

# Academic Top Scholar 2023 Insights

*Let's celebrate our top scholar students and uncover the strategies they used that propelled them to success. Each student brings a unique perspective to learning and navigating challenges. By exploring their insights, we can gain valuable lessons that inspire and empower others in their own educational journeys.*

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**Scye Collen**  
(Dux of Sunshine Coast Grammar School)

During my time at Grammar, I viewed knowledge as a continual journey shaped by everyday experiences. I approached my studies with careful planning, using to-do lists to stay organised and maintain a calm mindset. I also actively participated in netball, water polo and tennis which was a great outlet for me. Although school could be overwhelming at times, I always tried to take a step back, watch a few YouTube videos on that topic, and approached my studies as calmly as possible. I found being organised the best way to balance social, sporting and school life. one. Students are now just working to evaluate their own learning dispositions for strengths and areas of growth.



**Jessica Lawrie**  
(Dux of Sunshine Coast Grammar School)

To me, knowledge is total belief in an idea that you consider true in life or true to you personally. I always made the most of class hours by asking lots of questions, listening to everything my teachers said and making sure I fully understood the content before I leave the class. Outside the class I would attend tutorials, write up a daily study checklist and use the pomodoro technique.

I also played a lot of volleyball, basketball and water polo and was in Forest Strings. To balance my time, I made a study schedule based around my training and tournaments to make the most of the time I had.

# I

PERSONALISED EDUCATION



**Zara K**  
(Top of Year 11)

For me, knowledge is the effort of learning and the work put into mastering something. In the classroom, I collaborate with my peers and teachers to nurture an inclusive learning environment. Outside of the classroom, I remain proactive with my studies by using resources like my diary to remain organised.

I have been involved in debating for many years, and I balance my schedule by making the most of my allocated class time and trying to submit assessments as early as possible.

As a learner, our dispositions allow me to gauge how my subjects are going without consideration of my marks. That way, I can improve on the areas and dispositions that I lack in certain classes.

I have a strong interest in studying Advanced Humanities and Law in the future. I believe my current study habits and approach to challenges will serve me well in achieving my goals.



**Amelia M**  
(Top of Year 10)

Diverse and detailed knowledge prepares you to address events and circumstances of every type in your life. I try to approach my studies with focus within the classroom to gain understanding, and then consolidation outside of the classroom.

I'm involved in debating, mooted, pool lifesaving and water polo, as well as Surf Life Saving outside of school. I tend to manage my time by scheduling and use of a calendar system, which generally gets more intricate closer to exam season.

The learning dispositions aren't only limited to a learner in a school environment, but also to broader life. If you approach the world around you with these dispositions and the will to learn, I fully believe you will achieve whatever you set your mind to. I am trying to use my time and opportunities to explore my interests and discover my passions.



**Freya G**  
**(Top of Year 9)**

The phrase 'knowledge is power' may be a common one, but I sincerely believe that it is true. To me, knowledge is not simply academics, nor is it a perceived outcome, instead, knowledge is a path that leads to growth, to discovery and overall, to the betterment of society.

In my studies, I always try to be attentive by using active listening: considering the application of each topic and gauging what each piece of information means, so I can relate it to myself, society at large and back to the underlying subject at hand. Approaching information with an open mind and a love of learning is the key in and out of the classroom to having information stay with you.

Outside the classroom, I train 20+ hours a week – before and after school – for swimming, and travel across the country for state and national-level swimming events and other competitions such as water polo, pool lifesaving and debating. I also have two severe autoimmune conditions and work as an advocate for the JDRF (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation) and Diabetes Australia. Although time management can be difficult, my main skill is getting all my work done in classes, along with understanding my schedule and knowing how to use all my time wisely.

I believe that one of my core characteristics is curiosity – learning to be brave and question what you don't understand. From the standing beliefs in society to problem-solving in class, looking deeper and understanding 'why' is one of the most important ways that a person can learn. Also, being able to reflect on achievements, both positive and negative, is one of the things that allows me to reach goals.

My goal for any future endeavour is to make true positive change in the world. I am passionate about pursuing a career in biomechanical engineering while also aspiring to contribute positively to reforming Australia's political system.



**Emi S**  
**(Top of Year 8)**

Knowledge means so many things but, in my opinion, knowledge is knowing when you don't know something. It is acknowledging that there are so many things still to learn and being excited to do so. My approach to studying in the classroom is to listen as much as possible and write any notes I think will help me. My approach to private studies is simply to work on an assignment, or study for an exam for some time and then take a short break to let my brain reset or come up with new ideas and motivation.

I am involved in many co-curricular activities. I do musical theatre outside of school (BYTES) as well as performing in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. I also play the piano, flute and am in two choirs and wind orchestra. I am also in the Emerging Leaders and Duke of Edinburgh programs.

I believe that participating in co-curricular activities help with studies by providing enjoyable breaks from academic work and stops all my focus being on school.

To me, curiosity is being interested. It is being motivated to learn about something simply for the sake of learning about it. Determination, for me, is being motivated to do my best. Even if think I am not good at something, determination to succeed will override my mindset and help me to be the best version of myself I can be.

I would like to study to become a doctor, specialising in obstetrics. I would also like to pursue musical theatre and maybe perform in a touring musical one day. I think my habits of studying hard and managing my time well will help me reach these goals.



**Isabelle R**  
**(Top of Year 7)**

Knowledge is what you know about the world and how it works. You never stop gathering knowledge - by going to exhibitions, watching documentaries, playing board games and being active you naturally gain knowledge. Knowledge comes with being interested in others and your surroundings.

I like to complete my work with detail and try to work as hard as possible during class, so anything else I do at home is then revision. I try to complete all my homework on the day I receive it, so then it's done and I have more time if I have assessments to work on or training. I also study on weekends and try to be organised and start everything early, as I don't like feeling rushed.

Training and competing take up all my afternoons, mornings and part of Saturday: Netball (School, Club and Academy), Tennis - School of Excellence (Friday Night Fixtures and some weekend tournaments), Sunshine Coast Debating, DaVinci Academic Decathlon, SCISSA Volleyball and Grammar Helping Hands events. Fortunately, I also get to see my friends during these activities. To balance it all, I try to stay organised and be as productive as possible with a good colour-coded schedule.

I find listening in class, asking questions, setting myself high standards and feeling like I've achieved something each lesson works for me. I've always tended to be ultra-focused on whatever I'm doing, in and out of class, so I'm not easily distracted. Being interested and taking the time to think helps with all my learning dispositions.

In the future, I hope to find a career where I can make a difference and help people. Law is something I am interested in and I hope my study and learning dispositions will help me achieve my goals.



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