

MacKillop
Catholic College



YEAR 8 SUBJECT SELECTION GUIDE



2025

INTRODUCTION

MacKillop Catholic College is committed to creating a dynamic and supportive learning environment where students are provided with opportunities to realise their potential and pursue their aspirations. Students in Year 8 consolidate their foundational learning through participation in subjects and courses that develop skill sets designed to set them up to succeed as independent, self-directed, and motivated learners, who are able to engage collaboratively with their peers to produce meaningful and relevant products of their learning.

In Years 7–10 the Australian Curriculum supports the deepening of knowledge, understanding and skills in all eight learning areas. The curriculum continues to prepare students for civic, social and economic participation and personal health and well-being whilst providing increased opportunities for students to make choices and specialise in learning of particular interest. The curriculum is designed to equip students for senior secondary schooling, including vocational pathways.

This handbook is designed to support our Year 7 students make best decisions when selecting specialist courses of study for Year 8. It contains relevant information pertaining to curriculum structures and courses that will be offered in 2025.

There are three specialist lines, and in Semester 2, one of these lines will encompass JSS. This means that students who wish to participate in JSS do so as part of their specialist classes, and will do two other specialists.

HPE must be studied for a semester, but students can select these where it works with their other subject choices.

YEAR 8 CURRICULUM

In Year 8 all students will study a total of eight (8) courses each semester (6 core + 2 specialist). The structure of the subject offerings for Year 8 2025 will be as follows:

Core Subjects

- ▶ Religious Education
- ▶ English
- ▶ Mathematics
- ▶ Science
- ▶ Health and Physical Education (1 semester)
- ▶ Humanities and Social Sciences (1 semester of History; 1 semester of Geography)

Specialist Subjects

- ▶ Business and Economics
- ▶ Civics and Citizenship
- ▶ Design and Technology – Food Specialisation
- ▶ Design and Technology – Design
- ▶ Digital Technology
- ▶ Drama
- ▶ Health and Physical Education Extension
- ▶ Japanese
- ▶ JSS (Semester 2 only)
- ▶ Media
- ▶ Music
- ▶ Visual Arts

In selecting Specialist Subjects in Year 8, it is important that students consider:

- ▶ Areas that are of interest
- ▶ Achievement and success experienced in Year 7
- ▶ Subjects that will extend and challenge

Students should not choose a subject based on

- ▶ Friends taking it
- ▶ They've heard it's easy
- ▶ They have heard they need to do it even though they hate it and haven't passed it previously

How can parents help?

- ▶ Supporting students in the subject selection process by discussing the topics studied in the subject outline provided in this handbook
- ▶ Encouraging participation in subjects where students can feel success
- ▶ Being aware of the College's expectations and assessment programs

Selecting your specialist courses

- You must select one subject from The Arts, and one from The Technologies *across the year*
- Each class has a capacity of *28 students except for Food Specialisation, Design and Visual Arts which have 25*
- Those who *get the preferences in early*, will have a better chance of having their first preferences
- These are *preferences only* and you are not guaranteed what you choose
- You may NOT pick the same subject for both semesters

Religious Education



Why study this subject?

- Appreciate the diversity of belief and faith systems
- Understand the importance of faith and belief systems
- Develop critical and creative thinking skills
- Appreciate the spiritual and the divine

Possible topics covered

- Beliefs
- Sacred Texts
- Church
- Christian Life

What will students do?

- Develop understanding of the experience of sin throughout human history and some ways in which the Church responded to the presence of good and evil in the past (c.1750 CE - 1918 CE).
- Understand the priestly, prophetic and kingly work of Jesus Christ and ways in which believers live their Christian vocation by participation in this work. They consider sources of inspiration, strength and guidance for believers today
- Explore two forms of Biblical criticism, namely form criticism and narrative criticism, and develop the ability to apply these to help their understanding, interpretation and use of a range of Biblical texts

- Continue to develop their understanding of prayer in the Christian tradition through an exploration of the writings of Christian spiritual fathers and mothers, prayers for forgiveness and healing, Christian Meditation and meditative prayer practices
- Develop their understanding of three foundational beliefs of Christianity (the Incarnation, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus) and consider their significance for believers.

How will students be assessed?

- Exams
- Research assessment
- Critical analysis of source material
- Visual representations
- Biblical criticism

English



Why study this subject?

- The study of English is central to your learning and development.
- It helps create confident communicators, imaginative thinkers and informed citizens.
- It is through the study of English that individuals gain increasing control over language to analyse, understand, communicate and build relationships with others and with the world around them.

Possible topics covered

- Australian Poetry
- Conflict and Narrative Intervention
- Animal Farm Novel Study and Persuasive Strategies
- Analytical Writing

What will students do?

- Students engage with a range of literary texts that reflect imagination and the real world. These texts are a springboard for learning, with students developing skills around knowledge, understanding and skills in listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating.
- Analyse a range of text types from a variety of cultural contexts.
- Refine and develop control of language structures and textual features.
- Examine the use of aesthetic and stylistic devices by text producers for a range of purposes.

How will students be assessed?

- Students will complete assessment tasks that allow for creative responses using imaginative, informative, and persuasive text types. This may include:
 - Essays
 - Feature articles
 - Multimodal presentations

Mathematics



Why study this subject?

- Continue to develop essential mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding in Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, and Statistics and Probability
- Continue to develop the numeracy capabilities required in their personal, work, and civic life
- Develop the fundamentals on which mathematical specialties and professional applications of mathematics are built.

Topics covered

- Number and Algebra
- Measurement and Geometry
- Statistics and Probability

What will students do?

- Solve everyday problems involving rates, ratios, and percentages
- Describe index laws and apply them to whole numbers
- Describe rational and irrational numbers
- Solve problems involving profit and loss
- Solve problems relating to the volume of prisms
- Identify conditions for the congruence of triangles and deduce the properties of quadrilaterals
- Model authentic situations with two-way tables and Venn diagrams
- Choose appropriate language to describe events and experiments
- Explain issues related to the collection of data and the effect of outliers on means and medians in that data
- Use efficient mental and written strategies to carry out the four operations with integers
- Solve linear equations and graph linear relationships on the Cartesian plane

- Convert between units of measurement for area and volume
- Calculate perimeter and area of parallelograms, rhombuses and kites
- Calculate the areas and circumferences of circles
- Determine the probabilities of complementary events and calculate the sum of probabilities.

How will students be assessed?

- Examinations
- Problem-solving and modelling tasks

Science



Why study this subject?

- Develop an interest, curiosity and willingness to explore, ask questions about and speculate on the changing world in which you live
- Continue to develop your critical and creative thinking skills to solve problems
- Develop a stronger understanding of the scientific disciplines to support decision making process for Years 11 and 12.

Topics covered

- Chemistry
- Physics
- Biology
- Earth Science

What will students do?

- Understand that science provides of the nature of living things, of Earth and its place in the cosmos, and of the physical and chemical processes that explain the behaviour of all material things
- Understand the nature of scientific inquiry and the ability to use a range of scientific inquiry methods, including questioning; planning and conducting experiments and investigations based on ethical principles; collecting and analysing data; evaluating results; and drawing critical, evidence-based conclusions
- Communicate scientific understanding and findings to a range of audiences, to justify ideas based on evidence, and to evaluate and debate scientific arguments and claims
- Solve problems and make informed, evidence-based decisions about current and future applications of science while considering ethical and social implications of decisions
- Develop a solid foundation of knowledge of the biological, chemical, physical, earth and space sciences, including being able to select and integrate the scientific knowledge and methods needed to explain and predict phenomena, to apply that understanding to new situations and events, and to appreciate the dynamic nature of science knowledge.

How will students be assessed?

- Data Analysis
- Experimental Investigations
- Research Investigations
- Examinations

Humanities and Social Sciences

History



Why study this subject?

- The study of History is fundamental to understanding how the modern world works, and why it is the way it is
- It helps create an appreciation of the vast differences among humans, allowing people to become effective global citizens
- History promotes critical thinking, analysis and evaluation skills.

Possible topics covered

- Medieval Europe
- The Black Death

What will students do?

- Students study from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern period, c.650– 1750 AD (CE). During this time, social, economic, religious, and political beliefs were often challenged and significantly changed. It was the period when the modern world began to take shape
- The focus periods include Medieval Europe (c.590 – c.1500)
- A framework for developing students' historical knowledge, understanding and skills is provided by inquiry questions through the use and interpretation of sources
- Students will analyse, interpret, and evaluate a range of historical sources to understand the range of perspectives on a given topic

- They will apply historical thinking skills, such as significance, causation, and change and continuity.

How will students be assessed?

- Assessment may include:
 - Historical Essays
 - Multimodal presentations
 - Source analysis exams
 - Independent Source Investigation

Geography



Why study this subject?

- Develop a sense of wonder, curiosity and respect about places, people, cultures and environments throughout the world
- Acquire a deep geographical knowledge of their own locality, Australia, the Asia region and the world
- Develop your ability to think geographically, using geographical concepts
- To be competent, critical and creative users of geographical inquiry methods and skills
- To become informed, responsible and active citizens who can contribute to the development of an environmentally and economically sustainable, and socially just world.

Possible topics covered

- Landforms and Landscapes
- Changing Nations

What will students do?

- 'Landforms and landscapes' focuses on investigating geomorphology through a study of landscapes and their landforms
- 'Changing nations' investigates the changing human geography of countries, as revealed by shifts in population distribution
- A framework for developing students' geographical knowledge, understanding and skills is provided through the inclusion of inquiry questions and specific inquiry skills, including the use and interpretation of maps, photographs and other representations of geographical data.

How will students be assessed?

- Assessment may include:
 - Exams
 - Field trips
 - Research assessment
 - Digital portfolio
 - Data representation
 - Data interpretation

Civics and Citizenship



Why study this subject?

- *Develop a knowledge of government systems and processes*
- *Understand the way Australian politics functions*
- *Engage in political conversations regarding Democratic rule*

Possible topics covered

- how citizens can actively participate in Australia's political system, the role and impact of elections, and the ways political parties, interest groups, media and individuals influence government and decision-making processes.
- how laws are made and the types of laws used in Australia.
- what it means to be Australian by identifying the reasons for and influences that shape national identity, and how this contributes to active citizenship.

What will students do?

- engage with case studies on a variety of different political models
- investigate the role of law making in Australia
- develop and defend views regarding the identity of Australia as a nation

How will students be assessed?

- Assessment may include:
 - Exams
 - Research assessment

Business and Economics



Why study this subject?

- *Develop a knowledge of business systems and processes*
- *Understand the way business functions in Australia*
- *Develop micro business*

Possible topics covered

- The focus of learning in Year 8 is the topic "Australian markets" within a national context.
- The range of factors that influence decision-making by individuals and business.
- consumer and financial contexts including the role of Australia's system of taxation

What will students do?

- engage with case studies on a variety of different business models
- investigate the role of business and entrepreneurship in Australia

How will students be assessed?

- Assessment may include:
 - Exams
 - Research assessment

Japanese



Why study this subject?

- Continue to develop knowledge and appreciation of the Japanese language
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Continue to develop an understanding and appreciation of Japanese culture

Possible topics covered

- School life
- Dream Home
- Daily Routine

What will students do?

- Students will continue to explore Japanese culture and build upon the foundational language learnt in year 7 Japanese
- Students will consolidate and extend their knowledge of Hiragana and Kanji and be introduced to Katakana, as well as grammatical structures to communicate with ease.

How will students be assessed?

- Assessment may include:
 - Dialogues
 - Speeches
 - Oral presentations
 - Vocabulary test
 - Grammar tests
 - Writing tasks
 - Reading comprehension tasks
 - Listening comprehension tasks

- Bilingual research presentations

The Arts

Drama



Why study this subject?

- Build personal confidence and express individuality and social identity
- Manage the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills required to work effectively both individually and in groups
- Learn to be an innovative thinker
- Become adept at communicating
- Engage in learning experiences that integrate oral, kinaesthetic and visual communication to create meaning.

Possible topics covered

- Realism and non-realism
- Elements of Drama

What will students do?

- Students make and respond to drama by exploring performance techniques and conventions of realism and non-realism
- They explore these concepts through a range of practical and theoretical activities that help to develop performance skills and creativity
- Students engage with a range of texts and professional performances in order to develop evaluative and directing skills.

How will students be assessed?

- Journaling
- Performance critique/evaluations
- Ongoing observation of practical performances and application
- Research assessment
- Performances

NOTE WELL: As a performance-based subject, students are required to perform throughout this course.

Media Arts



Why study this subject?

- Gain a thorough foundation for further study in Media Art
- Problem solve through self-directed learning
- Embed your own ideas, thoughts, feelings and observations into your learning
- Develop as an individual equipped with 21st century, transferable skills.

Possible topics covered

- Making Media
- Responding to Media

What will students do?

- Evaluate how representations communicate artistic intentions in artworks they make and view
- Evaluate artworks and displays from different cultures, times and places
- Analyse connections between visual conventions, practices and viewpoints that represent their own and others' ideas. They identify influences of other artists on their own artworks
- Students manipulate materials, techniques and processes to develop and refine techniques and processes to represent ideas and subject matter in their artworks.

How will students be assessed?

- Folio of Work
- Visual Journal
- Written Assignments

Music



Why study this subject?

- Learn practical performance skills on the Piano and Guitar so you can learn songs that you enjoy and play music with other musicians
- Learn to read and write music so you can independently learn songs that you are interested in performing
- Learn to compose music so you can create original songs for your personal self-expression
- Learn to use music technology so you can record and produce your own original music
- Learn about a range of music genres and styles, which will lead you to a deeper understanding and appreciation of music you listen to

Possible topics covered

- Performance – Piano and Guitar
- Theory – reading and writing Music
- Composition – Film Music
- Responding – Analyse and evaluate the Elements of Music

What will students do?

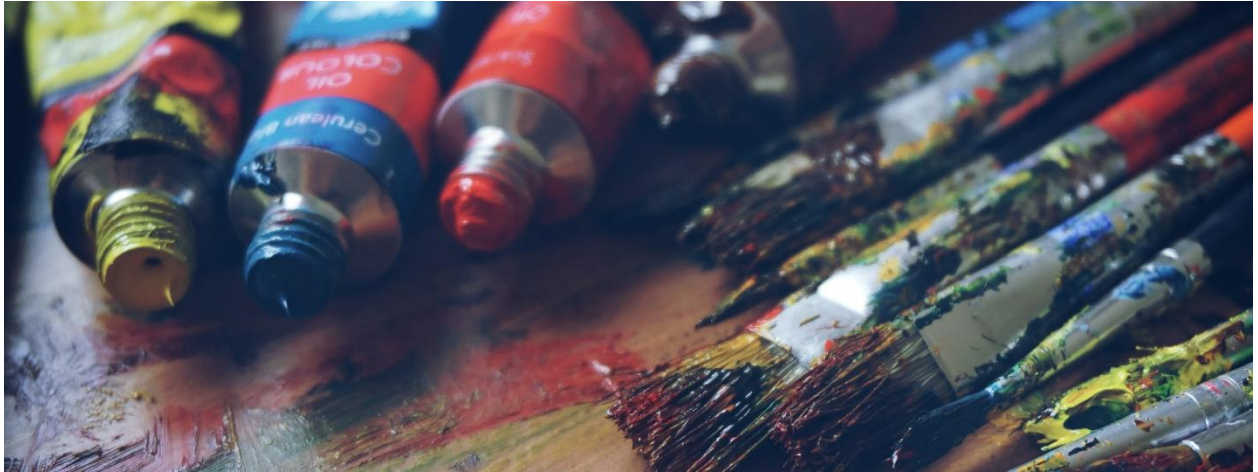
- interpret, rehearse and perform songs and instrumental pieces on the Piano and Guitar, demonstrating technical and expressive skills
- students identify and analyse how the elements of music are used in Film Music and apply this knowledge in their compositions
- evaluate musical choices they make to communicate meaning as Film composers
- manipulate the elements of music and stylistic conventions to compose Film music
- use aural skills, music terminology and symbols to recognise, memorise and notate features, such as melodic patterns in music they perform and compose.

How will students be assessed?

- Piano and Guitar Performance
- Film Composition
- Written Responding Task

NOTE WELL: As a performance-based subject, students are required to perform throughout this course.

Visual Arts



Why study this subject?

- Gain a thorough foundation for further study in Visual Art
- Problem solve through self-directed learning
- Embed your own ideas, thoughts, feelings and observations into your learning
- Develop as an individual equipped with 21st century, transferable skills.

Possible topics covered

- Making Art
- Responding to Art

What will students do?

- Students identify and analyse how other artists use visual conventions and viewpoints to communicate ideas and apply this knowledge in their art making
- They explain how an artwork is displayed to enhance its meaning
- They evaluate how they and others are influenced by artworks from different cultures, times and places
- Students plan their art making in response to exploration of techniques and processes used in their own and others' artworks
- They demonstrate use of visual conventions, techniques and processes to communicate meaning in their artworks.

How will students be assessed?

- Folio of Work
- Visual Journal
- Written Assignments

Technology

Digital Technologies



Why study this subject?

- Gain a thorough foundation in digital literacy skills.
- Use problem solving skills, that involves critical, creative, and innovative thinking.
- Develop collaborative and communication skills that are essential for 21st century careers and study pathways.
- Develop an in-depth understanding of cybersecurity, coding, technological impacts, innovative futures, and global connectivity.

Possible topics covered:

- Exploring Computer Networks in the Modern World
- General-purpose programming languages such as Python and JavaScript.
- Investigating digital footprints and data using Excel and App Development software.

What will students do?

- Discover the ins-and-outs of computer networks and the vast landscape of the internet.
- Decode the language of the digital world by explaining key network communication protocols.
- Learn to safeguard digital domains as they apply essential network security measures.
- Collaboratively manage the flow of data, ensuring smooth and efficient transmission in a connected world.
- Explore the art of data collection and ethical usage, preparing them for a data-driven future.
- Understand the concept of digital footprints and the importance of online safety in an ever-connected world.
- Demonstrate responsible digital citizenship by upholding ethical standards and online etiquette.
- Unleash their creativity and technical prowess by creating a data analysis app, empowering them to make data-driven decisions.

How will students be assessed?

- Folio of Work
- Multimodal projects, including practical demonstrations.
- Written Assignments
- Exams

Design Technologies



Why study this subject?

The study of Design provides students with opportunities to:

- Experience design through exploring needs, wants and opportunities
- Learn the value of creativity and build resilience as they experience iterative design processes
- Take risks and experiment with alternatives
- Seek creative and innovative solutions to solve basic design problems.

Possible topics covered

- Design in practice
- Sustainable design

What will students do?

- Solve design problems using the design process of representing ideas, design concepts and design information using drawing and prototyping
- Devise ideas in response to design problems
- Synthesise ideas and design information to propose design concepts
- Evaluate ideas and design concepts to make refinements
- Create prototypes for designed solutions
- Design and construct an organiser of some description
- critique their design using CAD and apply changes for a final assessed activity
- Examine the practicalities of designing and selling this as a product to large companies as a wholesale or retail supplier.

How will students be assessed?

- Design Project Folio
- Product Development
- Prototypes Development
- Examinations

Food Specialisation



Why study this subject?

- In Food Technology, students will be provided with opportunities to develop their practical cooking skills in the kitchen where they will learn about making relevant food choices for their future health
- This is a subject to take if you enjoy cooking at home for family and friends or are interested in developing practical cooking skills and knowledge about food trends around the world.

Possible topics covered

- Healthy menus
- The food pyramid
- Diet and Nutrition
- Meals of the day

What will students do?

- Students will develop food-specific skills, which can be applied in a range of contexts enabling students to produce quality food products
- They will also investigate the food science behind the preparation of food end products
- Students will undertake practical cooking lessons each week to develop and refine their culinary skills.

How will students be assessed?

- Projects - folio
- Practical skills
- Menu Design
- Examinations

Health and Physical Education



Why study this subject?

- Enjoy physical activity as part of the school curriculum
- Develop skills and knowledge of a range of sports and physical activity
- Explore a range of health topics that will provide life skills.

Possible topics covered

- Anatomy of movement
- Sports Psychology
- Ultimate Frisbee
- Volleyball
- Athletics

What will students do?

- Students study the anatomy of movement, in particular how bones, muscles and blood work together to create movement
- Students also involve themselves in a practical unit for Athletics. The Athletics training is a lead-in to the Secondary Athletics Carnival, with a major focus on correct technique for specialised Year 8 events: High Jump (Flop) and Javelin
- Students study a theory unit: Introduction to Sports Psychology. In this unit they look at whether different external variables can affect physical skills and performance. Skill experiments are conducted under different conditions and the data analysed
- There are also two practical units: Introduction to Ultimate Frisbee and Volleyball. Both have a focus on skill acquisition, rules and gameplay.

How will students be assessed?

- Practical observations
- Research assignments
- Data collection
- Written reports

- Examinations
- Multimodal presentations

HPE Extension



Why study this subject?

- To find out what it takes to become an elite athlete
- Develop high performance skills, fitness, and behaviours
- Insight from professionals on how to achieve success
- Explore a range of health/fitness topics that will provide life skills.

Possible topics covered

- Strength and conditioning training both in our own fitness gym and community gyms
- Food and nutrition
- Health benefits of physical activity
- Sports psychology and mental health
- Aerobic and anaerobic training
- Video analysis of techniques
- Yoga
- Fitness program design
- Research into professional elite athletes
- Offsite visits to senior sport trainings
- Guest speakers from professional coaches, players, fitness/health specialists.

What will students do?

- Refine and apply sports psychology strategies for maintaining a positive outlook and maintaining targeted arousal levels
- Apply health and physical activity information to devise and implement personalised plans for maintaining healthy and active habits
- Apply more specialised movement skills and complex movement strategies using individualised coaching and video analysis
- Explore movement concepts and strategies to evaluate and refine their own and others' movement performances

- Hear and learn from professionals about what it takes to play at the top level.

How will students be assessed?

- Practical observations
- Research assignments
- Data collection
- Written reports
- Examinations
- Multimodal presentations

Recommendations

- Current or recent involvement in a sport at either club or inter-school level
- Passion towards going further in at least one chosen sport

MacKillop

Catholic College

