

## Introduction to Doncaster Secondary College

Doncaster Secondary College is a co-educational school of around 1500 students who range in age from 13 to 18 and 123 staff. It is located in the highly desirable inner eastern Melbourne residential area in the State of Victoria in Australia.

The College was amongst the first schools in Victoria to offer an international student program. Our international student program has been running continuously for nearly 20 years at the College. We have therefore developed a very high level of understanding of the needs of International Students and the best ways to manage and support them with their welfare and academic progress.

### Academic Results

Our top student in 2017 achieved a ranking of 98.75 placing them in the top 2% of students in Australia. The top scoring International student achieved a rank of 97.00 placing them in the top 3% across Australia. On average, the top Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) achieved over the past three years was 99.3.

The most popular destinations for Doncaster Secondary College students for tertiary studies are: The University of Melbourne, Monash University and our local university.

Our International Students are regularly awarded the Monash Engineering Scholarship and many of our local students are also awarded university scholarships. Academically the College performs well above state level.

### Students' Academic Programs

The College has its own 'English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students' [ELICOS] catering for intermediate standard for newly arrived students. The intensive course is not suitable for students who are beginners. Having our own onsite ELICOS allows us to better cater for their welfare and academic needs and ensures a smoother transition into mainstream classes. Intensive language classes have an average of 16 students. Students work with a team of staff with the key focus being on the development of their English to prepare them to go into mainstream classes. Students also study with local students in a range of studies such as: Mathematics, Science, Art, Physical Education and Music. This means that the students also mix with local students in their elective classes which is not the case in standard ELICOS programs.

Students have a choice of over 27 VCE studies, University level studies and technically orientated studies. Senior Year 11 and 12 VCE classes are smaller and generally average 22 students per class. EAL classes are also usually less than 20 students. Students are provided with extensive support and careers counselling to assist them in choosing an appropriate VCE program.

### How do we support our International Students?

We pride ourselves on our open door policy of student support. Students are encouraged to seek assistance whenever they need it from our international support team, year level co-coordinators, careers teacher, College nurse and College wellbeing team.

Our International team is comprised of an EAL coordinator, EAL teachers and 2 support aides, who work with the International Student coordinator. We have 2 classroom assistants who provide senior International Students with one-on-one assistance during class time. The International Student team is based in the same office as the management staff for our local senior students. This arrangement means there is far better integration of our International Students with our local students and staff.

The College helps students who are seeking advice on what subjects and university to select through to general wellbeing concerns. We provide support to each of our International Students who may have specific needs, such as, issues with their homestay or missing their family at home.

The College runs special clubs for our International Students, some of these include:

- International intensive language program - staff ratio of 1:8 students
- General homework club for Year 10 and Year 11 International Students
- General homework club for Year 12 students
- Accounting homework club for Year 12 International Students
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) homework club for Year 12 students
- Social club - 'Home Away From Home' program

We concentrate on improving the leadership skills of our International Students. Our leadership program includes leadership training, International Student participation in the Student Representative Council (SRC), as well as participation in projects with local community organisations, such as, The Rotary Club and the Salvation Army charity group.

## Background

### Our Local Area & Transport

The College is centrally located within a very desirable middle class area in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, approximately 18 kilometres from Melbourne's central business district (CBD). All the schools in this area have a very good reputation and are highly sought after. Nearby there is a major bus terminal servicing 40 bus routes across the Melbourne metropolitan area.

The travel time to popular universities: 30 minutes to The University of Melbourne, 30 minutes to Monash University, 20 minutes to Deakin University and 30 minutes to RMIT.

The College is situated close to local facilities, such as, swimming pools, sports ovals, parks, major hospitals, local libraries, and tertiary colleges. One of Melbourne's largest shopping centres, Westfield Shoppingtown, is within a 5 minute walk from the College.

### Facilities at the College

The College is located on a 60,000sq m site and recently underwent a major renovation of all its buildings and grounds, at a cost of \$8.5 million Australian. In 2019, another major building program will commence, to construct extra classrooms, at a cost of \$5 million Australian. This ensures our growing local student population is well catered for.

Our state of the art facilities include: general and specialist teaching areas such as science and electronics laboratories, private study areas for senior students, a music Performance Centre and private practise rooms, specialised art rooms, a careers office and extensive dedicated computer areas. Students also have wireless Internet access from any location within the College grounds.

There are many recreational facilities, including, a synthetic surface sports oval, tennis courts, badminton, hockey, basketball courts, a traditional school gym, a weights room and a state of the art multi court sport stadium with seating for 650 persons.

### Enhancement and Extra-curricular

Our students leave our school with more than just their academic results. They develop life skills such as: leadership, teamwork, organisational and self-reliance. These traits are widely sought after by tertiary institutions and employers. Students participate in a wide range of sports, activities, camps, tours, special programs and competitions while they attend the College. Some examples of these include; debating, chess club, orchestras, drama, theatre, national competitions in science, chemistry and mathematics.

International Students are also encouraged to participate in our social programs, such as, traditional board games club, VCE club, community service club, homework club and EAL club. Our leadership training encourages International and local students to work together to promote greater interaction between International and local students.

Examples of tours offered to students are; Italy tour, France tour, Music Performance tours, USA NASA Space Camp tour, Central Australia tour and a wide range of outdoor adventure activities