

# Life After ATAR

Reaching the end of 13 years of schooling conjures up mixed feelings for students anxiously awaiting ATAR results and university offers. There is excitement over the start of a new journey in life, alongside fears of heading into the unknown.

While students take different pathways as they pursue their dreams and aspirations, the Academy of Mary Immaculate - listed in the top 10 of Catholic Schools results in Victoria in 2015 - ensures they are stepping off the launch pad with ambition, confidence and inspiration.



**Isabelle Danaher: it's all about the music.**

With 10% of Academy girls achieving an ATAR above 95, they are also assured of a solid academic grounding that will open up endless career possibilities. As these four graduating students testify, there is no stopping passion, an inquisitive mind and a clear sense of direction.

"I will definitely miss being a part of the daily life of the college," shares **Isabelle Danaher** who is leaving the Academy to pursue a degree in musical studies.

"Being able to take part in a great range of extra-curricular activities alongside my studies has allowed me to explore my skills and talents and develop a greater understanding of what I enjoy and do best."

One of Isabelle's dreams is to perform professionally either as 'a soloist, an ensemble member or in a musical theatre production'. However, the Academy's music teachers have also inspired her to pursue a career teaching music.



**Amelia Murphy: flying high.**

"During music ensemble rehearsals or at performances, I saw the dedication and passion the music teachers had for their subject, and it made the experience of rehearsals very enjoyable. I felt that if I became a teacher, I could share my own love of music with others."

**Amelia Murphy**, already accepted into the Royal Australian Air Force Gap Year program, has her sights set on becoming a pilot within the RAAF, paving the way for other women interested in aviation and male dominated careers.

"I like the idea of showing them that women can be just as valuable and even better than men in many job fields," says Amelia.

While the lure of exotic countries is part of her motivation, "the Academy has supported my dreams throughout my schooling. They certainly pushed me to work hard in physics and maths and gave me the opportunity to have work experience at Essendon airport."



"Education is the key to ending so many issues throughout the world."

**Dux, Aimee Altermatt with Academy Principal, Sr Mary Moloney,**

"My dream to fly is inspired by my dad as he is an air traffic controller and has a love for aviation. When I went for my first overseas trip to Vietnam, I realised that flying is what I want to do. I joined the Australian Air Force Cadets, which began my desire to join the RAAF as I love the lifestyle and it is the place for me rather than university."

18 year old **Victoria Waid** on the other hand is ready to jump straight into university to pursue law and politics.

"University opens up so many more doors to both furthering my career in law, and getting involved with more opportunities. I am going to miss all the teachers and the support they have provided. Having teachers who believe in you and want the best for you can have such an amazing impact on the person you grow to become."

During her time at the Academy, Victoria gained exposure to challenges facing girls in other countries by volunteering with Plan International, which "allowed me to realise that not everyone has the privilege of getting such a good education as I have. Education is the key to ending so many issues throughout the world. I have learnt to value who I am, my beliefs, and to ensure that I do not abuse my privilege of living in such a wealthy and safe country".

**Aimee Altermatt** is clearly celebrating the end of high school having just received the Academy's DUX award with an impressive ATAR of 99.25. "It's no secret that hard work, bothering your teachers and doing as many practice exams as possible are the best ways to succeed academically,"



**Victoria Waid: advocacy, change and the law.**

highlights Aimee who is breathing a sigh of relief that all the hard work has placed her in the top 1% of Victorian high school students.

Next year Aimee is off overseas to her father's home country for a Gap Year. "I am going to French speaking Switzerland to work as an Au Pair. I hope to perfect my French before studying Maths and French at University".

Reluctant to make concrete plans, Aimee's hopeful that she will find a career that she is passionate about: "All I know is that I really enjoy Maths thanks to all the great and inspiring teachers I've had over the year".

Whichever direction life takes, from a Gap Year overseas to a law degree, musical career or flying the skies as a RAAF pilot, the Academy enables young women to explore their strengths and dreams in a dynamic learning environment that builds confidence and capability, readying to lift off into the big wide world.

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