT starts at 10:00 am.
- Where:** Students will need to check in on arrival at the Performers Precinct building verandah. Students will enter the Performers building through the Kitchen classroom. All other doors will be locked.
- Who:** All Year 11 or Year 12 students undertaking a scored VCE or VET 3-4 subject.
- What:** The GAT is a 3-hour exam that consists of 2 writing sections (approx. 30 minutes each) and a range of multiple-choice questions that cover general knowledge across maths, science, technology, humanities, the arts and social sciences.
- Why:** VCAA uses students GAT results to ensure that study scores are fair and to derive study scores for students who cannot attend a final exam due to unexpected circumstances. It is especially important this year when students may be forced to isolate during the exam period.

*Students are not expected to wear school uniform for the GAT and are advised to dress warmly and in layers due to the need for well ventilated rooms.*

### COVID-19 precautions for the GAT

All students must sign in, and sanitize their hands on arrival. They should check the seating plans to find their allocated seat number. All equipment must be checked by a teacher before entering the Performers building. Please make sure that you have a transparent water bottle, no more than 1.5L, filled before arrival.

Seating for the GAT is distributed across several rooms to allow 4 square metres per person, with a minimum of 1.5m between seats. If you need to use the toilet at any time after entering the building, you'll need to let a supervisor know and wait for their approval.

Students must wear a face mask during the GAT, in line with current guidelines.

Any students who have COVID-19 symptoms, or are waiting for the results of a COVID-19 test, on the day of the GAT should stay at home and contact the school.

Students who have COVID-19 symptoms when they arrive at school will need to be collected and taken for a COVID-19 test. Students who develop symptoms during the GAT will be moved to a quarantine room and allowed to continue the test. Hayfever symptoms can appear similar to COVID-19. Students who experience hayfever should consider taking appropriate measures to minimise their symptoms.

### Canteen and Lunch Orders

The Canteen will be open from 9.15am for students to order lunch which can be collected at the end of the GAT.

If you have any questions or concerns about how the GAT will operate this year, please contact Kate Young: [katherine.young@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:katherine.young@education.vic.gov.au)

### Checking Exposure Sites

I am sure you are aware there is a growing list of Tier 1 and Tier 2 exposure sites within our area at the moment. Please continue to check the [exposure sites list](#) on the Victorian Government's Coronavirus website and take appropriate action if you believe you have been exposed. We are required to notify the Department of Education and Training if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 among our students or staff population. Please be sure to notify the college if this is the case for you.

I encourage you to contact teachers via email or XUNO messaging. If you can't make contact with a teacher, or if you're not sure who you should speak to regarding an inquiry, then please contact Reception via telephone (5479 1111) or email ([castlemaine.sc@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:castlemaine.sc@education.vic.gov.au)).

I will continue to provide updates when there is vital information which needs to be shared with you all.

Take care of yourselves and each other.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Wood', written in a cursive style.

Simon Wood  
Acting Principal – Castlemaine Secondary College