



WHAT'S ON NEWSLETTER

Term 1 Weeks 6 and 7 (Monday 6 March – Sunday 19 March)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Annual Improvement Plan 2023

As part of the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, the Annual Improvement Plan focuses solely on the goals and tasks allocated and/or created for 2022. This plan will ensure a continued commitment to providing a positive and nurturing learning environment that supports our school's mission and vision for the future. Please click [here](#) to find the 2023 Annual Improvement Plan.

School Fees

This is a friendly reminder that Term 1 school fees were due for payment Tuesday 28th February 2023.

If you haven't already done so we would appreciate if you could please settle any outstanding fees as soon as possible. This does not apply to those families who have direct debit arrangements in place.

If you are experiencing any financial difficulties or would like to discuss your fee account, please contact our Finance Manager Jodi Wrenford at fees.office@merici.act.edu.au or call 6243 4108 to discuss the options that are available to you.

Student Achievements at Canberra Show

Congratulations to all our students who entered their work for displays at the Canberra Show. All the entries were exceptional, and we thank you for your dedication to your studies of Textiles and Fashion at Merici College. We would also like to thank over 40 students who volunteered to help at the Show, through the exceptional organisation and support of Maria Georgiadis (Year 12). All our students were wonderful ambassadors for Merici College and eagerly supporting and assisted at stalls.

We would also like to acknowledge the extraordinary achievements of Maria and her entries, receiving numerous awards in Fashion, Craft, and Horticulture and Produce, in particular Champion award in Sewing. We would like to also celebrate the successes Jacinta Ffrench, Alexandra Barham, Emily McGrath, Sesadi Giragama, Rebecca Price, Amy Hants (Year 12 2022), Leah Thewlis (Year 12 2022).

Full article [here](#).

ACADEMIC COORDINATOR'S UPDATE

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Whilst Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been a considerable part of our lives for some time, you may be aware there have been some significant developments in AI tools over recent months. A more notable OpenAI release known as "ChatGPT" (a topical, language-based platform) was launched in November last year and has led to a significant global response, including enthusiasm for what this tool can do and considerable concern in the education environment over what it may mean for assessment. We expect Artificial Intelligence to continue developing rapidly, and there are other AI platforms available.

As more insights become available to educational systems, Merici will share insights and ways we plan to respond to AI technology as we move forward. Merici is working closely with guidance provided by experts, including the Board of Senior Secondary Studies.

Is ChatGPT accurate?

Depending on the question, ChatGPT can be very accurate, and the expression of language is very coherent. ChatGPT draws on large data sets on which it has been trained for answers, putting together what is essentially its best guess.

It is unreliable for numerical questions and cannot respond to information that has become available since ChatGPT was created in 2021. Expected areas of information can also be inaccurate or biased and all information presented by this platform should be questioned and compared against reliable sources. It does not provide any evaluation of its own accuracy, and answers are confidently presented as factual.

Can ChatGPT be blocked or banned?

Emergent AI technologies such as ChatGPT are unavoidable parts of the world our young people are growing in to. Therefore, at Merici, we believe it is important to support our learners to use AI for *appropriate* situations, to understand its opportunities and limitation and to have open conversations about integrity of information.

Yes, it is possible to block ChatGPT on the College network, however, we acknowledge that if we block it on site at Merici, we cannot prevent students from making use of the tool off the College network after hours. It is also important to note that the account creation process requires agreement that the user is over 18 years of age. Therefore, our students are *highly discouraged* to create an account.

Can ChatGPT or other AI content be detected by Turnitin or other tools?

There are emerging tools and responses to ChatGPT in attempt to detect AI creation of content. These tools attempt to determine a percentage likelihood of AI creation of content. Although we will investigate these solutions as they become available, it is likely these responses will be at least one step behind the developing technology and not foolproof. There are many ways of using ChatGPT that these tools will not be able to pick up, particularly if used to prepare information prior to writing, if text is adjusted by the user after generation, or if used to improve the quality of human written text.

How will Merici respond to ChatGPT?

This technology may have an impact on some forms of assessment, however our focus for Merici students is on developing and fostering a genuine love of learning. For this reason, our emphasis in formulating a response is to consider where learning could be impacted - both positively and negatively, through the use of AI. Whilst there are notable concerns around the potential for submission of assessment content created with AI, there can be value in using such tools to speed up some processes of initial investigation. For example, it could be a starting point for developing an understanding of subject matter in text or even a learning pathway for modelling improved written expression. The engine can be asked to simplify text, so information that is confusing could be simplified and more easily accessed for students struggling to understand concepts.

We already have many learning areas where assessment is completed during the learning process in the classroom, rather than relying only on the final product. Other examples of tasks that should not be dramatically affected will include in-class presentations, interviews and alternatives to printed text in video, podcasts, practical creative responses and mixed media presentations.

Teachers are already seeking ways to adjust some tasks possible for an AI engine to respond to. Some adjustments may include drawing a connection to contemporary and local content, using class discussions and

in-class processes as a basis for developing understanding or a perspective, or using creative processes to develop the presentation of final content.

Can students use ChatGPT?

We strongly do not recommend students create accounts for ChatGPT as users need to agree they are over 18. You also need to provide OpenAI with an email address, first and last name, and mobile number. Students need to be aware that the details they provide or information they upload to ChatGPT is stored and could be utilised by OpenAI. It is still an expectation that if students choose to use ChatGPT or any other form of AI in any way for assessment tasks, that they reference and correctly attribute it as they would with any other source of information.

Will teachers use ChatGPT or other AI engines?

From an ethical and philosophical perspective, there is considerable learning value in examining the impact of AI technologies. Therefore, depending on the curriculum area, we anticipate that many teachers will find opportunities to include current AI developments in classroom conversations and more formal learning processes. In fact, we expect many teachers may explore the use of ChatGPT to both understand some of its capabilities and prepare their understanding for conversations with students. Teachers will be supported in developing their own understanding of this technology.

ChatGPT could be used by teachers to generate ideas and prepare some aspects of their lesson content for teaching. Teachers could also use ChatGPT to assist with differentiating information to support different learning needs. It is not a tool that teachers would rely upon for their work, unless it enables them to support student learning more successfully.

What could parents do to support students?

As noted, this technology will continue to be a significant part of the lives of our young people, so it is important to be aware of AI in our lives and continue to question and investigate its impact. You could encourage open conversations at home to discuss understanding of the opportunities, challenges and ethics of AI. If you are concerned about any aspects of AI technology in the school context, please reach out to classroom teachers and our Teacher Librarian, Mrs Ann Blakey.

There are a large number of current news articles and resources emerging every day. Some possible pathways for exploring more about Chat GPT include the following:

- Dr Simon Coghlan, U.of M. (2023) *What'll be big in 2023? Ai, that's what, Pursuit*. The University of Melbourne. Available at: <https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/what-ll-be-big-in-2023-ai-that-s-what> (Accessed: January 29, 2023).
- Milmo, S (2023) *ChatGPT allowed in International Baccalaureate essays*, The Guardian [ChatGPT allowed in International Baccalaureate essays | English baccalaureate | The Guardian](#), (Accessed: February 28, 2023).
- Sam Illingworth Associate Professor (2023) *CHATGPT: Students could use AI to cheat, but it's a chance to rethink assessment altogether*, *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/chatgpt-students-could-use-ai-to-cheat-but-its-a-chance-to-rethink-assessment-altogether-198019> (Accessed: January 29, 2023).
- Voigt, A. (2023) *Schools right now face a choice - fight the wave of CHATGPT, or surf it*, *The Age*. The Age. Available at: <https://www.theage.com.au/national/schools-right-now-face-a-choice-fight-the-wave-of-chatgpt-or-surf-it-20230118-p5cdle.html> (Accessed: January 29, 2023).

Managing Assessment Deadlines & Developing Effective Study Habits

As IB Learners, we encourage our Merici girls to develop effective self-management skills so that they develop well-balanced routines at school and at home.

Unit Outlines

All students have now received their Unit Outlines on SEQTA for each course and spent time during their extended Pastoral Care lesson organising their assessment planners. Encourage your daughter to pin a copy of her Assessment planner somewhere visible around the house and saved strategically on her device.

Summative Assessment Tasks

As we launch into mid Term 1 (already), our students are delving a little deeper in class content and developing the skills required to understand the course material.

The first **Summative Assessment** tasks are starting to be issued to students. Task instructions and expectations are clearly explained to students during class time and on SEQTA. Please don't hesitate to contact the subject teacher as a starting point, if you are having issues accessing any of the information or need further clarification.

Merici Assessment Policy & Extension Requests

Extension requests for assessment tasks will not be granted easily and only on the grounds set out in the Merici Assessment Policies: <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/school-policies?tid=2>

Read full article [here](#).

WHOLE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

International Women's Day Celebration (Wednesday 8 March 5:30pm-7:30pm)

We are very excited about our upcoming IWD celebration on Wednesday 8 March at 5.30pm-7.30pm and welcoming representatives from the UN Women's Australia Canberra Chapter as our guest speakers. The IWD theme this year is '**Cracking the Code: Innovation for a Gender Equal Future**'. Based on the priority theme for the [United Nations 67th Commission on the Status of Women](#) - **Cracking the Code** highlights the role that bold, transformative ideas, inclusive technologies, and accessible education can play in combatting discrimination and the marginalisation of women globally (<https://unwomen.org.au/get-involved/international-womens-day/>).

Date: Wednesday 8 March at the Bridge Restaurant, 5:30pm-7:00pm

Cost: \$25 (adult), \$15 (student) Canapes and drinks

RSVP: Friday 3 March

Tickets can be purchased at <https://www.trybooking.com/CGGVN>



We look forward to celebrating this special event with you.

Annual Community BBQ (Thursday 16 March 5:30pm-7:30pm)

An invitation is extended to all families to attend the Merici College Annual Community BBQ on Thursday 16 March from 5:30pm-7:30pm in the New Quad. The BBQ is a great opportunity for our whole community to gather, parents to meet PC Teachers and for us to welcome new families to the College. Our six individual Houses will be very vibrant in their presence with House Coordinators, House Captains and Vice Captains coming along to meet and greet new families and reconnect with our current families. Members of our P&F Committee are also looking very forward to meeting you and welcoming our new families to the community.



Please note that for catering purposes, RSVPs are essential for this event before **Wednesday 8 March**. Food and drinks will be provided. Unfortunately no late RSVPs will be accepted. Please follow the link <https://www.trybooking.com/CGCTM> to let us know if you are available to join us.

Bridge Restaurant (Wednesday 22 March 12.30pm)

The Bridge Restaurant will be open on Wednesday 22 March from 12:30pm. Please email bridge@merici.act.edu.au for all bookings. Visit www.bridge.restaurant for more information and sitting times.

DonateLife Gift of Life Walk (Wednesday 22 March 7.15am-8.30am)

On Wednesday 22 March, Merici College students and staff will participate in our Donatelife Walk (<https://www.giftoflife.asn.au/>). The purpose of the walk is to promote increased organ and tissue donation awareness. One donor can transform the lives of up to 10 people and significantly improve the lives of many more (see flyer attached). Thousands of Canberrans are expected to take part in their own walks either individually or as a team to show their support for this cause. Please refer to the Gift of Life Inc website for further details (<https://donatelife.gov.au/>).



We are delighted to have Canberra FM's 104.7 Ned and Josh here as well, broadcasting their morning radio show live from the College.

The walk will take place on the Merici College Oval from 7:15am – 8:30am, students are encouraged to walk up to 5km. A cooked breakfast will also be provided to students at no cost after the walk. Students will have permission to wear Gift of Life or Donatelife Walk t-shirts and hats for the school day with their sports uniform shorts/tracksuit pants on Wednesday 22 March. Students are encouraged to wear t-shirts and hats they have received in previous years. There will be merchandise available as well. Parents are required to complete the permission note found [here](#) before Friday 17 March. Please ensure this permission note is completed to assist in merchandising, catering and as a record of Christian Service hours.

The Donatelife Walk is a good opportunity to discuss your thoughts on tissue and organ donation with your family and friends and to register your donation decision on the Australian Organ Donor Register at www.medicare.gov.au or www.donorregister.gov.au (donations cannot go ahead without the consent of family).

Please remind your child that appropriate behaviour is expected at all times as she is a representative of the College.

YEARS 7, 8, 9 NEWS

Year 7 Camp

Year 7 students will be attending a camp in Week 6 of Term 1 at The Tallong Outdoor Education Centre NSW. The details are as follows:

Balgo, Brescia and Penola Houses: 6 – 8 March 2023
Ningil, Seiwa and Tullow Houses: 8 – 10 March 2023

The Year 7 Camp is an excellent opportunity for students to develop relationships with their peers and enjoy diverse experiences outside of the formal school setting. It is expected that all students will attend the Camp. Students will be involved in various activities at the Camp for which all equipment will be provided.

For full information and permission note, please click [here](#).

Please click [here](#) to find the application for the administration of medicine.

Please click [here](#) to find the packing list.

Year 7 NAPLAN

NAPLAN testing will occur in our school between **15 and 27 March 2023**.

Education ministers agreed that NAPLAN would move to Term One from 2023. This will mean results will be available to education authorities earlier in the year to inform school and system teaching and learning programs and will assist teachers to better determine support students need for the coming year.



NAPLAN Online is a more engaging assessment that adjusts questions to each student's achievement level.

NAPLAN provides valuable information to schools and parents about literacy and numeracy achievement. It supports school improvement processes by enabling teachers to monitor student progress over time and to identify areas of strength and development.

At Merici College, we would like to reiterate that NAPLAN serves as a growth measurement and not something that students should feel they have to study for. Rather, the skills and knowledge that students are learning at Merici are guided by the principles of the Science of Learning, which will ensure that our girls are equipped with the skills they need to show growth in their NAPLAN journey. As such, all eligible students are encouraged and supported to participate in NAPLAN testing.

Visit www.nap.edu.au to see interactive versions of the test and for more information.

YEARS 10, 11 AND 12 NEWS

Year 11 and 12 Modern and Ancient History Excursion (Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 March)

Year 11 and 12 Modern and Ancient History students will travel to Sydney for an overnight excursion with Dr Powell and Ms Passchier to visit museums, tour historic sites and experience hands-on archaeology in week 7 on Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 March. The excursion is linked to an assessment task. Consent forms and payments should be sent directly to our finance office (Jodi.Wrenford@merici.act.edu.au) as soon as possible.

IB NEWS



Assessment and Reporting Workshop

Thank you to the families who attended our MYP Assessment and Reporting workshop. Please click [here](#) to find the evenings presentation.

Statements of Inquiry and the Middle Years Program

Unit outlines for the Middle Years Program (MYP) units have been released and it is exciting to see the huge variety in the statements of inquiry for different subjects and grades. The statement of inquiry (SOI) is a meaningful statement through which students can explore the concepts and contexts of their unit of study.

The SOI informs factual, conceptual, and debatable questions for the unit and helps students to understand the unit of study in a global context.

Here are some examples of statements of inquiry that are being explored this semester at Merici:

- The way we structure our lives is related to our personal identity and home life – Year 9 Spanish
- Movement can be an agent for relational inclusion and equity – Year 10 Physical Health and Education
- Discovering patterns and simplifying processes can help us to understand relationships to show connections between mathematical laws and real world systems, methods and processes. – Year 8 Mathematics
- Visual representations allow us to acknowledge our identity and explore personal and cultural expression – Year 9 and 10 Visual Art
- A new product can be developed by adapting existing ideas – Year 7 Food Technology

Classes introduce and explore these statements of inquiry in different ways. Ms Firman's Year 7 Integrated Humanities class [recite their SOI together](#) while. Ms Casey's Year 9 Religious Education class has created mind maps that illustrate the key ideas in the SOI.

Important Dates

MYP Awards Ceremony	10 March Period 6	MYP Year 10 2022 (current Y11 students) Award Ceremony. Please click here to find the invitation. This event will also be live streamed and recorded for your convenience.
MYP Revision Skills Workshop Year 7 families	30 March 6 :00pm	A workshop for students and their parents to learn effective techniques to revise for tests and exam at high school. This will be an interactive workshop with practical strategies provided. Please click here to find the invitation for parents to attend this workshop.



Key Dates

This is a list of some key dates for IB Year 11 students.

Event	Date	Information
CAS / Extended Essay Information Session	14 March 6:00- 7:00pm	For Y11 students and parents. This session will outcome the DP requirements for two parts of the 'Core'. Formal invitation to be sent out nearer the time.

This is a list of some key dates for IB Year 12 students.

Event	Date	Information
French B Oral Practice	10 March	French B SL students will complete their practice oral assessment for their Internal Assessment.
World Religion IA due	16 March	World Religion IA Final submission due
Italian IA	31 March	Final IA Italian Due
Italian Final IB Exams	9-10 May	Italian Students will sit their official IB exams.
World Religion Final IB Exams	15-16 May	All Y12 DP students to sit their official IB exams.

iC NEWS

These two weeks bring us peak assessment time. The Information Centre (iC) plays a big role in assisting and delivering key elements to students to help assist in the final task produced, including the skill development in notetaking, researching and referencing.

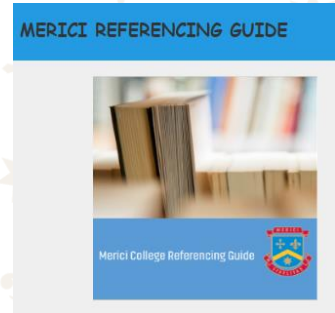
We have been curating resources that are task specific, both the physical books and digital resources. These can be found as a [LearnPath](#) on SEQTA home which are part of Oliver. These are pathways to reliable and relevant digital information, including the databases available to all students.

Over the last two weeks the seniors have had an information session about being an 'ethical researcher' how to show Academic Integrity in the work they produce. As IB learners we are Principled learners "We act with integrity and honesty... We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences" (IBO, 2013). This all comes down to acknowledging our sources by using intext refencing and producing a Reference list. Merici College has its [own Referencing Guide](#), based on Harvard, this is also available through LearnPath on SEQTA.

By showing our critical thinking, using the resources we have available to us and taking the time to read, note take and talking to others about what we have learned we will be ethical researchers who display Academic Integrity in our learning.

Yours in research,

iC Staff



LANGUAGES NEWS

Student Exchange Experience Reflection – Harriette Maguire

Back in 2018, I visited Italy with my family which was such a memorable experience, so I decided to start learning the language when I came to Merici in year 7. When the WEP overseas exchange experience came up, I thought it would be the perfect opportunity to go back to Italy and be able to use all the language skills that Merici had taught me over the past 4 years. Especially after the pandemic, I was so excited to travel and be able to see new places again. I went into it trying not to set any expectations, which prompted me to have an open mind. This resulted in me having the best experience; more than I could have ever wished for.



Please click [Full article with images](#)

DEFENCE NEWS

Week Six - Defence Catch Up - Thursday 9 March

Defence Catch up in room 222, pop in with your lunch and make some poppies for our ANZAC Service in Week 1 Term 2. Snacks will be provided.

Week Seven– Defence Buddies Fun Thursday 16 March, Harmony Day

Our Defence big Buddies are organising fun activities at lunch in the OYC. Bring your lunch and you're welcome to bring a friend and join in the fun activities. Snacks will be provided.

Further Contact:

Families are always welcome to contact myself with any questions or to update family deployment or posting information. Kate.friend@merici.act.edu.au or phone 02 6243 4190. I work part time and am at Merici College on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Kate Friend, Defence School Mentor

CO-CURRICULAR

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an internationally recognised scheme for young people, building their skills to equip them for life and work. It aims to get young people involved in a diverse and rich lifestyle; developing confident and competent individuals. The Duke of Edinburgh program at Merici is run as a co-curricular activity, open to students from year 9 to year 12 (or anyone over 14 years of age).

Parent Information Evening: Parents and students new to the Award are invited to attend an information session to find out more about The Duke of Edinburgh's Award and how it operates within Merici College.

Curtis Hibberson, Operations and Business Development Officer for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award in the ACT will also be in attendance. All welcome.

Date : Monday 6 March, 5:00pm– 6:00pm

Location: Auditorium, Merici College

Adventurous Training hike preparation

Prior to the Parent Information Evening, there will be an Adventurous Journey training and preparation session offered to new Bronze Award participants. All students welcome.

Date: Monday 6th March, 3:30pm-5:00pm

Location: Auditorium, Merici College

For more information, please email Jackie Males (Jackie.males@merici.act.edu.au).



Music Program

Instrumental and Vocal Opportunities

At Merici College, students have the opportunity to participate in private instrumental lessons to learn a musical instrument or sing with one of our vocal tutors, during school hours on campus. Individual tutor rates are \$41 per half hour lessons. Lesson times are rotated to allow for flexibility with school timetabling.



Instrumental Tutors

- Woodwind – flute, clarinet and saxophone
- Brass – trumpet, trombone, french horn and tuba
- Guitar and bass guitar
- Strings - violin, viola, cello and double bass
- Piano and keyboard
- Voice

Merici Music Groups

We also offer a wide variety of instrumental and vocal opportunities which include:

- String Ensemble
- Vocal Group
- Merici Concert Band
- Guitar Group

Instrument Hire

Musical instruments are available at Merici College and can be signed out to students at no charge for up to 12 months. There is a security deposit of \$150 which is fully refunded upon return of the instrument.

Please click [here](#) to find the Music Tuition Policy.

Participation

Students are invited to join a co-curricular group at our Activities Expo held in Term 1 of each year. Enrolment in private lessons or hiring an instrument can be made by emailing the Music Department.

Performances

Through the Music Co-Curricular Program students can perform at a number of events throughout the year. These may include; the Australian National Eisteddfod, Floriade, Open Day, Creative and Performing Arts Showcase, Merici College Masses, Grandparents Day, and much more.

Contact : Heather Lloyd, Music Department

Email: music.program@merici.act.edu.au. For further information, please click [here](#).

OTHER NEWS

Volleyball ACT Sports Bra Project

The Sports Bra Project works to remove barriers to sports participation for women and girls around the world by providing new sports bras to organizations and programs operating in countries and communities where opportunities and access to sport is limited. For many, a sports bra is a luxury, and it is something that we often take advantage of (imagine trying to play volleyball without one!). When resources are limited, our basic human needs – food, water, educational fees – take priority over luxuries like sports equipment. To ensure that the equipment gets to its intended location, the project works with trusted partners in the U.S. and abroad.

On **Tuesday 7th March**, Volleyball ACT will be holding a donation event at the Lyneham Beach Courts. From **5:30pm onwards** (in line with our Women's Beach Competition times), you are invited to come down and enjoy **free hot drinks and baked goods** (please feel free to bring a plate of goodies) from the food van and donate a sports bra.

A few key points:

- It is recommended you donate a sports bra of your size (to ensure there is a variety).
- Only new or unused sports bras can be donated.
- Each donation will be paired with a personalized message tag from the donor (these can be filled out on the day and attached to the sports bra).
- Your donation doesn't need to be super flash - every donation will be well received.

Volleyball ACT are accepting donations if you are unable to attend this event. Please visit <https://www.volleyballact.com.au/home/> for more information.

THE SPORTS BRA PROJECT

Volleyball ACT

WOMEN SPORT AUSTRALIA

Support The Sports Bra Project this International Women's Day

To mark International Women's Day, Volleyball ACT will be supporting *The Sports Bra Project* in partnership with Women Sport Australia.

The Sports Bra Project increases access to sports for women and girls by removing barriers to participation. They provide sports bras to athletes who don't have access to such a basic piece of equipment.

We are seeking donations of sports bras (all shapes and sizes) with the aim of donating 100 sports bras. Each donation will include a personalized message tag from the donor.

When: Tuesday 7th March 5:30pm onwards.

Where: Lyneham Beach Courts

Come down, support our Women's Beach Comp and enjoy free hot drinks and baked goods.

Dr Justin Coulson PhD - FREE webinar on the important topic of Anxiety and Resilience.

The Council of Catholic School Parents NSW/ACT invites parents, carers and staff to attend a free webinar to assist you to support children in your care. The webinar will be held on Wednesday 29 March at 7.00pm. Please register using the QR code below or ccsp.catholic.edu.au/upcoming-webinars



Anxiety and Resilience

With Dr Justin Coulson PhD

Wednesday 29 March 2023 7.00-8.00 pm