

THREE IN FOUR SENIOR STUDENTS FACE ATAR ANXIETY

57 per cent of students believe their parents' ATAR anxiety is worse than their own

Sydney, Australia, 10th October 2019: Seventy-five per cent of Australian senior students are experiencing or have experienced ATAR anxiety, according to new research from Cluey Learning. Surprisingly, over half of these students consider their parents' ATAR anxiety to be worse than their own. The release of the research coincides with the start of Term 4, a critical time for Australian senior students. The term marks final high school exams, the transition of Year 11 students into Year 12, and the last chance for Year 10 pupils to select senior subjects, which can determine their final ATAR score. The nationwide survey of senior students* reveals that a specific ATAR score is "extremely important" to 57 per cent of pupils. More than half have a particular ATAR score they wish to achieve, with 55 per cent aiming for an ATAR of 90 or above. Despite this, more than half of students believe an ATAR over 90 is "impossible". When it comes to an ATAR under 60, over 80 per cent of students agree this score would be detrimental to their life and/or career. According to the research from Cluey Learning, over 75 per cent of students believe their ATAR will impact the rest of their life. What's more, 25 per cent of students who are aiming for a specific ATAR score agree they are unsure what they will do if they miss out on the rank they hope for. Founder of Youth of Sydney, Ryde Young Citizen of the Year and Year 12 student Tasnia Ahmad recognises the impact of ATAR anxiety on the minds of students her age: "Your ATAR can decide your whole career so it's a regular point of discussion for students; we share our ATAR goals with each other and even talk about the ATAR goals parents have for kids. At times it can feel like the ATAR constricts you. All your work boils down to a number which can be stressful to think about." In response to emphasis on the admission rank, Cluey Learning has launched #ATARanxiety, a campaign encouraging students to shift focus from their final number to what can be done today. The brand will release expert tips via their blog and social channels throughout Term 4. Chief Learning Officer Dr. Selina Samuels comments: "At critical moments in education, students can feel like nothing else in the world matters except that final year or result. It's easy to become fixated on the end and its enormity instead of the small steps to take today to allow effective learning to continue. Rather than finding ways to remove the pressure, it's better to find ways to manage it. Learning how to best deal with stress and expectations can help build resilience. The challenge is learning how to distinguish between reasonable levels of stress and disproportionate anxiety".

When it comes to getting on top of ATAR anxiety, students expressed a number of tactics. Study was the top choice for managing ATAR anxiety followed by "ignoring it", exercise and meditation. Over 85 per cent agreed that last minute study and help is an important part of the prep process. Despite this, over 85 per cent of students agreed that when studying alone they often have questions which they need support with. "The last few weeks before the ATAR exams can feel very lonely," says Samuels. "Many students feel that all they can do is go over and over their notes on their own. But that kind of repetition of familiar material makes students passive learners and breeds boredom. The trick to this final study stretch is to maintain your interest and to keep finding new ways to approach the same content. A tutor can help keep your study more lively in the final stretch and ensure no question goes unanswered."

Cluey Learning is extending office hours to provide session support from 6am until 10pm (and up until midnight for eastern states) across Term 4. Cluey is ready to support the early risers and night owls, helping students' study from wherever suits them. Free subscriptions to sleep and mindfulness app Calm will also be available as part of the #ATARanxiety campaign. Cluey matches students with expert private tutors who conduct sessions using an online platform. Features like video and audio, a virtual whiteboard and digital content results in a personalised learning experience for each student. Visit <https://clueylearning.com.au/atar-anxiety/> for more information on ATAR anxiety and senior student packages.

-ENDS- Additional research findings, according to Cluey Learning: 88 per cent of students will be disappointed if they don't achieve their desired ATAR 84 per cent of students feel like the ATAR is the most important thing they will do at school The main reason for a desired ATAR is: To get into the course I want (46 per cent) It's important for a successful career (18 per cent) I want to know I did my best (15 per cent) To make my parents / school proud (13 per cent) Bragging rights (6 per cent) Student plans for after school: Tertiary education (51 per cent) Travel (19 per cent) Learn a trade (18 per cent) Unsure (6 per cent) Other (6 per cent) NOTES TO EDITORS: *Student Edge supplied the sample for this survey conducted by Cluey Learning with 420 Year 11 and 12 students across Australia in October 2019. For interviews with Selina, a senior student or for research raw data please contact: Candice Meisels | candice@candicepr.com | 0481 369 484 About Cluey Learning: Cluey Learning offers online tutoring mapped to the Australian curriculum. Expert tutors are matched to each student. Students can follow customised lesson plans or upload their own notes and questions. Cluey Learning has helped over 3,000 students and has been rated 4.7/5 by parents and students.