Mission Statement

As a faculty, our mission is to:

Instill an intrinsic love of Science and learning in our students within a positive, safe environment.

The Science faculty strives to inspire and facilitate in our students, the development of:

- Cooperation and respect for learning
- Observation skills
- Curiosity
- Skepticism and objectivity
- Investigation skills (theoretical and practical research)
- An understanding and ability to explain the world around them

So that our students:

- Achieve their academic potential
- Can make informed decisions
- Become independent learners with a lifelong thirst for knowledge
- Are equipped to cope with the rapidly changing world

Courses

In Years 7 to 9 students engage in a range of units of work covering all scientific disciplines, including the major branches of Science; Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Other areas of Science such as Geology and Astronomy are also integrated as appropriate. Students engage in a range of experiences, including problem solving, practical experiments, modeling, first hand investigations, research tasks and oral and group presentations.

In Year 10, students rotate through the three major scientific disciplines, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This provides them with an insight into what each of these subjects will be like in Year 11 and 12, thus enabling them to make informed decisions about pursuing these fields of study for their HSC.

In Year 11 and 12, students have a choice of three HSC subjects, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Biology being the study of the living world, seeks to explain the metabolism of life and the interactions of organisms with each other and the environment. Chemistry deals with the study of the composition of materials at an atomic level and their relevance to everyday life. Physics deals with the forces in our universe, velocity, energy and motion and how these impact on our daily lives.
Excursions

A number of excursions enhance the teaching and learning of Science at Masada College. These excursions allow content learnt in the classroom to be seen and experienced in a more real-world context. These excursions include:

- **Year 7 Taronga Zoo excursion** to study classification and animal diversity
- **Year 8 Excursion to the PowerHouse Museum** to study energy and machines
- **Year 9 Excursion to Macquarie University** to learn about careers in Science
- **Year 11 Biology Excursion** to the mangroves to complete fieldwork in ecology.
- **Year 12 Physics excursion** to University of Sydney Kickstart Program.

There are also incidental incursions through our involvement with CSIRO Scientists in Schools program in which Scientists will visit and work with students in various areas of interest and content.

Culture of Thinking

We have incorporated thinking routines into our programs at all year levels, in line with the *Culture of Thinking*. These challenging activities are ideally suited to the study of Science. They engage students and allow them to think critically to solve problems, link ideas and concepts, apply their existing knowledge, justify their decisions and understand how their thinking processes develop.

Our Laboratories

There are three laboratories used by the Masada College Science Department. Each of these is equipped with a comprehensive set of standard laboratory equipment and specialist models and apparatus for demonstrations and student experiments. Each Laboratory is also equipped with a data projector which connects to a computer allowing teachers to show internet sites, PowerPoint presentations or short videos. This also allows experimental data to be displayed in spreadsheets and whole class sets of data can be processed.

We have recently purchased a set of 6 dataloggers connected to notebook computers for students to use in small groups. They include a variety of sensors and probes to allow for electronic data collection in Physics, Chemistry and Biology.

Each teacher also conducts their own assessment for the purposes of reporting on each students individual progress in their subject.

Assessment

All assessment weightings adhere to the Board of Studies guidelines. This may change in the future as a new national curriculum is developed and implemented. In each year (7-12) students complete a range of assessment tasks including examinations, research assignments, oral and group presentations, practical investigations and first-hand investigations.

In years 8 and 10 all students undertake a major assessment task in the form of an independent Student Research Project, where students identify a problem, plan a procedure to investigate the problem and then carry out an experiment and report on their findings. We have planned a Science Evening where the top student will present their research to their peers, parents and a panel of visiting scientists.

Apart from the formal assessment tasks, each teacher also conducts their own assessments for the purpose of reporting on and monitoring each students progress and developing skills.