

Wednesday 8 February 2023

SACE students celebrated at Merit Ceremony

The 35th SACE Merit Ceremony will be held on February 8 and 9 to recognise the academic success of 1,034 students who have collectively achieved 1,277 subject merits.

Subject merits are awarded to students who gain an overall subject grade of A+ and demonstrate exceptional achievement in that subject.

SACE Board's Chief Executive Michaela Bensley congratulated the high-achieving students from the Class of 2022.

"We love celebrating with the students and their families each year. They achieved their goals and have shown remarkable determination and passion," Ms Bensley said.

"It's been a challenging few years for the class of 2022, but with the support of their teachers and families they've met those challenges head on and remained committed to their education. With the completion of their SACE, these students have earned a qualification that opens doors in South Australia and worldwide. I'm excited to hear about their future successes."

South Australian Premier Peter Malinauskas said, "This is an exciting time for our young people as their hard work and conscientiousness from last year is rewarded and celebrated. More than 1000 students received subjects merits last year which is a testament to the bright young minds of our future entrepreneurs, leaders and change makers."

Mr Malinauskas will present the Tennyson Medal in recognition of the student who received the highest result in English Literary Studies. The winner for 2022 is 18-year-old Wilderness School graduate Olivia Tallent, who is about to start a Bachelor of Commerce and Juris Doctor (Law) at the University of Melbourne.

Olivia's love for literature was nurtured by the community around her.

"I was inspired by passionate and knowledgeable English teachers," Olivia said. "By presenting a diverse range of historical and contemporary texts, my teachers equipped me with the skills necessary to critically analyse texts and understand how ideas can be represented through language."

"*Atonement*, by Ian McEwan, is currently one of my favourite texts. I am also drawn to texts where the author has an acute understanding of their subject matter and can offer a new interpretation on conventional ideas. Having just read *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller, I found her perspective on Homer's *Iliad* thought-provoking."

Olivia is also a recipient of a Governor of South Australia Commendation Excellence Award. Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson will present it to her and 34 other recipients at the ceremony.

The Minister for Education, Training and Skills Blair Boyer will officiate over the presentation of awards to students who have achieved three or more subject merits.

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Mr Boyer said "The incredible number of students who received subject merits is a testament to the hard work and dedication each of them applied throughout the year, in sometimes difficult and challenging circumstances.

"As they embark on their next chapter in life – whether it be further study, a break or beginning their career – the education they have received in South Australia, along with the advice and commitment of their teachers, will no doubt provide a wonderful foundation for their years ahead."

This year Wudinna Area School graduate William Sampson will respond on behalf of the Class of 2022 as their student representative.

"Every individual has unique strengths and passions, and will face unique challenges," William said. "We are fortunate to study a SACE education that provides the flexibility for every student to experience personal and academic growth, to best prepare us for whatever lies beyond secondary education.

"The SACE students that I studied alongside this year should be proud of the way we embraced the adversity of 2022. Smooth seas do not make skilled sailors, so overcoming the challenges of this year whilst achieving the SACE will see us incredibly well prepared to take on our futures."

For more information about the Merit Ceremony contact Chris Hutchings on 0448 671 050 or email sace.media@sa.gov.au.

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Background

Tennyson Medal

The medal is cast in sterling silver and features the portrait of Alfred Lord Tennyson, Poet Laureate.

The Tennyson medal was established by the poet's eldest son, Hallam, 2nd Baron Tennyson in 1900, as an award for achievements in English Literature at the Public Examinations.

Hallam Tennyson was the Governor of South Australia from 1899 until 1902 and was then appointed Acting Governor-General of Australia in 1902. His appointment was confirmed in January 1903 for one year, at his request.

Hallam Tennyson wrote and published a children's book *Jack and the Beanstalk* and then wrote two memoirs about his father, and edited and published 9 volumes of Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poetry.

Recipient of the 2022 Tennyson Medal

The recipient of the 2022 Tennyson Medal is Wilderness School graduate Olivia Tallent. She is a recipient of a Governor of South Australia Commendation Excellence Award and won six subject merits out of the eight Stage 2 subjects she studied across three years. The three subject merits she received in 2022 are for Legal Studies, Mathematical Methods, and English Literary Studies.

Governor of South Australia Commendation Awards

There are three types of awards for the Governor of South Australia Commendation Awards:

Excellence Award (2 categories)

Category 1 – 90+ SACE credits plus Research Project receives A+ with merit

Category 2 – 70+ SACE credits plus Research Project at A level (A-, A, A+) and nominated by the school for their demonstration of SACE capabilities.

Aboriginal Student SACE Excellence Award

This award is presented to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student nominated by their school who has the best overall performance in the SACE and best demonstration of the SACE capabilities.

Excellence in Modified SACE Award

This award is presented to one student with identified intellectual disabilities nominated by their school who demonstrates outstanding achievement through the study of modified SACE subjects and demonstration of the SACE capabilities.

Student responder – William Sampson

William loves his photography in both his spare time and for school events. He is often published in school media, across web, newsletters and yearbooks. As part of the Rural Youth Ambassador program, William would facilitate online discussion forums where students would discuss issues and aspects of rural education. In this role, he was also a media representative, conducting television interviews. He was called up to the Under 23 South Australian Men's Netball Team which will compete in Perth in 2023. This involved having to travel approximately 600km to Adelaide to compete in the state trial matches, and some of the team training sessions, all whilst in the later stages of his Stage 2 studies. He is a Governor of South Australia Commendation Excellence Award winner and received a subject merit in General Mathematics.