



## Duncraig Senior High School Year 12 Goal Setting Sessions with Sally Topley

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### **Biography and introduction to Sally Topley**



Sally has been involved in education all her working life, and has taught all age ranges and abilities, from kindergarten to adult, from gifted and talented through to students at risk of failing, and to those in maximum security prison. Her passion has always been to give her students the skills and knowledge they need to make the best of their time in class, and to enjoy the process as much as they can.

Her time as Head of Year 12 at Methodist Ladies' College helped her refine the Academic Mentoring role that she now takes to several schools in Perth, and will be bringing to Duncraig for the first time in 2012. What is unusual about Sally's approach is that she mentors students individually. This personal tutorial system is one that Sally developed from her time as an undergraduate at the University of Cambridge, where all teaching, other than lectures, was done individually. This individual attention, combined with her willingness to listen, ensures that she is able to see each student as a whole person in the context of their time in Year 12. She spent time back at her old college in Cambridge in 2010 as an Honorary Fellow and was able to share expertise with others in the field.

Both Steve Spice and Owen Goyder have worked with Sally and believe she has much to offer our students.

#### ***A success story***

One of her students was told by his school at the end of Year 10 that he should change all his subject selections for Year 11 as his teachers felt he wasn't capable of doing any TEE subjects. He really wanted to go to uni, so the school agreed to let him start the subjects in Year 11, but would ask him to drop them if he was struggling after the first six weeks. He was determined to succeed, so took on board everything that Sally showed him, and took charge of his own learning, recordkeeping and progression. Two years later he left school with an ATAR of 97.5 and the offer of a \$20,000 scholarship to Curtin. He was no cleverer or more intelligent than he was in Year 10, but he had learnt to play by the rules of the game. The student was her son.

You have the chance to be your own success story. Make it happen!

Owen Goyder  
Associate Principal (Senior School)