

Good morning, Mr Ronchetti, students of the college, teachers, parents and distinguished guests. It is with great honour that I represent the graduating year group from the 60th year of St Dominic's history, to share my journey and advice that guided me to be the Dux for 2019.

I'd like to start by giving a huge congratulations to all of those who stand beside me today. You all must be so proud of what you have achieved as a result of the hard work you all put in and the excellent guidance and support from all of our teachers. It fills me with great pleasure to acknowledge the academic achievements and excellence of so many students from the 2019 graduated class.

Over the past few years there were many great people who supported me and helped me attain my goals, and it is today that I would like to take the opportunity to thank these people. Firstly, I would like to thank all the staff members of St Dominic's for arriving early each and every morning, giving every student an opportunity to grow.

To Mrs Shankar, on behalf of all the boys sitting here with me today, we thank you for the guidance, constant reassurance and structure you gave to the whole year group. But more importantly, thank you for pushing me to be my best in every aspect of life. This time two years ago, I remember sitting in the audience and not even considering Food Tech as a subject, yet with your persistence and support it not only did I make some of the best memories in our classes it was my highest achieving subject finishing 6th in the state.

To Ms Torpy, from my first day in Year 9, I remember walking into your class absolutely petrified, only to find out that you are one of the most kind, fun, yet hardworking teachers I've met. Thank you for nurturing me on my English journey over the past four years, tolerating my waffle, lack of 'wide reading' and copious amounts of drafts. Without your ruthless feedback and constant assistance, pushing me to be my best, I would have never been able to write like I can.

To Mr Mackinnon and Mr Kilbourne, I have never met two people in my life who have asked me for as many past paper questions as you two. Thankyou for your dedication both in and out of school hours, pushing me to constantly improve on my work, study the syllabus and boost my love for PE. To Mr Mackinnon, your constant stories of band 6 success, the many hours we spent in summer without air conditioning and your tips and tricks are some of the best memories and pieces of knowledge I will treasure forever.

To Ms Tahan and Miss Lister, I appreciate the endless hours you spent both in and out of class helping me to learn everything 'Biology' from what has to be the biggest syllabus I've ever seen. Thankyou for staying back each Wednesday afternoon to help me smash through as many past paper questions as I could in that hour, growing my passion for the subject. To Mrs Reid and Mrs Geerlings, thank you for your dedication and constant guidance you provided, helping me to achieve the results I did in my respective subjects. To Mr Passlow, thank you for taking the throne, in what was the best 3yrs of homeroom I have witnessed. Your fun jokes, positive attitude and smiley face stamps in our diaries were always the best start to our day each morning no matter the mood. And finally, to Mr Ronchetti, thank you for not only the support you provide to the college but the to the year 12 Cohort. The abundance of work that you put in behind the scenes to reach academic success from each and every student often goes without recognition, so I would like to thankyou all.

I would also like to thank my family for remaining calm and understanding through my undertaking of the HSC, for providing overwhelming amounts of support and inspiration. Without your constant reminders for me to study hard, achieve my goals and of course ensuring I always get 8hrs of sleep before an exam, I don't think I would have been able to perform as I did and will be forever grateful

for all the time and effort you have invested into me. I would also like to thank my friends, for having my back and helping me keep my head in the game. You guys were always there to help me relax when I needed a break, but also very understanding and motivating when it was time to work hard. They are an amazing group of boys and I am honoured to have the privilege of calling them my friends.

The past year was the most eventful, enjoyable and memorable year I have had in my short life at St Dominic's College. There was a lot of hard work involved. I had many early mornings and late nights to get work done, and quite a few days where I had to force myself to get through the day but believe me the end result was more than worth it. But life does not stop. Over the course of my final year at Doms, I was able to experience many things which helped me grow as an individual and will be forever cherished as lifelong memories. From the fun filled days at the swimming carnival and athletics carnival, to the many many hours spent planning and practising for what was the best Dommies day I have ever experienced, I can say with confidence that we left with a bang. Yes, there were times where we had to knuckle down on study, but we all did our best to leave this school with no regrets and only great memories. I encourage each of you sitting in this room today to seek these opportunities out and become involved in the life of the college.

Being named Dux of the college was a goal I set for myself 6 years ago, as a fresh year 7 student who sat up on the mezzanine listening to the dux speech from the graduating class of 2013. I remember going back into my core class with Mr Naicker, the man who truly kickstarted my journey at St Dominic's and telling him that I wanted to be up there when I graduate. Throughout the years I never lost sight of this goal. With this, I would like to give the following advice to the new year 7s and all students at St Dominic's. Have faith in yourselves and your abilities but realise that help is always near and here at the college, some of the best teachers are always available to provide any help you may require and support your journey from start to finish.

To the current year 12 students, I would like to say, enjoy this year, build new friendships, strengthen old ones and most importantly make some memories. As daunting as your final year can seem, the HSC is nothing more than what you have already completed. I'm here to tell you that yes while you may become consumed by the extra workload or your goals, it is important to make sure you continue to live life. Keep up what you love, because I know I did. Right up until my first HSC exam, I was still training 4 nights a week and competing on most weekends. These breaks from schoolwork were something I looked forward too, giving me time engage in what I enjoy most and motivate me to study harder and achieve my goals. Set goals. Yes, I know you've all heard it before, but setting a visible goal to work towards made the HSC so much more rewarding and only kept me focused to achieve what I wanted. The number 95 was on almost every wall in my bedroom, on my laptop wallpaper and even in my phone notes, reminding me everyday that my goal was to get a 95 atar.

The final thing I would like to say is support and look out for one another. Throughout my HSC year, we had our ups and we certainly had our downs. If it wasn't for my peers helping me get through it as one team, then myself and the other boys here with me today wouldn't have achieved as well as we did. If you believe in yourself, if you know what you want and are willing to work hard to get it, nothing can stand in your way.

Goodluck to you all and thankyou for listening.

