



THE WAY





DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD

The many benefits of the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Thomas Hassall

There's something special as a teacher to be able to walk alongside students in the Australian bush. No technology, no distraction, just nature and your teammates around you. When I get to see students helping each other, encouraging and supporting as we traverse through tricky situations, I see a group of young people with genuine and sincere concern and love for their fellow peers. It is hard work and tiring, yet they persevere and persist through the challenges together (and with smiles on their faces!).

Mr John Williams from the English/ LOTE department speaks about his experience of Dukes at the College:

"This is my second year of being an active member of the College's Duke of Edinburgh programme. Recognised the world over, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, or simply 'Dukes', is one of the finest qualifications students can leave secondary school with. It is also the best co-curricular experience the College offers, well, at least that's my opinion! While Dukes requires

participation in a range of community and skill-based activities, it is best known for its adventurous journeys. Hitting the trail together, following tracks and bush bashing, climbing challenging mountains, pitching camp and sharing great food and laughs around the fire at the end of the day is what these journeys are all about. For me as a teacher, the dusty trail and the campfire banter is where I see relationships nurtured, maturity blossom and resilience develop; all skills that our students need for life in our rapidly demanding world. In many ways, the bush gives our students the next challenge where our classrooms and technology cannot. I am lucky enough to love bush walking as a hobby. If I didn't though, I would still do Dukes for the wondrous growth I see it giving our students."

I am currently recruiting students aged 14 years and older to join the Dukes experience. I will also be giving a brief presentation at Year 9 and 11 Parent Teacher Night (March 26). For more information on the Award at Thomas Hassall please contact the Award Leader Niamh Friel (nfriel@thac.nsw.edu.au).

Miss Niamh Friel

Dukes Coordinator
