

VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook 2021

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Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Qualifications: Victorian Certificate of Education | 1 |
| 1 VCE program components | 1 |
| 1.1 VCE units | 1 |
| 1.2 VET | 2 |
| 1.3 VCAL units | 2 |
| 2 Entry to VCE studies | 2 |
| 2.1 Specific eligibility requirements for VCE studies | 2 |
| 3 Eligibility for the award of the VCE | 2 |
| 3.1 Minimum requirement | 3 |
| 3.2 English requirement | 3 |
| 3.3 Equivalent studies | 5 |
| 3.4 Recognition of VCE VET programs in the VCE | 6 |
| 3.5 Recognition of Higher Education studies in the VCE | 6 |
| 3.6 VCE – Baccalaureate | 7 |
| 3.7 Repeating VCE units | 8 |
| 4 Atypical VCE programs | 8 |
| 4.1 Completion of VCE units without calculation of a study score | 8 |
| 4.2 Adult students returning to study | 9 |
| 4.3 Student transfer and credit from interstate studies | 10 |
| 4.4 Student transfer and credit from overseas studies | 10 |
| 4.5 Students enrolling in VCE with previous VCAL enrolment | 11 |
| 4.6 Exchange students | 11 |
| 4.7 Credit from the International Baccalaureate | 12 |
| 5 VCE on a Northern Hemisphere Timetable | 12 |
| Qualifications: Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning | 14 |
| 1 VCAL program components | 16 |
| 1.1 VCAL strands | 16 |
| 1.2 VCAL program components | 16 |
| 1.3 VCAL units | 16 |
| 2 Entry to VCAL studies | 17 |
| 3 Eligibility for award of the VCAL | 18 |
| 3.1 Course requirements | 18 |
| 4 Themed VCAL course requirements | 21 |
| 5 Atypical VCAL programs | 22 |
| 5.1 Students with credit from the VCE | 22 |
| 5.2 Adult students returning to study | 22 |
| 5.3 Student transfer and credit from interstate studies | 22 |
| 6 VCAL partnerships | 22 |
| Qualifications: Vocational Education and Training | 25 |
| 1 VET programs | 25 |
| 1.1 VCE VET programs | 26 |
| 1.2 Assessing Groups | 27 |
| 1.3 School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships | 27 |
| 1.4 VET including non VCE VET programs | 27 |

| | | |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 2 | Entry to VET programs | 28 |
| 2.1 | Transfer arrangements between certificate types | 28 |
| 3 | Satisfactory completion of VET programs | 28 |
| 3.1 | Certificate type: VE1 and VE2 programs | 28 |
| 3.2 | Certificate type: VE3 programs | 29 |
| 3.3 | Certificate type: VFE programs (for students enrolled in a qualification in 2018 or earlier) | 29 |
| 4 | Contribution of VET to VCE | 29 |
| 4.1 | Recognition within the VCE for VCE VET programs | 29 |
| 4.2 | Recognition of VET within the VCE | 30 |
| 5 | Contribution of VET to VCAL | 30 |
| 5.1 | VCAL strands | 30 |
| 5.2 | Credit towards VCAL | 31 |
| 6 | VCE VET documentation | 31 |
| 7 | Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) Recognition | 31 |
| | Administrative information: Schools and providers | 32 |
| 1 | Schools providing the VCE or VCAL | 32 |
| 1.1 | School/provider name changes and school closures | 32 |
| 1.2 | School/provider address, telephone and coordinator changes | 32 |
| 1.3 | Recognition as a VCAL provider | 32 |
| 2 | Registered training organisations | 32 |
| 2.1 | School–RTO partnerships | 33 |
| 2.2 | Schools as RTOs | 33 |
| 3 | School/provider obligations to the VCAA | 33 |
| 3.1 | Communication from the VCAA to school staff | 33 |
| 3.2 | Endorsement from the principal | 34 |
| 3.3 | VASS | 34 |
| 3.4 | Data security and VASS | 35 |
| 3.5 | Submission of data | 35 |
| 3.6 | Accuracy of personal and enrolment data | 37 |
| 3.7 | Accuracy of results data | 37 |
| 3.8 | Data amendments and late fees | 38 |
| 4 | School/provider obligations to students | 39 |
| 4.1 | Provision of accredited curriculum and assessments | 40 |
| 4.2 | Checking the accuracy of student data | 40 |
| 4.3 | Security of student data | 42 |
| 4.4 | Security of student numbers and Results Service password | 42 |
| 4.5 | Integrity of VCE School-based Assessments | 42 |
| 4.6 | Administration of Special Provision | 43 |
| 5 | When schools fail to meet their obligations to students | 43 |
| 6 | Partnerships | 44 |
| 6.1 | Forming and documenting a partnership | 44 |
| 6.2 | Managing small-group partnerships for statistical moderation of VCE School-based Assessment | 44 |
| 7 | Maintenance of school records | 46 |
| 7.1 | Retention of VCE School-based Assessments | 46 |
| 7.2 | Privacy | 47 |
| 7.3 | Access to student data | 47 |

| | | |
|--|---|-----------|
| 7.4 | Security and storage | 47 |
| 7.5 | Freedom of Information requests | 47 |
| 7.6 | Maintenance and disposal of records | 48 |
| Administrative information: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority | | 49 |
| 1 | About the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority | 49 |
| 1.1 | Responsibilities of the VCAA | 49 |
| 1.2 | Functions and powers | 49 |
| 2 | VCAA obligations to schools | 49 |
| 2.1 | Quality assurance: VCE Languages audit | 49 |
| 2.2 | Quality assurance: VCE School-based Assessment Audit | 50 |
| 2.3 | Quality assurance: VCE school audits and observer visits | 50 |
| 2.4 | Quality assurance: VCAL | 50 |
| 3 | VCAA obligations to students | 51 |
| 3.1 | Collection of student enrolment data | 51 |
| 3.2 | Provision of student assessment records | 51 |
| 3.3 | Access under the Privacy and Data Protection Act | 51 |
| 3.4 | Victorian Student Number | 51 |
| 4 | VCAA committees and terms of reference | 52 |
| 4.1 | Executive Committee | 52 |
| 4.2 | Early Years–10 Curriculum and Assessment Committee | 52 |
| 4.3 | Senior Secondary Curriculum and Assessment Committee | 52 |
| 4.4 | Audit Committee | 53 |
| 4.5 | Review Committees | 53 |
| 4.6 | International Committee | 53 |
| Administrative information: Student enrolment | | 54 |
| 1 | Registration: VCE and VCAL Student Personal Details form | 54 |
| 1.1 | General declaration | 54 |
| 1.2 | Consent for disclosure to other organisations | 54 |
| 1.3 | Permission for use of student work | 54 |
| 1.4 | Students with past results | 54 |
| 1.5 | Fee-paying international students | 55 |
| 2 | VCE enrolment | 55 |
| 2.1 | Students seeking EAL status | 55 |
| 2.2 | Students seeking enrolment in VCE Second Language studies | 57 |
| 2.3 | Students seeking enrolment in Chinese Language, Culture and Society | 60 |
| 2.4 | Students seeking enrolment in VCE Modern Languages | 60 |
| 3 | VCAL enrolment | 61 |
| 4 | VET enrolment | 61 |
| 5 | International Baccalaureate registration | 61 |
| 6 | Year 10 students without a program | 62 |
| 7 | Atypical enrolment in VCE or VCAL | 62 |
| 7.1 | Students transferring within Victoria | 62 |
| 7.2 | Students transferring from interstate on exchange programs | 63 |
| 7.3 | Students transferring from interstate during Year 11 | 63 |
| 7.4 | Students transferring from interstate during Year 12 | 64 |
| 7.5 | Students arriving from overseas | 65 |
| 7.6 | Late enrolments in VCAL for exchange students | 65 |
| 7.7 | Interrupted Studies students | 66 |

| | | |
|------|---|-----------|
| 8 | Withdrawal from study | 68 |
| 8.1 | Compassionate Late Withdrawal | 68 |
| 8.2 | Total withdrawal from the VCE or VCAL | 68 |
| 9 | Fee-paying international students | 68 |
| 9.1 | VCAA administration fee for fee-paying international students | 69 |
| 9.2 | VCAA fee refund policy for fee-paying international students | 69 |
| 10 | Student observance of assessment and attendance rules | 70 |
| 10.1 | VCE attendance | 70 |
| 10.2 | VCAL attendance | 70 |
| | Assessment: Satisfactory completion of units | 71 |
| 1 | Satisfactory completion of VCE units | 71 |
| 1.1 | Satisfactory VCE unit result | 71 |
| 1.2 | Not satisfactory VCE unit result | 71 |
| 1.3 | Redeeming outcomes – submitting further evidence for satisfactory completion | 72 |
| 1.4 | VCE unit result of J | 72 |
| 1.5 | Lost, stolen or damaged work | 72 |
| 1.6 | Care in the use of technology | 72 |
| 2 | Satisfactory completion of VCAL units | 72 |
| 2.1 | Satisfactory VCAL unit result | 72 |
| 2.2 | Recording of VCAL learning outcomes | 73 |
| 3 | Satisfactory completion of VET units | 73 |
| 3.1 | Satisfactory VET unit of competency result | 73 |
| | Scored assessment: School-based Assessment | 75 |
| 1 | Authentication | 75 |
| 1.1 | School-assessed Coursework | 75 |
| 1.2 | School-assessed Tasks | 76 |
| 1.3 | Strategies for avoiding authentication problems | 76 |
| 2 | Scheduling assessment tasks | 77 |
| 2.1 | Rescheduling assessment tasks for an entire class | 77 |
| 2.2 | Rescheduling an assessment task for an individual student | 77 |
| 3 | Determining initial School-based Assessments | 77 |
| 3.1 | Determining initial School-based Assessments where there is more than one class in the school | 78 |
| 3.2 | Determining initial School-based Assessments in partnership with another school | 78 |
| 4 | VCE Units 3–4 School-assessed Coursework | 79 |
| 4.1 | Preparation for School-assessed Coursework | 79 |
| 4.2 | Initial assessment | 80 |
| 4.3 | Feedback to students | 80 |
| 4.4 | Lost, stolen or damaged School-assessed Coursework | 80 |
| 5 | VCE School-assessed Tasks | 81 |
| 5.1 | Topic selection | 81 |
| 5.2 | Advice on developmental stages of School-assessed Tasks | 81 |
| 5.3 | Assessment of School-assessed Tasks | 82 |
| 5.4 | Feedback to students | 82 |
| 5.5 | Lost, stolen or damaged School-assessed Tasks | 82 |
| 5.6 | Student transfers after the due date | 82 |
| 6 | VCE VET School-assessed Coursework | 83 |
| 7 | Managing score amendments | 83 |

| | | |
|------|--|------------|
| 8 | VCE School-based Assessment Audit | 83 |
| 9 | School-based Assessment: Breaches of rules and investigations | 83 |
| 9.1 | Rules for authentication of School-based Assessment | 84 |
| 10 | Investigation of breaches of School-based Assessment rules | 85 |
| 10.1 | Reporting alleged breaches of rules in School-based Assessment | 85 |
| 10.2 | Preliminary investigation | 85 |
| 10.3 | Investigation | 85 |
| 10.4 | Decision-making | 86 |
| 11 | Student appeals against school decisions about breaches of VCAA rules | 88 |
| 11.1 | Notice of school decision following interviews | 88 |
| 11.2 | Student appeal | 89 |
| 11.3 | Appeal hearing | 89 |
| | Scored assessment: External assessment | 90 |
| 1 | VCE examinations | 90 |
| 1.1 | Integrity of VCE written examinations and VCE examination administration | 90 |
| 2 | Eligibility to undertake VCE external assessments outside Victoria | 90 |
| 3 | VCE external assessment periods and timetable | 91 |
| 3.1 | Students with three examinations timetabled on one day | 91 |
| 3.2 | Timetable clashes | 92 |
| 3.3 | Early starts | 92 |
| 3.4 | Late arrivals | 92 |
| 3.5 | VCAA examination rules | 92 |
| 3.6 | Student identification requirements for VCE external assessments | 92 |
| 3.7 | Materials and equipment authorised for use in the GAT and VCE written examinations | 93 |
| 3.8 | Irregularities | 93 |
| 4 | Marking external assessments | 93 |
| 4.1 | Indicative grades and the anomalous grades check | 93 |
| 5 | Externally-assessed Tasks | 95 |
| 6 | Student breach of VCAA rules for the conduct of VCE external assessments | 95 |
| 6.1 | Identification of an alleged breach of VCAA rules | 95 |
| 6.2 | Initial investigation | 96 |
| 6.3 | Review Committee | 97 |
| 6.4 | Review by an Appeals Committee | 98 |
| | Scored assessment: VCE and VET assessment summary | 100 |
| 1 | VCE studies and revised assessment in 2021 | 100 |
| 2 | VCE VET programs with scored assessment in 2021 | 105 |
| | Scored assessment: General Achievement Test | 106 |
| 1 | Purpose of the GAT | 106 |
| 1.1 | School-based Assessment and the GAT | 106 |
| 1.2 | External assessments and the GAT | 106 |
| 1.3 | DES and the GAT | 106 |
| 1.4 | Exemption from the GAT | 107 |
| 1.5 | VCAL and/or VCE VET and the GAT | 108 |
| 2 | GAT Statement of Results | 109 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Reporting results: Score aggregation | 110 |
| 1 Study scores | 110 |
| 1.1 Study score calculation | 110 |
| 1.2 Calculating a VCE VET study score | 110 |
| 1.3 Study score calculation for students with Interrupted Studies status | 111 |
| 1.4 Interstate credit and study scores | 111 |
| 2 Statistical moderation | 111 |
| 2.1 Internal comparability of assessments | 112 |
| 2.2 Small-group partnerships | 112 |
| 2.3 Transferring students | 112 |
| 3 Final grades | 114 |
| 3.1 Final grades for VCE and VCE VET School-based Assessment | 114 |
| 3.2 Final grades for VCE external assessments | 114 |
| Final results: Reporting to schools | 115 |
| 1 School access to final results of students | 115 |
| 2 Confirmation of Grades | 115 |
| 3 VCE Data Service | 115 |
| 4 VCE External Assessment Results Service | 116 |
| Final results: Reporting to students | 117 |
| 1 Reporting VCE | 117 |
| 1.1 VCE certificate | 117 |
| 1.2 VCE Statement of Results | 117 |
| 1.3 VCE completion of units | 117 |
| 1.4 Reporting graded assessment results | 118 |
| 1.5 Reporting | 118 |
| 1.6 GAT results | 119 |
| 2 Reporting VCAL | 119 |
| 2.1 VCAL certificate | 119 |
| 2.2 VCAL Statement of Results | 119 |
| 2.3 VCAL completion of units | 119 |
| 2.4 Reporting graded assessment results | 119 |
| 2.5 Reporting study scores | 120 |
| 3 Reporting VET results | 120 |
| 3.1 VET satisfactory completion of units of competency | 120 |
| 3.2 VET Statements of Results | 120 |
| 4 Delivery of results | 120 |
| 5 VCE Results and ATAR Service | 120 |
| 6 Post-Results and ATAR Service (PRAS) | 121 |
| 7 Statement of Marks and Statement of Study Score | 121 |
| 8 Inspection of examination response materials | 121 |
| 9 Final results | 122 |
| 9.1 VCE examination score review | 122 |
| 10 Replacement certificates and Statements of Results | 122 |
| 10.1 Certified copies | 122 |
| 10.2 Equivalent qualifications | 122 |
| 10.3 Requests for data | 122 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Special Provision | 123 |
| 1 Special Provision within the VCE and VCAL | 123 |
| 1.1 Types of Special Provision | 123 |
| 1.2 Eligibility for Special Provision | 123 |
| 1.3 Management of students requiring Special Provision | 124 |
| 2 Special Provision: Classroom learning and School-based Assessment | 125 |
| 2.1 Eligibility for Special Provision for classroom learning and School-based Assessment | 126 |
| 2.2 Strategies | 126 |
| 3 Special Examination Arrangements for VCE external assessments | 129 |
| 3.1 Eligibility for Special Examination Arrangements | 129 |
| 3.2 Submitting an application for Special Examination Arrangements | 130 |
| 3.3 Administering approved Special Examination Arrangements | 131 |
| 3.4 Emergency Special Examination Arrangements | 131 |
| 3.5 Appealing a decision | 131 |
| 3.6 Types of Special Examination Arrangements | 132 |
| 3.7 Special Provision categories, evidence requirements and appropriate provisions | 137 |
| 4 Derived Examination Scores | 147 |
| 4.1 Eligibility for a DES | 148 |
| 4.2 Evidence required for a DES application | 148 |
| 4.3 How to make an application | 149 |
| 4.4 Attendance at VCE external assessments | 150 |
| 4.5 Assessing the application | 151 |
| 4.6 Group applications | 151 |
| 5 How is a DES calculated? | 152 |
| Index | 153 |

Qualifications: Victorian Certificate of Education

The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) is a senior secondary certificate of education recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). It is designed to be completed over a minimum of two years, and includes general education curriculum components (VCE studies) and programs from Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications.

Each VCE study is designed to provide a two-year program. Studies are nationally and internationally benchmarked at Unit 1 and Unit 2 level to a Year 11 standard, and studies at Unit 3 and Unit 4 level are benchmarked to a Year 12 standard. Units 1 and 2 can be completed as single units and Units 3 and 4 in each study must be completed as a sequence.

Each VCE unit involves 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction. In addition, it is expected that students will undertake up to 50 hours of self-directed learning for each unit. Satisfactory completion of a VCE unit is based on successful completion of outcomes. Satisfactory completion of units is determined by the school, in accordance with Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) requirements.

Levels of achievement for Units 1 and 2 are determined by schools and are not reported to the VCAA. Levels of achievement for Unit 3–4 sequences are assessed using School-based Assessment and external assessments (including examinations). Each VCE study has three graded assessment components: either one School-based Assessment and two external assessments, or two School-based Assessments and one external assessment. Each of the three graded assessment components contributes to a study score. Scored VCE VET studies have two graded assessment components, comprising one School-based Assessment and one external examination. Graded assessments are reported on an 11-point scale with a range of A+, A, B+, B, C+, C, D+, D, E+, E or ungraded (UG).

The VCE is available on two academic years: the Victorian academic year, which is delivered across a calendar year, and the Northern Hemisphere academic year (the Northern Hemisphere Timetable or NHT), which is delivered from July to June.

There is one examination period in each academic year. The General Achievement Test (GAT) is conducted in June for both academic years.

see the *Scored assessment: General Achievement Test* section for more information about the GAT. see the *Scored assessment: School-based Assessment* and the *Scored assessment: External assessment* sections for more details on assessment of VCE units.

1 VCE program components

1.1 VCE units

Although Units 1 and 2 are benchmarked to a Year 11 standard and Units 3 and 4 to a Year 12 standard, student programs may include some Units 1 and 2 in the second or final year and/or some Unit 3–4 sequences in the first year.

VCE Units 1 and 2

Units 1 and 2 may be undertaken separately or as a pair. Schools may timetable Units 1 and 2 in a sequence that is suitable for their program. Students may enrol simultaneously in Units 1 and 2 of a study.

VCE Units 3 and 4

Units 3 and 4 of all studies must be undertaken as a sequence; a student may not enrol in Unit 4 only. see 7.7 Interrupted Studies students in the *Administrative information: Student enrolment* section for exceptions to this rule.

1.2 VET

The VCE can include components of nationally recognised VET qualifications. Training from a nationally recognised VET qualification may contribute towards the VCE through the following recognition arrangements:

- enrolment in a VCAA-approved VCE VET program, or a School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship
- enrolment in any other nationally recognised qualification at Certificate II or above (Block Credit Recognition; see 4.2 Recognition of VET within the VCE).

1.3 VCAL units

The VCE can include Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) units if enrolment is transferred from VCAL to VCE before completing a VCAL certificate. Satisfactory completion of Intermediate VCAL units may contribute to the satisfactory completion of the VCE at Unit 1 and 2 level, and satisfactory completion of Senior VCAL units at Unit 3 and 4 level. Foundation VCAL units do not contribute to the VCE. Combinations of VCAL Senior units may contribute as a VCE Unit 3–4 sequence, but no study score is given. VCAL Literacy Skills units do not contribute to the VCE Unit 3–4 English sequence requirements.

2 Entry to VCE studies

Students may enter studies at the level of Units 1, 2 or 3. In some studies, students are advised to complete either or both Units 1 and 2 before attempting Unit 3, or have equivalent experience, or be willing to undertake some preparatory learning. The relevant advice is published in the study design for each study.

Units 3 and 4 are designed to be taken as a sequence. Students must undertake Unit 3 before commencing Unit 4 of a study.

2.1 Specific eligibility requirements for VCE studies

There are specific eligibility requirements for:

- Chinese Language, Culture and Society
- English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- VCE Second Language studies in Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese.

see the *Administrative information: Student enrolment* section for further details of these requirements.

3 Eligibility for the award of the VCE

The VCE is awarded on the basis of satisfactory completion of units according to VCE program requirements. For VCE Units 3 and 4, evidence of achievement of outcomes is collected by the teacher through a range of tasks that are designated for the study: School-based Assessments. The decision about satisfactory completion of a unit is distinct from the assessment of levels of achievement.

A student may be eligible for the award of the VCE if they have submitted a range of tasks that include School-based Assessments for satisfactory completion of units, but have not been assessed for levels of achievement in the study and have not completed examinations. In these cases, the teacher judges that the student has achieved the outcomes for a study based on the work provided by the student, without assessing for levels of achievement. A student must be assessed for levels of achievement in two of the graded assessments in order to receive a study score.

If a unit result is not provided, the student will not receive a study score. When making their enrolment selection, students should consider the requirements for satisfactory completion of the VCE. Not achieving graded assessments may limit a student's options for further training, study and work. Students should be encouraged to attempt all graded assessments.

The VCE is normally completed over two years, but students may accumulate units over any number of years. It is possible for adults returning to study, and students who have received credit equivalent to a full Year 11 in another jurisdiction, to complete their VCE in a single year.

3.1 Minimum requirement

The minimum requirement is satisfactory completion of 16 units, which must include:

- three units from the English group, including a Unit 3–4 sequence
- at least three other sequences of Unit 3–4 studies, which can include further sequences from the English group.

The [Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre \(VTAC\)](#) advises that satisfactory completion of a scored Unit 3–4 sequence from the English group of studies is required for the calculation of a student's Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

Students undertaking atypical programs may have their previous studies or experience counted towards the awarding of the VCE. These students are adult students with no Year 12 results, adult students with Year 12 results prior to the VCE, students with credit from interstate and overseas studies, and students who previously attained VET qualifications or credit from a VCAL qualification.

3.2 English requirement

The minimum English requirement is three units from the English group, including a Unit 3–4 sequence. English units may be selected from:

- Bridging English as an Additional Language Units 1 and 2
- Foundation English Units 1 and 2
- English Units 1–4
- English as an Additional Language Units 3 and 4
- English Language Units 1–4
- Literature Units 1–4.

English Units 3 and 4 and English as an Additional Language Units 3 and 4 are equivalent sequences, so only one sequence may be counted towards the award of the VCE.

Units from the English group may also contribute to the sequences other than English requirement. In calculating whether students meet the minimum requirements for the award of the VCE, the VCAA first calculates a student's English units. Once a student has met the English requirement, and satisfied an English sequence, any additional sequences from the English group will be credited towards the requirement for sequences other than English.

Adult students, students with credit from interstate study, and students with credit from overseas study can use their previous studies to satisfy the English requirement.

The following table provides examples of how the English requirement will apply in 2021 for students who are not adults and have no credit from interstate or overseas study and have not previously attained their Intermediate or Senior VCAL.

Possible unit combinations from the English group

| | English group Units 1 and 2 satisfactorily completed | English group Units 3 and 4 satisfactorily completed | Is the English requirement met? | Sequences other than English | Units contributing to minimum 16-unit count | Notes |
|----|--|---|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | English Units 1 and 2 | English Units 3 and 4 | Yes | 0 | 4 | |
| 2 | English Units 1 and 2 | Literature Units 3 and 4 | Yes | 0 | 4 | |
| 3 | English Units 1 and 2 | Literature Unit 3 | No | 0 | 3 | Students need a Unit 3–4 sequence from the English group to meet the English minimum requirement. |
| 4 | Literature Units 1 and 2 | Literature Units 3 and 4 | Yes | 0 | 4 | |
| 5 | English Language Units 1 and 2 | English Language Units 3 and 4 | Yes | 0 | 4 | |
| 6 | English Units 1 and 2 | English Language Units 3 and 4 | Yes | 0 | 4 | |
| 7 | English Units 1 and 2 | English Units 3 and 4; English Language Units 3 and 4 | Yes | 1 | 6 | The study scores for both Unit 3–4 sequences can be included in the primary four for the ATAR.* |
| 8 | Foundation English Units 1 and 2 | EAL Unit 3 | No | 0 | 3 | Students need a Unit 3–4 sequence from the English group to meet the English minimum requirement. |
| 9 | | English Units 3 and 4; English Language Units 3 and 4 | Yes | 1 | 4 | The study scores for both Unit 3–4 sequences can be included in the primary four for the ATAR.* |
| 10 | | English Units 3 and 4; Literature Units 3 and 4 | Yes | 1 | 4 | The study scores for both Unit 3–4 sequences can be included in the primary four for the ATAR.* |
| 11 | Literature Units 1 and 2; English Units 1 and 2 | | No | 0 | 4 | Only one of these units count towards the English requirement. Students need a Unit 3–4 sequence from the English group of studies. |

| | English group Units 1 and 2 satisfactorily completed | English group Units 3 and 4 satisfactorily completed | Is the English requirement met? | Sequences other than English | Units contributing to minimum 16-unit count | Notes |
|----|--|---|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---|---|
| 12 | | English Units 3 and 4; English Language Units 3 and 4; Literature Units 3 and 4 | Yes | 2 | 6 | Only two Unit 3–4 results from the English studies study area grouping can be included in the primary four for the ATAR.* The third study score can contribute as an increment. |
| 13 | English Units 1 and 2 | English Unit 3; English Language Units 3 and 4 | Yes | 0 | 5 | |
| 14 | Bridging EAL Units 1 and 2; English Units 1 and 2 | EAL Units 3 and 4 | Yes | 0 | 6 | Only one unit from Unit 1 and 2 level counts towards the English requirement. |

* VTAC advises that satisfactory completion of a scored English Unit 3–4 sequence is required for the calculation of a student's ATAR.

3.3 Equivalent studies

Some VCE studies consist of more than four units. There are no restrictions within these studies on the number or combinations of units that students may undertake. For example, in VCE Applied Computing, students may obtain credit for Units 3 and 4 of both Data Analytics and Software Development. However, to obtain credit for a sequence, students must satisfactorily complete both Units 3 and 4 from the one study.

For units that are deemed to be equivalent, there are restrictions on credit that may be gained towards satisfactory completion of the VCE. Rules about combinations of studies or units satisfied before 2001 are not set out in detail in this document. Schools are expected to run a **VCE Student Eligibility Report** in the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) for all students, and should contact the VCAA's Student Records and Results Unit if there are any concerns about the report.

Australian and Global Politics

The *VCE Australian and Global Politics Study Design (Accreditation Period 2018–2022)* replaced the previous study of VCE International Politics. There are two Unit 3–4 sequences in Australian and Global Politics: Australian Politics and Global Politics. Students who have satisfactorily completed:

- Units 1 and/or 2 of International Politics cannot count Units 1 and/or 2 of Australian and Global Politics towards satisfactory completion of the VCE
- Units 3 and 4 of International Politics cannot count Units 3 and 4 of Global Politics towards satisfactory completion of the VCE
- Units 3 and 4 of National Politics cannot count Units 3 and 4 of Australian Politics towards satisfactory completion of the VCE.

Computing

The *VCE Applied Computing Study Design (Accreditation Period 2020–2023)* replaced all previous study designs for Computing and Information Technology. Students who have completed Computing or Information Technology units prior to 2020 and who subsequently enrol in Applied Computing cannot count Units 1 to 4 of Applied Computing towards satisfactory completion of the VCE.

Food Studies

The *VCE Food Studies Study Design (Accreditation Period 2017–2021)* replaced all previous study designs for Food and Technology. Students who have completed Food and Technology units prior to 2017 and who subsequently enrol in Food Studies cannot count Units 1 to 4 Food Studies towards satisfactory completion of the VCE.

Languages

There are 49 languages available for VCE enrolment. Students may study more than one language; however, for satisfactory completion of the VCE, students cannot count the same units of:

- Chinese First Language, Chinese Second Language, Chinese Second Language Advanced and Chinese Language, Culture and Society
- Indonesian First Language and Indonesian Second Language
- Korean First Language and Korean Second Language
- Japanese First Language and Japanese Second Language
- Vietnamese First Language and Vietnamese Second Language.

Students who are enrolled to study the same language in both a VCE Languages study and a Certificate II or III VET language qualification (either simultaneously or sequentially) will receive credit for only the VCE Languages study.

3.4 Recognition of VCE VET programs in the VCE

VCE VET units make a contribution towards satisfactory completion of the VCE only if no significant duplication exists between a VCE VET program and VCE studies or other VCE VET programs. If there is significant duplication, students may enrol in the VCE VET program, VCE studies or other VCE VET programs identified, but a reduced VCE VET unit entitlement will apply. Schools should refer to VCE VET program booklets on the VCAA website for further information on the duplication between VCE VET programs and VCE studies or other VCE VET programs.

Duplication between VCE VET programs and other VET including qualifications available through Block Credit Recognition will be taken into account when determining the amount and level of credit towards the VCE.

3.5 Recognition of Higher Education studies in the VCE

Satisfactory completion of an approved Higher Education study (HES) within the VCE will contribute towards the satisfactory completion of the VCE as an unscored Unit 3–4 sequence. Students can undertake only one HES as part of their VCE program. The VCAA publishes the list of approved HES annually on the VCAA website.

It is the school's responsibility to:

- advise a student that only one HES can be undertaken as part of their VCE program
- ensure the student has met the prerequisite or co-requisite requirements for their selected HES.

The higher education studies are offered by Higher Education institutions and are designed for independent, high-achieving, interested and able VCE students. Two types of study, Extension and Advanced Standing, are offered through this program.

An Extension study is:

- equivalent in content and assessment in every respect to one or more current first-year university studies and constitutes at least 20 to 25 per cent of a full-time first-year university course
- of a level for a high-achieving student and comparable in workload with an additional VCE study
- of a level that will normally allow the student, on successful completion, to proceed to second-year study in that discipline at the Higher Education institution.

An Advanced Standing study:

- is a clear advance on an existing VCE Unit 3–4 sequence
- comprises curriculum not available in any current VCE Unit 3–4 sequence.

Students must be approved by their school principal for participation in the program. The school principal will certify that selected students meet the guidelines provided by the Higher Education institutions, which may include specific tests. Where a school principal determines that there is a need to further extend a student, they should contact the VCAA to discuss the possibility of additional Higher Education studies enrolments.

If students have completed the VCE prerequisite of the HES in a previous year, they are required to have an active enrolment, and satisfactorily complete at least one Unit 3–4 sequence towards the VCE, in the same year in which they enrol in the HES. Usually, for enrolment in HES, students will have demonstrated high achievement across all studies and have a VCE study score of 40 or more in the preparatory study, if applicable.

ATAR increment

If a student successfully completes a Higher Education study, and if applicable corequisite or prerequisite conditions were met, the study can contribute to the student's ATAR as a fifth or sixth study, subject to the restricted combinations outlined in Victorian Tertiary Entrance Requirements (VICTER), which are set by VTAC.

If a student withdraws from, or fails to satisfactorily complete, the VCE preparatory study (either as a prerequisite or corequisite) that is a requirement of the Higher Education study, they will not be eligible for a HES increment in their ATAR calculation, regardless of their performance in the HES.

3.6 VCE – Baccalaureate

The VCE – Baccalaureate is an additional form of recognition for students who choose to undertake the demands of studying both a higher level mathematics and a language in their VCE program of study.

To be eligible to receive the VCE – Baccalaureate, students must satisfactorily complete the VCE and receive a study score for each prescribed study component.

The VCE program of study must include:

- a Unit 3–4 sequence in English or Literature or English Language with a study score of 30 or above; or a Unit 3–4 sequence in EAL with a study score of 33 or above
- a Unit 3–4 sequence in either Mathematical Methods or Specialist Mathematics
- a Unit 3–4 sequence in a VCE Language
- at least two other Unit 3–4 sequences.

Upon satisfactory completion of the VCE – Baccalaureate program of study, the student will receive an appellation on their VCE certificate. If a student has previously satisfied their VCE and received a VCE certificate, they will not automatically receive a subsequent VCE – Baccalaureate certificate.

3.7 Repeating VCE units

There are no restrictions on students repeating units, but they may obtain credit only once for each unit. Students who repeat a unit are required to repeat the full unit, including all assessments for the outcomes specified for the unit, in the current study design for the year of repetition.

4 Atypical VCE programs

Students may vary the usual VCE program requirements if they:

- require additional support by completing VCE units without calculation of a study score
- are adult students returning to study
- have transferred from interstate or overseas
- have results from an incomplete VCAL
- are exchange students
- have previously been enrolled in the International Baccalaureate (IB).

4.1 Completion of VCE units without calculation of a study score

Schools are encouraged to support all students to undertake scored assessment. Scored assessment provides a more detailed record of student achievement and is the best way to maximise opportunities and pathways to further education and training.

The VCE does provide the flexibility to satisfactorily complete units without being assessed for levels of achievement in all or any graded assessments (two graded assessment scores are required to achieve a study score).

In some cases, where students are at risk of not completing or have other valid reasons for not undertaking scored assessment, a school may advise them to undertake one or more VCE units without being assessed for levels of achievement in those units or by sitting examinations. In this case a study score will not be calculated for the study.

Schools are well placed to advise parents and students in individual cases where students may benefit from this option. It is important, however, that when students, with parental support, make the decision to complete a unit without a study score, schools remind them of the possible restriction this places on future pathways and ensure that students fully understand the greater number of pathways available when scored assessment is completed.

4.2 Adult students returning to study

Students must meet two criteria to be enrolled as an adult. They must:

- be at least 18 years of age on 1 January in the year of enrolment
- not have been enrolled in more than seven units in the full year preceding the first year of enrolment as an adult.

Examples of adult enrolment in the VCE

| Schooling | Age requirement | VCE with adult status |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| No senior secondary program in the full year preceding enrolment as an adult | 18 years of age or over as at 1 January in the year of enrolment as an adult | Yes |
| No senior secondary program in the full year preceding enrolment as an adult | Not yet 18 years of age as at 1 January in the year of enrolment as an adult | No |
| Not enrolled in more than seven units in the full year preceding enrolment as an adult | 18 years of age or over as at 1 January in the year of enrolment as an adult | Yes |
| Not enrolled in more than seven units in the full year preceding enrolment as an adult | Not yet 18 years of age as at 1 January in the year of enrolment as an adult | No |

Adult students with no previous Year 12 results

To satisfy requirements for the award of the VCE, adult students with no previous Year 12 results must satisfactorily complete at least eight units, including:

- a Unit 3–4 sequence from the English group
- at least three sequences of Unit 3–4 studies, which can include further sequences from the English group.

Example of program for an adult student with no previous Year 12 results

| Total units satisfied | English requirement | Three sequences other than English | Satisfies VCE |
|--|-----------------------|---|---------------|
| Business Management Units 3 and 4 English Units 3 and 4 Accounting Units 3 and 4 Psychology Units 3 and 4 | English Units 3 and 4 | Business Management Units 3 and 4 Accounting Units 3 and 4 Psychology Units 3 and 4 | Yes |

Adult students with credit for interstate or overseas studies or Block Credit Recognition from VET training

For these students, at least five of the eight units required for satisfactory completion must be VCE units or credit from nationally recognised VET training, of which four units must be at Unit 3 and 4 level.

Adult students claiming results prior to their current year enrolment

Students who wish to attain their VCE using previous VCE, VCE (HSC), VCE (TOP) or VCE (T12) results must accumulate satisfactory results for eight units, including a Unit 3–4 sequence from the English group, provided that all units are taken at Unit 3 and Unit 4 level (Year 12). These students are exempt from all requirements for sequences other than English. VET qualifications may contribute units to the award of the VCE.

4.3 Student transfer and credit from interstate studies

Credit is available at all unit levels for equivalent studies completed interstate. The requirements for satisfactory completion for students with credit for interstate studies are the same as the requirements for other VCE students, with the following exceptions:

- students who have credit granted at any level for studies undertaken interstate must satisfy the following requirement for English: three units from the VCE English group, including a Unit 3–4 sequence
- at least five of the minimum 16 units required for satisfactory completion must be VCE units or credit from nationally recognised VET training, of which four must be at Unit 3 and 4 level. The requirement for three sequences other than English may be met using credit granted at Unit 3 and 4 level.

Students must apply to the VCAA through the Victorian school at which they are enrolled using the **Application for credit towards the VCE/VCAL** form. Credit will be granted only if students have completed the equivalent of a unit or a full year of study in one or more subjects. Partially completed subjects will not be considered for credit. Credit granted will specify the number and level of units, but will not state the titles of studies or subjects, unless the study is English. The VCAA is able to grant a maximum of 12 units of credit at Unit 1 and 2 level and Unit 3 and 4 level to each student.

At the level of Units 1 and 2, schools will recommend the amount of credit to be granted, on receipt of an interstate school or authority transcript and after consulting the equivalent qualification guidelines. Credit recommended by the school will be entered on the application form. The student's previous school reports and certificates should be attached. Decisions on the amount of credit to be granted at Unit 3 and 4 level will be made by the VCAA. Credit granted will be recorded at the VCAA and may be viewed by the school on VASS.

All applications for credit must be accompanied by copies (certified by the principal) of statements of results or certificates. Original documents must not be submitted. Credit granted will be included on the student's Statement of Results.

4.4 Student transfer and credit from overseas studies

Credit is not granted at Unit 3 and 4 level for studies undertaken overseas. Credit from overseas is available at Unit 1 and 2 level only.

The requirements for satisfactory completion for students from overseas who have been granted credit for equivalent study undertaken at Unit 1 and 2 level will be the same as for continuing students.

Students must apply to the VCAA through the Victorian school at which they are enrolled, using the **Application for credit towards the VCE/VCAL** form. Credit will be granted only if students have completed the equivalent of a unit or a full year of study in one or more subjects. Partially completed subjects will not be considered for credit.

Credit granted will specify the number and level of units, but will not state the titles of studies or subjects, except for English. The VCAA is able to grant up to 12 units of credit to each student. Decisions on the amount of credit to be granted will be made by the VCAA. Credit granted will be recorded at the VCAA and may be viewed by the school on VASS.

All applications for credit must be accompanied by copies (certified by the principal) of statements of results or certificates. Original documents must not be submitted. All accompanying documentation must be in English, or have been translated into English by a recognised translation authority. Credit granted will be included on the student's Statement of Results.

Overseas students who have not completed Year 11

If a student from overseas wishes to undertake Year 12, but has not completed the equivalent of Year 11, the principal can make a recommendation on the student's readiness. The principal should ask to see the student's reports and other documentation from overseas and, based on this, recommend the number of units of credit to be awarded at Unit 1 and 2 level, including those for English. The VCAA may accept this

advice and grant up to six units of credit. A signed statement from the principal, documenting the student's circumstances, should be sent to the VCAA with the application for credit. This credit provision is primarily aimed at students who have suffered major disruption to their education.

4.5 Students enrolling in VCE with previous VCAL enrolment

Recognition for VCAL completion

Students who have successfully completed a Foundation VCAL and who enrol in the VCE in a subsequent year will be required to meet the standard VCE satisfactory completion rules. VCE units and VET Certificate II or above, completed as part of a Foundation VCAL, will contribute to the VCE in the subsequent year.

Students who have successfully completed the VCAL at Intermediate or Senior level and who enrol in the VCE in a subsequent year will be eligible to complete the VCE if they satisfactorily complete:

- a Unit 3–4 sequence from the English group that has not been undertaken in the previous VCAL qualification
- three sequences of VCE Units 3 and 4 in studies other than English that have not been undertaken in the previous VCAL qualification.

Credit for VCAL units when a student transfers to VCE

If a VCAL student who has not yet completed a VCAL Intermediate or VCAL Senior certificate transfers to the VCE, they must meet the minimum VCE requirements of 16 units, which must include:

- three units from the English group, including a Unit 3–4 sequence
- at least three sequences of Units 3 and 4 in studies other than English. They may count VCAL and VCE units successfully completed.

Studies completed as part of a VCAL learning program will contribute towards the VCE as follows:

- Intermediate VCAL units contribute towards satisfactory completion of the VCE at Unit 1 and 2 level
- Senior VCAL units contribute towards the VCE at Unit 3 and 4 level.

Senior VCAL units can be accumulated towards a VCE Unit 3–4 sequence in the following ways:

- two Senior VCAL units from the Personal Development Skills strand and Literacy and Numeracy Skills strand
- a combination of any Senior VCAL Personal Development Skills/Literacy and Numeracy Skills unit and 90 nominal hours of appropriate VET training at AQF Level III and above that meet the Literacy and Numeracy Skills strand requirements
- two Senior VCAL units from the Work Related Skills strand
- a combination of any Senior VCAL Work Related Skills unit and 90 nominal hours of appropriate VET training at AQF Level III or above.

4.6 Exchange students

Returning Victorian exchange students

Returned exchange students may apply to the VCAA to receive credit for study undertaken overseas. The procedure and level of credit available is identical to those for students from overseas. If students have undertaken a full Year 12 course of study overseas and have been awarded a formal qualification, they may apply to the VCAA for a Statement of Equivalent Qualification to the VCE.

Overseas exchange students

Overseas exchange students may enrol in Unit 3, Units 3 and 4, or Unit 4 only. These students may complete some or all graded assessments and have their grades reported, but a study score is calculated only if Units 3 and 4 are completed in the same academic year.

4.7 Credit from the International Baccalaureate

Students may transfer from the IB to the VCE. In general, students may not enrol in a mix of IB and VCE studies concurrently on the VCAA database. However, if a curriculum area cannot be studied as part of the IB, students may enrol in a single VCE study. In such cases the school should write to Student Records and Results at the VCAA, detailing the:

- student's current curriculum program within the IB
- proposed VCE study to be enrolled in.

The letter needs to display school letterhead and be signed by the principal. Following receipt, Student Records and Results will assess the request and enrol the student in the VCE study, if appropriate.

IB students enrolled in Year 11 may transfer from the IB to the VCE after completing two units of study. These students will be eligible for credit towards their VCE based on their IB results, providing they have not undertaken any unapproved VCE units at the same time. Students transferring from an IB program in Year 11 to the VCE in Year 12 may receive credit towards the relevant number of VCE units at Unit 1 and 2 level and Unit 3 and 4 level on the basis of their IB results (including any Year 12 IB subjects) obtained in Year 11.

Credit will be granted only if students have completed the equivalent of a unit or a full year of study in one or more subjects; partly completed subjects are not considered. Credit granted specifies the number and level of VCE units, but will not state the titles of studies or subjects except for English. The VCAA is able to grant a maximum of 12 units of credit at Unit 1 and 2 level and Unit 3 and 4 level to each student.

Schools are to provide to the VCAA the credit application together with the IB reports. These reports must contain a numerical score. The minimum score that the VCAA is able to use in the calculation of credit is 3.

Decisions on the amount of credit to be granted will be made by the VCAA. Credit granted will be recorded at the VCAA and may be viewed by the school through VASS. All applications for credit must be made on the **Application for credit towards the VCE/VCAL** form and be accompanied by copies (certified by the principal) of statements of results or certificates. Original documents must not be submitted. Credit granted will be reported by the VCAA on the Statement of Results.

5 VCE on a Northern Hemisphere Timetable

Schools can apply for authorisation to deliver selected VCE studies on the Northern Hemisphere Timetable (NHT) alternative academic year. Information about the studies available is provided on the VCAA website.

The external assessment results for the NHT academic year are subject to equating to ensure comparability with the results of the cohort assessed in the preceding calendar year. Key dates and other administrative requirements are available to authorised schools on VASS.

To satisfy VCE requirements, students may accumulate units on both timetables, subject to the following requirements:

- Units 3 and 4 of a study must be undertaken as a sequence within the same academic timetable.
- Students cannot be enrolled in the same Unit 3–4 sequence in overlapping academic timetables.
- Enrolment in and completion of a Unit 3–4 sequence cannot be extended over 18 months using the two academic timetables, unless Interrupted Studies applies.
- Students can enrol in the same study in the next academic timetable, but they must undertake all graded assessments if they are seeking a study score.
- The same study undertaken in both timetables has equivalent sequences but only one sequence may be counted towards the award of the VCE. In this case, only one study score will count towards the calculation of the ATAR.

The VCAA is committed to ensuring that all VCE students are treated fairly and equitably, whether they study on the November examination timetable or the June examination timetable. This is achieved by:

- developing June examinations that are compared with the previous November's, to ensure they are of the same standard and difficulty
- wherever possible, using the same pool of VCE qualified assessors marking the June examinations as the previous November examinations
- having an additional equating process that means scores for the June examinations are equivalent to the scores from the previous November examinations.

This process ensures that all students' study scores fairly and accurately reflect their achievements.

Qualifications: Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) is a senior secondary certificate of education recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). The VCAL can include components of accredited Vocational Education and Training (VET) from within the AQF, and VCE studies. The VCAL is accredited and issued at three award levels. Each has a Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) State Register code. VET training is a requirement for completion of VCAL at Intermediate and Senior level.

| Award levels | VASS code | State Register code |
|--|-----------|---------------------|
| Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (Foundation) | FND | VCALFND001 |
| Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (Intermediate) | INT | VCALINT001 |
| Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (Senior) | SEN | VCALSEN001 |

These codes may be used by some VCAL providers for funding purposes.

The qualification aims to provide the skills, knowledge and attributes to enable students to make informed choices about pathways to work and further education. Personal development, students' interests and pathways for senior secondary students, in the context of applied learning, underpin the design of the VCAL. The VCAL acknowledges this by developing in students knowledge and:

- employability skills that help prepare the student for employment and for participation in the broader context of family, community and lifelong learning
- skills that assist the student to make informed vocational choices within specific industry sectors and/or facilitate pathways to further learning.

Students enrol in a VCAL learning program at the level that matches their skills and abilities. A typical example may be a student starting at Foundation or Intermediate level in Year 11.

Nominal duration

Each of the three award levels has a nominal duration of 1000 hours, which typically is a mix of class time and independent learning. However, the nominal hours (including both scheduled and unscheduled contact hours) may vary when considering the specific needs of each student.

The three qualification levels provide flexible entry and exit points to cater for a range of student abilities and interests and offer a clear progression of learning.

The following information is a guide to help VCAL providers determine the general focus and award level of the learning program. It must, however, be used in conjunction with the table in section 3.1, which outlines the curriculum options for meeting VCAL strand requirements.

VCAL levels

At Foundation level, knowledge and employability skills development is supported by a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills and preparatory learning.

At Intermediate level, knowledge and employability skills development leads to independent learning, confidence and a high level of transferable skills.

At Senior level, knowledge and employability skills development leads to a high level of interpersonal skills, independent action and achievement of tasks that require decision-making and leadership.

Pathways

The VCAL is designed to develop and extend pathways for young people. On completion of the VCAL, students will be able to make informed choices about employment or education pathways. Meaningful pathways are created by linking student aspirations and future employment goals to the choice of accredited curriculum, as well as connecting VCAL learning programs to work and industry experiences and active participation in the community. Including curriculum from VET in VCAL learning programs helps connect students with broader options for work, further education and active community participation.

Successful partnerships in the VCAL involve building a culture of collaboration and creating connections between schools, non-school providers and partner organisations. These partnerships rely on strong, cooperative relationships and a shared understanding and commitment to:

- 'learning that does not stop at the school gate'
- the values of technical and further education (TAFE) institutes, adult and community education (ACE) organisations and schools, with easy movement between these sectors
- a 'whole community' approach that involves shared leadership, pooling of resources and expertise, and non-exclusive ownership of learning programs.

This is a possible pathway at Foundation level:

- Intermediate or Senior level VCAL
- apprenticeships and traineeships (school-based or full-time)
- Certificate I (or above) VET courses
- Certificate I (or above) General Education courses
- employment.

This is a possible pathway at Intermediate level:

- Senior level VCAL
- completion of VCE
- apprenticeships and traineeships (school-based or full-time)
- Certificate II (or above) VET courses
- Certificate II (or above) General Education courses
- employment.

This is a possible pathway at Senior level:

- completion of VCE
- apprenticeships and traineeships (school-based or full-time)
- Certificate II (or above) VET courses
- Certificate III (or above) General Education courses
- employment.

1 VCAL program components

1.1 VCAL strands

The VCAL has four compulsory curriculum strands. These are:

- Literacy and Numeracy Skills
- Industry Specific Skills
- Work Related Skills
- Personal Development Skills.

Students must be enrolled in a program that includes curriculum from each of these strands. Information on the four curriculum strands is published on the VCAA website. To ensure coherence in designing a VCAL learning program, selected curriculum components must closely align with the purpose statement of the appropriate curriculum strand.

VCAL learning programs must be designed to meet the VCAL course requirements. Each learning program should be designed to allow students to achieve the required credits and meet all course requirements, and be at the appropriate level.

To ensure that students are eligible to receive a VCAL certificate, providers should consult the table in section 3.1 and run the eligibility report in the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) as soon as possible.

1.2 VCAL program components

A VCAL learning program must contain a minimum of two VCAL units and may also contain:

- additional VCAL units
- VCE studies
- VET units of competency
- General Education courses.

Locally developed non-accredited curriculum, structured workplace learning programs, and community and youth programs provide the context for the achievement of VCAL units. Delivery strategies for units should be consistent with the VCAL delivery principles and requirements outlined in accredited course documents, VCE study designs or VCAL curriculum documents on the VCAL webpages.

1.3 VCAL units

A VCAL unit contains learning outcomes that are generic by nature and enable content to be developed and/or planned at the local level to suit the individual needs of students.

Each VCAL unit is 100 nominal hours in length, and each unit that is successfully completed contributes one credit towards the VCAL at the appropriate award level. The nominal hours include both scheduled and unscheduled time.

VCAL units are available at the three VCAL award levels (Foundation, Intermediate and Senior) to cater for the different needs, abilities and experiences of students.

The following VCAL units are available in 2021.

| Strand | Units |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Work Related Skills | WRS011 Work Related Skills Foundation Unit 1 WRS012 Work Related Skills Foundation Unit 2 WRS021 Work Related Skills Intermediate Unit 1 WRS022 Work Related Skills Intermediate Unit 2 WRS031 Work Related Skills Senior Unit 1 WRS032 Work Related Skills Senior Unit 2 |
| Personal Development Skills | PDS011 Personal Development Skills Foundation Unit 1 PDS012 Personal Development Skills Foundation Unit 2 PDS021 Personal Development Skills Intermediate Unit 1 PDS022 Personal Development Skills Intermediate Unit 2 PDS031 Personal Development Skills Senior Unit 1 PDS032 Personal Development Skills Senior Unit 2 |
| Literacy Skills | LIT011 Literacy Skills Foundation Reading and Writing LIT012 Literacy Skills Foundation Oral Communication LIT021 Literacy Skills Intermediate Reading and Writing LIT022 Literacy Skills Intermediate Oral Communication LIT031 Literacy Skills Senior Reading and Writing LIT032 Literacy Skills Senior Oral Communication Note: Oral Communication units do not contribute to the Literacy Skills component of the Literacy and Numeracy Skills strand. |
| Numeracy Skills | NUM011 Numeracy Skills Foundation NUM021 Numeracy Skills Intermediate – Unit 1 NUM022 Numeracy Skills Intermediate – Unit 2 NUM031 Numeracy Skills Senior – Unit 1 NUM033 Numeracy Skills Senior – Unit 2 NUM032 Advanced Numeracy Skills Senior Note: Unit 2 Numeracy at Intermediate and Senior do not contribute to the Numeracy Skills component of the Literacy and Numeracy Skills strand. |

The Skills for Further Study – Senior unit (SFS031) and Portfolio Enhancement and Presentation – Senior unit (FEP031) are single units at the Senior level of VCAL. The units will not meet any of the strand requirements in a VCAL program but will contribute to a VCAL learning program as a general credit (refer to section 3.1).

VCAL unit learning outcomes may be assessed in the context of programs that include community, school-, work- and sports-based projects or activities. More information about [VCAL assessment](#) is provided on the VCAA website.

2 Entry to VCAL studies

There are no formal entry requirements for VCAL studies. The VCAL has been designed to accommodate flexible entry and exit. Students can enter at the appropriate VCAL level to suit their learning needs, abilities and interests. Parameters for entry and exit in schools will be determined by school regulations and enrolment guidelines. If a provider that is not a school delivers the VCAL, flexible entry and exit points will be determined by the policies and regulations of that education provider.

Students with particular needs may require additional resources to enable the successful completion of the learning program. Some students may require additional time to achieve outcomes. Students can gain more than one VCAL qualification in their senior secondary education program, depending on their abilities and learning goals.

3 Eligibility for award of the VCAL

3.1 Course requirements

To be awarded a VCAL qualification at any level, students must successfully complete a learning program that contains a minimum of 10 credits.

The 10 credits must include:

- a minimum of one credit in each of the following strands: Personal Development Skills Strand, Work Related Skills Strand and Industry Specific Skills Strand
- a minimum of two credits for Literacy and Numeracy Skills Strand – one for Literacy Skills and one for Numeracy Skills.

VCAL learning program requirements

| VCAL Strand | Minimum credit requirement |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Literacy and Numeracy Skills | <p>A minimum of one credit for Literacy, at the award level or above (if using VCAL units to meet the eligibility requirements of the Literacy Skills component, the Reading and Writing unit must be completed at the award level or above)</p> <p>A minimum of one credit for Numeracy (if using VCAL units to meet the eligibility requirements of the Numeracy Skills component, the following units can be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation: Numeracy Skills Foundation, Numeracy Skills Intermediate Unit 1, Numeracy Skills Senior Unit 1 and Advanced Numeracy Skills Senior • Intermediate: Numeracy Skills Foundation, Numeracy Skills Intermediate Unit 1, Numeracy Skills Senior Unit 1 and Advanced Numeracy Skills Senior • Senior: Numeracy Skills Intermediate Unit 1, Numeracy Skills Senior Unit 1 and Advanced Numeracy Skills Senior) |
| Industry Specific Skills | <p>A minimum of one credit</p> <p>At Intermediate and Senior level a minimum of 90 hours of completed VET units of competency (no credit is awarded for incomplete units)</p> |
| Work Related Skills | A minimum of one credit |
| Personal Development Skills | A minimum of one credit, at the award level or above |

When planning a learning program, the following requirements should be taken into account:

- Six credits must be at the award level attempted or above. Of these six credits one must be for Literacy Skills and one must be for Personal Development Skills.
- A minimum of two VCAL units must be included, one of which must be a Personal Development Skills unit, at the award level or above.
- Only VCAL Personal Development Skills units can meet the strand requirement for Personal Development Skills. Either Personal Development Skills units at the award level or above meet the strand requirement.
- One VCAL or VCE unit is equal to one credit.

Students may carry credit forward from the previous award level into the level in which they are currently enrolled. However, credits allocated at Foundation level cannot contribute to Senior Level.

VCAL providers can include additional curriculum, such as the VCAL Literacy Skills Oral Communication units, VCE units and VET-accredited curriculum in a VCAL learning program, to meet the requirement for a minimum of 10 credits.

At the VCAL Intermediate and Senior levels, the learning program must also include accredited VET curriculum components to the value of a minimum of one credit in the Industry Specific Skills strand (see the VCAL learning program requirements table). One credit is awarded on successful completion of 90 nominal hours of accredited VET curriculum. One credit is awarded on successful completion of 90 nominal hours of accredited VET curriculum, or on successful completion of a VCE unit. No credit is awarded for incomplete units.

Upon successful completion, students will receive a VCAL certificate and a Statement of Results. Successful completion will be certified in July or December in each enrolment year. Additional Statements of Attainment or certificates will be provided by the registered training organisation (RTO) for successful completion of VET curriculum. Students who commence a VCAL program but do not complete it will receive a Statement of Results at the completion of each year of study.

Curriculum options for meeting the VCAL strand requirements

The 'VCAL Strand requirements: Curriculum options' table presents curriculum options that are available for meeting the satisfactory completion requirements of each VCAL strand. This should not be confused with satisfactory completion of the VCAL. The following information about VCE units and General Education also needs to be considered when reading the table.

VCE Units

All VCE units will provide credit towards satisfactory award of the VCAL. Some units will meet a VCAL strand requirement, for example a VCE English unit (at the appropriate level) will meet the Literacy component of the Literacy and Numeracy Skills Strand requirement. Other VCE units will contribute as a general credit to the overall 10 credits required.

If a provider plans to offer VCE units, they must be authorised to deliver the VCE.

General Education

General Education courses are different in style and structure to VET qualifications. If units of competency within General Education certificates are used to contribute to VCAL strand requirements, these are allocated at certificate level only. This includes VET units that have been imported into General Education courses.

Completion of General Education certificates

While individual VET units of competency may be selected for inclusion in a VCAL learning program, completion of the entire VET qualification is not a requirement.

The relevant registered training organisation (RTO) will provide advice on the selection of appropriate accredited units of competency/modules in accordance with the selected training package or curriculum document requirement.

General credits

Any curriculum components that are included within a student's VCAL program, but which do not meet the purpose statement of any of the VCAL curriculum strands, may contribute towards the overall minimum total credits required and/or minimum credits required at the award level.

The units Skills for Further Study – Senior and Portfolio Enhancement and Presentation – Senior contribute to the Senior VCAL as general credits.

Student eligibility

Providers should check the Curriculum Strand Report and run eligibility reports in VASS to determine if or how units contribute to a VCAL strand (or overall credit) and to ensure that the minimum requirements of the VCAL qualifications have been met.

Eligibility reports should be run as early as possible at the commencement of the academic year and every time a student's enrolment is changed.

Individual student eligibility can be checked on VASS when students are enrolled in the learning program.

VCAL Strand requirements: Curriculum options

| Strand | Foundation | Intermediate | Senior |
|---------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Literacy Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VCAL Literacy Skills Reading and Writing units VCE units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EAL English English Language Foundation English Literature Bridging EAL selected General Education literacy/reading and writing units of competency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VCAL Literacy Skills Reading and Writing Intermediate/Senior units VCE units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EAL English English Language Foundation English Literature Bridging EAL selected General Education Certificates II/III literacy/reading and writing units of competency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VCAL Literacy Skills Reading and Writing Senior units VCE Units 3 and 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EAL English English Language Literature selected General Education Certificate III literacy/reading and writing units of competency |
| Numeracy Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VCAL Numeracy Skills units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numeracy Skills Foundation Numeracy Skills Intermediate – Unit 1 Numeracy Skills Senior – Unit 1 Advanced Numeracy Skills Senior VCE units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any mathematics units Chemistry Environmental Science Physics selected General Education numeracy and mathematics units of competency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VCAL Numeracy Skills units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numeracy Skills Foundation Numeracy Skills Intermediate – Unit 1 Numeracy Skills Senior – Unit 1 Advanced Numeracy Skills Senior VCE units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any mathematics units Chemistry Environmental Science Physics selected General Education Certificate II or above numeracy and mathematics units of competency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VCAL Numeracy Skills units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numeracy Skills Intermediate – Unit 1 Numeracy Skills Senior – Unit 1 Advanced Numeracy Skills Senior VCE units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any mathematics units Chemistry Environmental Science Physics selected General Education Certificate III or above numeracy and mathematics units of competency |
| Industry Specific Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VET units of competency VCE units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accounting Industry and Enterprise Visual Communication Design Studio Arts Business Management Media Product Design and Technology Systems Engineering Agricultural and Horticultural Studies selected VET units of competency within General Education Certificates I/II | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VET units of competency selected VET units/modules within General Education Certificates at level II or above | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VET units of competency at Certificates II or above selected VET units/modules within General Education Certificates at Certificate III or above |

| Strand | Foundation | Intermediate | Senior |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Work Related Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCAL Work Related Skills units • VET certificates • VCE units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Industry and Enterprise (Unit 1 only) – Product Design and Technology – Systems Engineering – Agricultural and Horticultural Studies – Studio Arts • selected General Education units of competency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCAL Work Related Skills units • VET certificates • VCE units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Industry and Enterprise (Unit 1 only) – Product Design and Technology – Systems Engineering – Agricultural and Horticultural Studies – Studio Arts • selected General Education Certificates II/III units of competency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCAL Work Related Skills Intermediate/Senior units • VET Certificate II or above • VCE units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Industry and Enterprise (Unit 1 only) – Product Design and Technology – Systems Engineering – Agricultural and Horticultural Studies – Studio Arts • selected General Education Certificates III units of competency |
| Personal Development Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCAL Personal Development Skills Foundation unit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCAL Personal Development Skills Intermediate/Senior unit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCAL Personal Development Skills Senior unit |

4 Themed VCAL course requirements

The Themed VCAL learning program is intended to lead to informed choices for a broad range of occupations in a particular industry sector. To be awarded a Themed VCAL, a student must successfully complete an Intermediate or Senior VCAL learning program that is made up of:

- accredited curriculum components leading to a minimum of 10 credits
- curriculum components that can be justified against the purpose statement for each of the four VCAL curriculum strands
- curriculum components drawn from VCAL units and VCE units
- VET-accredited curriculum or training package qualification (one credit is awarded on successful completion of 90 nominal hours of accredited curriculum).

The Themed VCAL learning program must include:

- a minimum of two VCAL units
- one credit for Numeracy Skills
- curriculum components to the value of seven credits at the award level or above, made up of
 - one credit for Literacy Skills at the award level or above
 - one credit for a VCAL Personal Development Skills unit at the award level or above
 - a minimum of two credits in the Industry Specific Skills strand made up of accredited VET curriculum components that are directly related to the industry theme designated in the learning program
 - a minimum of one credit for a VCAL Work Related Skills unit, which includes a structured work placement directly related to the industry theme designated in the learning program
 - two credits from the Personal Development Skills strand and/or Work Related Skills strand (in addition to mandatory requirements above) which are directly related to the industry theme designated in the learning program.

When planning a Themed VCAL learning program, the following requirements must be followed:

- If using VCAL units to meet the eligibility requirements of the literacy component of the VCAL Literacy and Numeracy Skills Strand, the Reading and Writing unit must be completed at the award level or above.
- If using VCAL units to meet the eligibility requirements of the numeracy component of the VCAL Literacy and Numeracy Skills Strand, a Unit 1 Numeracy unit must be completed.
- Integration of the industry theme across curriculum strands other than those listed is encouraged.

Enrolling students in a Themed VCAL program

Providers must obtain approval from the VCAA to deliver a Themed VCAL program. VCAL providers delivering the Themed VCAL will be required to enrol students in Themed VCAL through VASS. Students must be enrolled at either Intermediate or Senior level, with an additional industry theme appellation. This industry theme appellation will be included on VASS enrolment screens and on the student's VCAL certificate.

5 Atypical VCAL programs

5.1 Students with credit from the VCE

Any VCE unit that has not already contributed to the satisfactory completion of the VCE may contribute to satisfactory completion of the VCAL.

Students who have successfully completed the VCE and enrol in VCAL in a subsequent year will be required to meet the normal VCAL satisfactory completion rules as outlined in section 3.1.

5.2 Adult students returning to study

There are no formal VCAL entry requirements for adult students returning to study, and there is no variation in course requirements based on the age of a student.

5.3 Student transfer and credit from interstate studies

Nationally accredited studies that meet the VCAL qualification design rules, purpose statements and course requirements and that have been completed by a student prior to their enrolment in VCAL may contribute to the award of the VCAL. Students must apply to the VCAA through the Victorian provider they are enrolled with, using the **Application for credit towards the VCE/VCAL** form.

6 VCAL partnerships

VCAL providers are encouraged to form cooperative partnerships with external education providers, businesses, community organisations and individuals. Partnerships will extend the learning program and resources available to VCAL providers.

VCAL partnerships provide advantages, such as:

- access to a wider range of opportunities to meet curriculum learning outcomes
- greater cost effectiveness in the delivery of VCAL learning programs
- better quality learning programs
- access to particular expertise
- provision of resources
- more innovative delivery and assessment strategies
- ready sources for structured workplace learning, excursions and guest speakers

- links to industry that focus on developing a student's work readiness, mapping employment opportunities and identifying particular employment skills
- access to specialist organisations or individuals
- involvement in activities with a regional focus that may provide opportunities for VCAL students.

Successful partnerships usually include:

- a common purpose and shared vision
- open, clear communication from the beginning of discussions
- a culture of equality and cooperation
- clear understandings about how the partnership will be funded and what each partner will provide in terms of resources (including time, money, materials and equipment)
- clear guidelines about the roles and responsibilities of each partner
- a recognition of the different cultures that may exist between partners
- a belief that partner representatives can respect each other and work together
- a formal agreement (such as a Memorandum of Understanding) that clearly sets out the obligations of each party.

Funding or resourcing partnerships is the responsibility of VCAL providers. For example, a VCAL provider arranges:

- VET to be delivered by the local TAFE institute
- the delivery of the Certificate in General Education for Adults (CGEA), where the teacher is provided by the school, under the auspices of an Adult Community Education (ACE) organisation.

The Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) standards for RTOs include requirements for partnerships. If a VCAL provider that is an RTO enters into a partnership with another organisation to provide training and/or assessment services on behalf of the RTO, for qualifications under its scope of registration, there must be a written agreement with which the partners comply. The agreement must specify how each party will discharge its responsibilities to ensure the quality of training and/or assessment conducted under the agreement, and the RTO must maintain a register of any agreements.

How to build a VCAL partnership

The partnerships a VCAL provider may wish to pursue will be guided by the identified needs of VCAL students. Strategies that may assist providers to develop partnerships, if there is no existing relationship between the VCAL provider and an organisation or a group, include:

- contacting a Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN)
- canvassing support through letters or telephone calls
- inviting key personnel or organisations to open days or events
- identifying the community of support to which a student is already linked
- exploring the networks linked to a student's broader circle of relatives or support groups
- contacting group training companies
- joining a local VET cluster
- forming networks with other VCAL providers or education providers.

LLENs are established across Victoria and can provide support to VCAL providers, including:

- linking with industry and employers
- supporting partnerships and network arrangements
- supporting collaborative planning and delivery arrangements
- providing advice and information about post-compulsory initiatives.

Group training companies are not-for-profit organisations that employ apprentices and trainees, and connect them with employers. Many of these organisations are also RTOs that can provide training in nationally recognised VET qualifications. Most group training companies have close links with job networks and can assist with contacting employers and arranging structured workplace learning programs.

Qualifications: Vocational Education and Training

Recognition of Vocational Education and Training (VET) within the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) ensures that students who complete all or part of a nationally recognised VET qualification drawn from a training package or an accredited course may receive credit towards satisfactory completion of the VCE or VCAL. Students would typically undertake training at Certificate II or III level.

1 VET programs

VET qualifications have been coded on the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) as follows:

- VE1 – VET certificates approved by the VCAA for delivery to secondary students. They are typically drawn from Certificate II and III levels with qualifications and units of competency (UoC) packaged within VCE VET programs.
- VE2 – VET certificates with training schemes approved by the VRQA for delivery as School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships. Both VE1 and VE2 coded certificate types provide credit towards the VCE in the form of VCE VET units and nominal-hour credit towards VCAL.
- VE3 – All other VET certificates are contained within this certificate type. These certificates offer Block Credit Recognition towards the VCE and nominal-hour credit towards VCAL.

Home schools must ensure that students are enrolled in the correct certificate type and that students receive accurate advice about eligibility for satisfactory completion of both the qualification and the VCE or VCAL. The onus for reporting completion of VET certificates lies with the registered training organisation (RTO).

Some VCAA-approved programs are available as both a VCE VET (certificate type VE1) and a School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SBAT or certificate type VE2) qualification. All other VET qualifications are classified on VASS as certificate type VE3.

If the VET qualification is not available on VASS, schools should contact Student Records and Results for further advice, or download the application form and send it to the VCAA, accompanied by any information requested in the form.

VET programs appear on VASS in the following format: Certificate Code–Type–Description (for example, CUA20715-VE3-Certificate II in Visual Arts).

Summary of certificate types and contribution to VCE and VCAL

The following table provides details on each certificate type and the recognition available for each type of program.

Summary of certificate types

| VASS certificate type | Credit arrangements |
|---|---|
| VE1 (VCE VET program) | <p>VCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Units 1 to 4 level generally includes one Unit 3–4 sequence towards satisfactory completion of the VCE automatic enrolment in VCE VET units through enrolments in units of competency a study score may be available may provide additional credit where the qualification is in excess of the hours that provide Units 1 to 4 <p>VCAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> credit awarded on satisfactory completion of 90 nominal hours of training |
| VE2 (VRQA-approved certificates available as School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship) | <p>VCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 1 to 4 level in most cases includes one Unit 3–4 sequence towards satisfactory completion of the VCE may provide additional credit where the qualification is in excess of the hours that provide Units 1 to 4 automatic enrolment in VCE VET units through enrolments in units of competency <p>VCAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> credit awarded on satisfactory completion of 90 nominal hours of training |
| VE3 (Other VET program) | <p>VCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contribution to VCE through Block Credit Recognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certificate II qualifications provide credit at VCE Units 1 and 2 only, credit is capped at six units Certificate III qualifications provide credit at VCE Units 1 to 4; most include one Unit 3–4 sequence, additional credit is available where the qualification is in excess of the hours that provide Units 1 to 4, credit is capped at six units Certificate IV and above qualifications provide credit at VCE Units 3 and 4, credit is capped at four units credit accrues within each qualification enrolment <p>VCAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> credit awarded on satisfactory completion of 90 nominal hours of training |

1.1 VCE VET programs

VCE VET programs provide credit towards the VCE, typically for Units 1 to 4, although some programs provide credit only at Unit 1 and 2 or Unit 3 and 4 level. VCE VET programs also provide credit towards VCAL. However, a student may not be enrolled simultaneously in the VE1 and VE2 version of the same qualification.

VCE VET programs are constantly being developed or revised, and schools are advised to refer to the *VCAA Bulletin* or VET section of the VCAA website for the most up-to-date information. A summary of VCE VET programs, containing qualification codes and titles, is available online in January each year. If changes are identified in the summary, a fully updated version of the program is contained on the relevant VCE VET program webpage.

Programs offering a study score at Unit 3 and 4 level are indicated on individual VCE VET program webpages.

1.2 Assessing Groups

Schools may indicate where the delivery of VET qualifications is taking place by selecting an Assessing Group when entering VET programs on VASS.

For all scored VCE VET programs, Assessing Group data will be used for reporting and statistical information on VASS.

An Assessing Group can be:

- home school: a teacher from the school delivers and assesses the VCE VET program
- RTO: students attend an external RTO for delivery of the VCE VET program
- other: students attend another school as part of a VET cluster for delivery of the VCE VET program.

1.3 School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships

In School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs), students undertake a vocational training program within a part-time employment arrangement. Each student is required to enter into a formal training contract. An SBAT comprises:

- enrolment in the VCE or VCAL
- enrolment with an RTO in a structured vocational training program that leads to a vocational qualification
- part-time, paid work under an industrial agreement that recognises School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships
- at least one timetabled day spent on the job or in training during the normal school week
- at least seven hours of employment and six hours of training undertaken per week.

A student may undertake an SBAT only if the following conditions are met:

- the training scheme is approved by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) for delivery as a SBAT
- the student is 15 years of age or over
- the student is an Australian citizen or a permanent resident
- the student is in relevant employment
- the principal or principal's delegate has signed the training plan and the student is enrolled in a nationally recognised qualification that can be undertaken as an SBAT.

Students who undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship that does not satisfy the school-based criteria will be undertaking a 'part-time apprenticeship or traineeship'. This type of arrangement will still provide credit for VCE or VCAL if it is recorded on VASS as a VE2 Certificate type.

VCAA-approved SBATs

SBATs typically offer credit at Unit 1 to 4 level towards the VCE and all levels of VCAL. Further credit is available in larger qualifications up to a maximum of six units. For the level of credit in the VCE, refer to the Certificate UoC Structure Report on VASS. All nationally recognised qualifications with training schemes approved by the VRQA are also approved by the VCAA.

1.4 VET including non VCE VET programs

Students can use training in any nationally recognised VET qualification as part of their VCE or VCAL program.

Block Credit Recognition in the VCE

Students are eligible for credit towards the VCE if they have completed, or are completing, training in a nationally recognised VET qualification that is not included in the suite of approved VCE VET and SBAT programs.

Credit towards the VCE will be available for full or partial completion of a nationally recognised qualification at AQF II and above. This credit is referred to as Block Credit Recognition. Students must be enrolled in the VCE to be eligible for Block Credit Recognition.

VCE VET programs and approved SBAT programs with full recognition in the VCE are not eligible for Block Credit Recognition. All other nationally recognised qualifications at and above AQF Level II are eligible.

Recognition arrangements that commenced in 2019 require qualification enrolments in the VE3 Certificate type on VASS. These arrangements see credit accruing at the certificate level with Certificate II qualifications providing credit at Unit 1 and 2 level up to a maximum of six units, Certificate III at Units 1–4 up to a maximum of 6 units and Certificate IV or above at Unit 3 and 4 up to a maximum of four units. Schools are requested to check the UoC structure report to confirm credit arrangements.

Students who have completed training in VET before 2021

Students who have completed training in a nationally recognised VET qualification before 2021 and have not previously had their details entered on VASS may include the qualification in their current year enrolment if it is available on VASS. If it is not available on VASS, the school must apply to the VCAA.

Applications for credit in this way must be made on the **Application for credit towards the VCE/VCAL** form and be accompanied by copies (certified by the principal) of Statements of Attainment and/or certificates. Original documents must not be submitted. Credit granted will be recorded at the VCAA and may be viewed by the school on VASS. Credit granted will be reported by the VCAA on the VCE or VCAL Statement of Results.

2 Entry to VET programs

2.1 Transfer arrangements between certificate types

If a student wishes to transfer to a different certificate type for the same qualification (for example, from the VE1 certificate type for SIS30115 Certificate III in Sport and Recreation to the VE2 certificate type), the following procedure should be followed:

- if the student is currently enrolled in the VE1 program, they should be withdrawn from the program before enrolment in the VE2 program
- a statement from the RTO should be obtained, listing the units of competency that the student has satisfactorily completed in the previous enrolment
- the student can now be enrolled in the VE2 program and previously completed units of competency and then given a result of S for these units of competency completed in the VE1 certificate program
- the student should then be enrolled in the remaining units of competency expected to be completed in the current year
- students should be awarded S for any units of competency completed and N for units of competency not yet completed.

3 Satisfactory completion of VET programs

3.1 Certificate type: VE1 and VE2 programs

The requirements for satisfactory completion of a VCE VET program are outlined in the relevant VCE VET program booklets. For VCAA approved SBATs the **Certificate UoC Structure Report** on VASS provides completion and credit arrangements.

3.2 Certificate type: VE3 programs

Satisfactory completion of a certificate type VE3 qualification is not calculated or reported on VASS; however, any training completed may contribute towards the student's overall VCE or VCAL as described in the following section. The RTO is responsible for issuing a statement of attainment or a certificate for training undertaken.

3.3 Certificate type: VFE programs (for students enrolled in a qualification in 2018 or earlier)

Satisfactory completion of a certificate type VFE qualification is not calculated or reported on VASS; however, any training completed may contribute towards the student's overall VCE or VCAL as described in the following section. The RTO is responsible for issuing a statement of attainment or a certificate for training undertaken.

4 Contribution of VET to VCE

VCE VET and SBAT (VE1 and VE2) programs and VET (VE3) contribute to the VCE in different ways.

4.1 Recognition within the VCE for VCE VET programs

For VE1 and VE2 programs only, enrolment in units of competency leads automatically to enrolment in VCE VET units. Schools will be unable to directly enrol students in, or withdraw them from, VCE VET units. This can be done only by enrolment in, or withdrawal from, units of competency.

As units of competency are completed, VCE VET unit completion is calculated automatically. The nominal hours for VCE VET units vary from program to program.

In VCE VET programs where a study score is available, the contents of the Unit 3–4 sequence are prescribed. Completion of the VCE VET units is dependent on completion of the prescribed units of competency in the Unit 3–4 sequence.

In VCE VET programs where a study score is not available, students will receive credit based on the accrual of hours from that program. This will typically be Units 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Credit will be up to a maximum of six units towards the VCE based on the nominal hours of units of competency.

Duplication between VCE VET programs and VCE or other VET

VCE VET units may make a contribution towards satisfactory completion of the VCE only if there is no significant duplication between a VCE VET program and VCE studies or other VCE VET programs. If there is significant duplication, students may enrol in the VCE VET program, VCE studies or other VCE VET programs identified, but a reduction in credit towards the VCE will then apply.

However, all satisfactorily completed VCE VET units will appear on the student's Statement of Results. Program coordinators should refer to VCE VET program booklets for further information on the duplication between VCE VET programs and VCE studies or other VCE VET programs.

Current duplication has been identified between VCE Languages studies and the VET Applied Language certificates where they are undertaken in the same language. Where a student is enrolled in both a VCE Languages study at Unit 3 and 4 and the VET Certificate III in Applied Language in the same language, the VCE Languages study will be the only one to contribute towards the satisfactory completion of the VCE. In this instance the results from the VET Certificate III in Applied Language will be reported on the VCE or VCAL Statement of Results.

Duplication between VCE VET programs and other VET qualifications available through Block Credit Recognition will be taken into account when determining the amount and level of credit towards the VCE.

If units of competency sit within the scored Unit 3–4 sequence of a VCE VET program, they will not be included in VE3 qualifications in the same industry.

Duplication of units of competency

The same unit of competency may be contained in multiple VET qualifications, an example being any of the First Aid units. Students enrolled in multiple VET qualifications should only be enrolled in the duplicated unit of competency for VCE or VCAL credit in a single qualification. The RTO responsible for reporting the outcome of each VET qualification will report on each unit of competency in the respective qualification.

4.2 Recognition of VET within the VCE

Contribution towards the VCE for certificate type VE3 programs is calculated via Block Credit Recognition. Credit is to be awarded in the VCE on the basis of achieving units of competency. The level of credit is determined by the AQF level of the qualification within which the units of competency are undertaken. Students who aggregate results from more than one VET training program may be eligible for credit for all of their training, subject to completion of sufficient hours.

The rules for the award of credit in the VCE are as follows:

- Certificate I qualifications do not provide any credit in the VCE.
- Certificate II qualifications provide credit at VCE Units 1 and 2 only, with each completed 90 nominal hours of training providing one unit of credit. Credit accrues with hours of training completed in the following sequence: Units 1, 2, 1, 2, 1 and 2, up to a maximum of six units.
- Certificate III qualifications provide credit at VCE Units 1–4, with each completed 90 nominal hours of training providing one unit of credit. Credit accrues with hours of training completed in the following sequence: Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 3 and 4, up to a maximum of six units.
- Certificate IV and above qualifications that are pre-approved by the VCAA VET Unit provide credit at VCE Units 3 and 4, with each completed 90 nominal hours of training providing one unit of credit. Credit accrues with hours of training completed in the following sequence: Units 3, 4, 3 and 4, up to a maximum of four units.

Schools seeking to enrol students into Certificate IV or Diploma qualifications are required to seek prior approval from the VCAA's VET Unit. An approval form is available from the Block Credit Recognition webpage on the VCAA website. This approval process is designed to ensure that students are undertaking qualifications aligned to their future pathway and that the qualifications are appropriate to their needs and capabilities.

The award of credit to a student will take into account issues of duplication with their other studies or VCE VET programs.

5 Contribution of VET to VCAL

5.1 VCAL strands

Nationally recognised VET will contribute to two of the four VCAL strands: Work Related Skills and Industry Specific Skills. Accredited units of competency with a literacy or numeracy focus may contribute to the VCAL Literacy and Numeracy Skills strand.

At the Intermediate and Senior VCAL levels, components of nationally recognised VET to the value of at least one credit must be included in the Industry Specific Skills strand.

5.2 Credit towards VCAL

For all certificate types (VE1, VE2, VE3 and VFE), a credit towards VCAL is awarded on successful completion of 90 nominal hours of nationally recognised training. The credit accruing towards the VCAL will be capped at four credits from any qualification at Certificate IV or Diploma level.

6 VCE VET documentation

The following publications are available on the VCAA website:

- *VET Quick Guide for VASS Administrators*
- VCE VET program booklets for all VCE VET programs
- *VCE VET Program Guide* with general advice for all VCE VET programs.

The following organisations also have useful information:

- training.gov.au is the database of vocational education and training in Australia
- the Victorian Department of Education and Training's Higher Education and Skills Group (www.education.vic.gov.au) has information on access to further education and training opportunities for Victorians and links to Victorian Purchasing Guides and Victorian Government-accredited curriculum documents and Curriculum Maintenance Managers (CMMs)
- the Commonwealth Department of Education Skills and Employment is responsible for developments and policy changes in VET at a national level.

7 Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) Recognition

Students who undertake SWL or an SBAT and complete the requirements for SWL Recognition may achieve credit towards the VCE or VCAL.

The requirements for SWL Recognition are:

- the completion of a minimum of 80 hours of SWL in the same industry as the VCE VET program or apprenticeship or traineeship that the student is enrolled in
- an enrolment in at least 180 hours of VET in a VCE VET program or an SBAT
- the successful completion of the Workplace Learning Record
- an enrolment and entry of results in the VE1 SWL Certificate on VASS.

Students are eligible for up to four units of credit for SWL Recognition at the VCE Unit 1 or 2 level and as a General Credit towards all levels of VCAL. A maximum of one unit per year per VCE VET program is available for SWL and up to two units per year for an SBAT.

Resource material to support the implementation of SWL Recognition is available on the VCAA website.

Administrative information: Schools and providers

The term 'school' is used here to cover any organisation registered by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) as a senior secondary provider.

Schools (government and non-government) and other organisations that wish to offer the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and/or Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) must be approved by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) and registered as a senior secondary education provider with the VRQA.

Single study provider registration

A school or organisation wishing to provide only a single VCE study must be approved by the VCAA and registered as a senior secondary single course provider with the VRQA. Enquiries about registration should be directed to the VRQA Quality Assurance Schools Unit on (03) 9032 1546.

Allocation of a VASS identity

Once registration has been approved, the VCAA oversees the allocation of each provider's identity in the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) and contacts the school or organisation to provide training, if required.

1 Schools providing the VCE or VCAL

Schools offering the VCE or VCAL can be viewed on VASS.

1.1 School/provider name changes and school closures

Schools that change their name must advise the VCAA's Student Records and Results Unit in writing and provide proof that the relevant registration body has endorsed the name change. Schools that no longer offer the VCE or VCAL should also notify the Student Records and Results Unit at the VCAA in writing.

1.2 School/provider address, telephone and coordinator changes

It is the responsibility of schools to ensure that their address, telephone number, fax number and the details of their principal and coordinators are correct and confirmed, using VASS. The VCAA's VASS Operations team must be contacted to change the school email address.

1.3 Recognition as a VCAL provider

A VCAL provider may be either a registered school or a registered non-school provider. All VCAL providers must meet the VRQA registration requirements for a senior secondary provider.

2 Registered training organisations

RTOs are responsible for the delivery, assessment and certification of Vocational Education and Training (VET). An RTO may be a technical and further education (TAFE) institute, a group training company, an industry training organisation, an enterprise, a school or an Adult and Community Education (ACE) provider.

2.1 School–RTO partnerships

A school may enter into a partnership with an RTO for the delivery of VET to VCE or VCAL students. An agreement between a school and an RTO may enable a school to deliver components of the VET qualification or a whole qualification. Schools may contract an RTO to deliver the whole qualification.

Costs are incurred for each of these options. Advice on eligibility for funding is available from the relevant sector authority: Department of Education and Training (DET), Independent Schools Victoria or the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria. Schools should confirm that the RTO with whom they enter an agreement has the scope of registration to deliver the VET programs that are offered.

2.2 Schools as RTOs

Schools may apply to the VRQA or Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to become an RTO for the delivery of specified qualifications. A school recognised as an RTO is responsible for delivery, assessment, certification and quality assurance. The school is also responsible for providing enrolment and results data to the training sector. Schools as RTOs may contract other providers for the delivery of training and assessment, but the school remains responsible for quality assurance and the validation of assessments.

All RTOs must comply with either the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* or the *2019 VRQA Guidelines for VET Providers*.

3 School/provider obligations to the VCAA

Principals of schools, and other VCE and VCAL providers, are the formal authorities for many important procedural and managerial requirements in the VCE (including the provision of 50 hours of classroom instruction per unit) and VCAL. These requirements are summarised in this section, although they appear in their specific contexts throughout this handbook.

Each year schools indicate to the VCAA, through student enrolments, the detailed programs they will offer. The principal undertakes to ensure that students are provided with access to adequate facilities and resources to complete any VCE or VCAL study they are offered.

3.1 Communication from the VCAA to school staff

The VCAA uses email, Notices to Schools, the *VCAA Bulletin* (through direct teacher subscription) and its website for official communication with schools. Procedures must be in place so that official emails and all correspondence are promptly forwarded to the appropriate school staff (for example, VCE and VCAL coordinators and VASS administrators). Teachers and VASS administrators must be kept informed of VCAA administrative and assessment requirements, including official notification of changes to VCE and VCAL procedures. Teachers must have access to copies of:

- relevant accredited VCE study designs
- relevant *VCE Advice for Teachers and Assessment Handbook* publications
- assessment criteria sheets and assessment advice for VCE School-assessed Tasks
- VCAL curriculum documents and relevant Advice for Teachers
- relevant VCE VET program booklets, extracts or summaries
- current units of competency
- *VCE VET Assessment Guides*
- *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*
- *VCAA Bulletin*
- Notices to Schools.

3.2 Endorsement from the principal

The signature of the principal, or a delegate of the principal, is required on some documents to certify that the information they contain is accurate and complete. These documents relate to:

- amendments to results
- confirmation of grades
- credits
- Derived Examination Scores (DES)
- Inspection of examination response materials International Baccalaureate (IB) students
- Interrupted Studies status
- late entry of data on VASS
- Second Language status
- Special Examination Arrangements.

Other documentation requiring principal or delegate verification includes:

- Agreement to Conduct and Administer VCE External Assessments
- identification lists of fee-paying international students
- forms for GAT and VCE written examination centres
- the appointment of supervisors and delivery of all examination materials
- partnership agreements
- endorsed lists of VCAL-eligible students at midyear.

3.3 VASS

All VCE and VCAL providers are required to have access to VASS. The VCAA is notified by the registering authorities of schools eligible to offer VCE and VCAL. Schools can apply for a user ID and password by contacting VASS Operations, which will issue one upon approval.

The term 'school' refers to both VCE and VCAL providers, and schools registering Year 10 students without programs as part of DET's On Track project.

VASS is a database through which schools maintain student details, assessment information and school details. It is imperative that the accuracy, privacy and security of VASS data are maintained at all times.

The VCAA and schools have joint responsibility for the privacy protection of student personal information held in VASS. School-based authorised users of VASS are responsible for the use and disclosure of student personal information when it is extracted from VASS either in printed or electronic form. Schools should take reasonable steps to protect personal information from misuse, loss or unauthorised access. Student personal information should not be provided to staff, students or any other person who does not have a legitimate reason to access that information.

RTOs that are not senior secondary qualification providers need to apply for read-only access to VASS, and are limited to viewing only the details of students to whom they offer training. RTOs should contact VASS Operations to initiate access.

Schools are responsible for respecting and protecting the confidentiality of students' personal and academic details. VASS system security is designed so schools can view the details of students only if the school is their 'home school', or if they are being assessed in at least one unit by the school.

VASS users

There are a number of school-based VASS-user types that allow each school to control and maintain the security of their student data. The VASS administrator has system control for their school and is responsible for setting up other school-based users.

VASS administrators use their high-level access to administer the VCE, VCE VET and VCAL for the school, including setting up the school's program, enrolling students, entering results and producing reports. While schools may have one or more VASS administrators, and they are appointed at the discretion of the principal, the VCAA recommends that each school should have no more than four VASS administrators. Schools may have many VASS users; for example, every VCE and VCAL teacher could be given VASS teacher (restricted) status to enter their own results.

3.4 Data security and VASS

VASS has a three-layer security system. Users have a username, password and passcode to access the authentication grid.

Schools must contact VASS Operations to set up new VASS administrators or modify existing VASS administrators; however, VASS administrators can set up other VASS users. All users should change their own password on a regular basis. Other VASS user groups include Clerical (CL) and School Statistics and Results Group (SSRG).

VASS administrators should refer to the *VASS New Users Guide* for comprehensive details on using VASS. If VASS administrators experience problems, including password and login issues, they should contact VASS Operations at the VCAA.

3.5 Submission of data

Enrolment, unit completion and assessment data must be entered in accordance with the administrative requirements of the VCAA and must meet critical dates. There are penalties for late data entry.

The first enrolment deadline of each academic year is critical because it is used:

- to develop each year's VCE examination timetable
- to plan the General Achievement Test (GAT) and VCE external assessments
- to identify schools for the VCE School-based Assessment Audit.

Schools can modify Units 3 and 4 enrolments up until the final enrolment deadline (see [Important Administrative Dates](#) for details). Student transfers must be processed according to VCAA requirements.

Home schools

The home school is the student's main school. A student can have only one home school at a time, and each home school is responsible for ensuring its students' programs of enrolments are correct. This is achieved by printing and checking the **Student Full Details Report** from VASS.

Only a student's home school may enter or amend their personal details. A student may be enrolled in a unit or units on VASS, either by the home school or the assessing school.

The home school that is not the assessing school can enrol a student in a unit if the assessing school has indicated on VASS that it is offering the unit. If the home school is to enrol the student, the assessing school must complete the **Assessing School Enrolment Notification** form for that student and send it to the student's home school. The correct VCAA school code for the assessing school for each unit must be entered on VASS.

The home school may view a student's enrolments and results in all studies in all years. The assessing school may view only a student's details, enrolments and results for units in which the student is enrolled at that school. The home school is responsible for ensuring that all its VCE and VCE VET students have been allocated an examination centre.

For VET and VCAL enrolments, the home school is always the assessing school, but the RTO code must be entered (if appropriate) against the enrolment. Regardless of delivery arrangements, the home school remains responsible for all enrolments and results data entry for VET and VCAL.

Assessing schools

The assessing school is the school responsible for providing the assessment for one or more units, and is responsible for fulfilling the requirements of the VCE School-based Assessment Audit. A student may have one or more assessing schools. The assessing school is usually, but not always, the home school.

In order to ensure security of student data, an assessing school that is not the home school must have a student number and home school code before a student's details can be viewed for the first time. The assessing school may then enrol the student in units that it offers.

Timelines and summary of data requirements

Schools must adhere to published dates for entry of enrolments and results on VASS. Some dates are important for both school administration and the VCAA. Others are cut-off dates and the VASS system will not allow data entry after these dates. Due dates and warnings on the VASS website home page are designed to prompt VASS users to meet scheduled dates. School administrators should also refer to [Important Administrative Dates](#), which are published on the VCAA website.

There are four types of data required from schools:

- school programs – providers must identify the units comprising their school's VCE and VCAL program before enrolling students in their programs
- student registrations – these can be entered at any time but must be completed before the end-of-academic-year results processing
- student program enrolments – refer to the [Important Administrative Dates](#) for details. Changes to student enrolments after the due dates require approval from the VCAA. Late fees will be charged, except for late withdrawals approved on compassionate grounds. Schools cannot change the enrolment status of students who are in VCE Unit 3–4 sequences and scored VCE VET Unit 3–4 sequences who indicate that they no longer wish to continue with a unit after the relevant closing date for withdrawal
- student result data – there are several dates by which schools must provide data.

Schools should set dates for students to complete School-based Assessment that take into account the way these dates affect the workload of students and teachers. Schools should access the Assessment Schedule, which is published on the VCAA website. This will provide information to schools on what School-based Assessment scores are required for particular studies and cycles at various times throughout the year.

The list of completion dates can be entered on VASS. The dates should be distributed to students and accompanied by the rules for ensuring the dates are complied with. If students do not submit their work by the specified date, the school may accept the work and assess it in the normal manner, or refuse to accept it and award an NA, in accordance with school policy. Students should be awarded 0 only if work was submitted and did not meet any of the specified criteria for that task. VCAA submission dates cannot be varied.

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that all data entry required by the VCAA is entered into VASS by closing dates.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that they set adequate submission dates for SATs and SACs to be completed and marked in time so that the entry of results can be maintained within VCAA timelines. Teachers should not be scheduling SATs or SACs after a VCAA submission date.

Extensions of time to enter enrolment or results data

If a school does not meet deadlines for entry of enrolment or results data due to unforeseen circumstances, permission may be sought from the Student Records and Results Unit for an extension of access to VASS for a short period of time beyond the published submission date. This service can be made available to schools only if the VCAA administrative processes are not compromised. An extension of time is not possible for the specific results deadline.

Special circumstances beyond the control of the school will be taken into account; otherwise, the school will be charged a fee for this service (see the [Summary Schedule of Fees and Charges](#) on the VCAA website).

3.6 Accuracy of personal and enrolment data

The accuracy of personal and enrolment data is a school's obligation to its students. Data may be entered into the VASS database manually or by data import.

Student data imports

It is possible to import students' personal details and program data from other applications, including CASES21 for government schools. For advice on file formats, consult the VASS help screens and the VASS Import Document, which is available as a download through VASS.

Student number errors

If a student has either two student numbers in the current year of enrolment or multiple numbers across various years, schools should notify Student Records and Results, VCAA, immediately so these issues can be resolved.

If a student has not been enrolled before sitting an examination, the GAT or submission of School-based Assessment scores, schools are advised to register the student on VASS through the entry of the student's personal details so the student is assigned a student number. This will allow the student to use that number for their examination or other assessments. Schools are advised that they should then fax the **Student Full Details Report** and the **Late Enrolment Amendment** form (both on VASS), and any related School-based Assessment, to Student Records and Results, so the student can be enrolled in their required studies. Late fees for enrolment changes after published deadlines will apply.

Reporting the death of a student

Schools must communicate the death of a student or former student to the VCAA by sending a letter signed by the principal to the Manager, Student Records and Results, VCAA. The student's record will be amended on the VCAA database accordingly. If the VCAA is not informed of the death of a student, the student's data will be included in VCAA senior secondary data collections, which may result in the student's family experiencing further distress.

Student enrolment data

The **Student Full Details Report** on VASS is the key report for checking students' personal details and enrolments. As part of the school's audit procedures, this report must be printed and given to students for checking and signing at the beginning of the academic year, and always when changes have been made to either a student's personal details or enrolment details.

VASS-generated class lists should also be produced and handed to class teachers at the beginning of each unit. Class teachers should confirm the list against the students they are teaching. When a student's enrolment changes, the relevant class lists should be produced and given to the class teachers for signing to confirm acknowledgement of the changes. These audit procedures are essential for ensuring the accuracy of students' personal and enrolment data.

3.7 Accuracy of results data

The accuracy of results data is a school's obligation to its students. Data may only be entered into the VASS database manually.

Unit results for VCE, VCE VET and VCAL

Schools report students' results as follows:

- VCE unit results are reported as S (satisfactory), N (not satisfactory) or J (discontinued a study without formal withdrawal and no form of assessment has been completed). Refer to the VCE Assessment section
- VET unit of competency results are reported as S (satisfactory) or N (not yet completed) for all certificate types

- VCAL unit results are reported as S (satisfactory) or N (not yet completed)
- VET results entered as N (not yet completed) will appear on the Students Full Details Report from VASS but are not printed on the official documentation by the VCAA.

All VCE and VCAL unit results are due at the VCAA on a specific date; however, the VCAA recommends schools enter unit results as they are received, to reduce the amount of data entry required closer to the deadline.

Scores for VCE School-based Assessment (Units 3 and 4)

Scores may be entered continually until the relevant date. If a student withdraws early in the academic year, the school is advised to keep a paper record of any scores achieved by the student in that study. In the event that the student re-enrols in that sequence, these scores may then be re-entered.

Schools are advised that best practice supports the checking of all results before entry. Here is an example:

- VASS administrators distribute class lists to teachers for entry of School-based Assessment scores
- teachers return completed lists to the VASS administrator for data entry
- class lists that include the entered School-based Assessment scores are distributed to teachers for checking
- all teachers check the results, make any changes and return signed class lists to the VASS administrator
- any required changes are made and class lists are distributed to the teacher for final sign-off before collection.

Once scores have been entered they cannot be removed once the date for such changes on VASS has passed. Therefore, if a student no longer wishes to be assessed for levels of achievement for all or any graded assessments, the school should ensure that NAs are entered for the remainder of that study. The scores already entered will remain.

Scores for VCE Externally-assessed Tasks

Scores may be entered on VASS until the date advised in the [Important Administrative Dates](#). After this date VASS will not allow schools to enter scores for the Externally-assessed Task. If a student has withdrawn after the official VCAA closing date, the school should enter NA, where appropriate. Blank scores are not permitted. Any scores not entered by the due dates will incur late fees.

Missing results and scores

VASS can be used to produce input, summary and missing result reports for all types of results. Schools must check these reports to ensure that all students' results are entered. Failure to do so may lead to unit results not being awarded, a study score not being calculated for the student, or certificates not being awarded.

If results for a whole class are not available for entry by the scheduled submission date, contact the Manager, Student Records and Results, VCAA for advice.

It is the responsibility of the student's home school to enter results where the assessing school is a private provider, such as for VCE Dance and VCE Music.

3.8 Data amendments and late fees

Procedure for amending enrolments after the due date

Data will be locked after the due date for enrolments in each cycle. The Manager, Student Records and Results, VCAA must be notified of any errors that have occurred in entering VCE and VCAL unit data as soon as they are detected. Schools are reminded that enrolment changes will not be accepted if students have indicated their intention to withdraw from the unit after a closing date or have left school without formally exiting from the VCE or VCAL.

The acceptance of an application for amendment is at the discretion of the VCAA. Applications for amendments must be submitted on the appropriate form, available on VASS.

1. The relevant enrolment amendment forms for VCE and VCAL are available as VASS downloads.

All requests for changes to VCE VET and VET units of competency should be made on the **Application for Late VET Enrolment Amendments** form, available on VASS. If the results submission date has also passed, the result for the new enrolment must be included on the form.

Requests for the addition of units of competency to certificates or the addition of a new certificate should be accompanied by the student's training plan, previously scanned and emailed to the VET Curriculum Unit for approval.

2. If the request is made after the VCAA cut-off dates, the request must include:
 - a letter from the school principal explaining the reason for the error
 - evidence supporting the enrolment change, such as copies of a class attendance sheet, and evidence of the student's intention to withdraw.
3. The application for amendment must be accompanied by the appropriate fee (see the [Summary Schedule of Fees and Charges](#) on the VCAA website). No GST is payable on late fees.

After the deadline for withdrawing from a Unit 4 study, the VCAA will withdraw a student from Unit 4 of a study only if the student indicated their intention to withdraw before the cut-off date. If a student wishes to withdraw from a Unit 4 study after the deadline, they must be able to prove that their intention was to do so before the deadline. Unit enrolments will not be withdrawn if the notification by the student was after the cut-off date or if the student has formally exited from the VCE or VCAL.

Procedure for amending results for VCE School-based Assessment or Externally-assessed Tasks after the due date

Student results for that assessment period will be locked after the due date for submitting results. The Manager, Student Records and Results, VCAA must be notified of any errors that have occurred in entering the results as soon as they are detected. The acceptance of an application for amendment is at the discretion of the VCAA.

1. The relevant results amendment forms are available on VASS. All requests for scores for the VCE should be made on the Score Amendment Sheet (SAS) generated through VASS.
2. If the request is made after the final results have been released and the amendment will change the course result or a VCE study score, the request must include:
 - the principal's explanation for the error
 - evidence supporting the new result, such as copies of a class attendance sheet and/or teacher's mark book.
3. The application for amendment must be accompanied by the appropriate fee (see the [Summary Schedule of Fees and Charges](#) on the VCAA website). No GST is payable on late fees.

4 School/provider obligations to students

Schools should:

- advise students in writing of the VCAA's rules and the school's responsibilities
- ensure that subject matter the students investigate through self-directed research and/or produce as an artwork, performance or product is consistent with community standards, appropriate for study by school students, and does not place students at risk of contravening Victorian or Australian law
- ensure that teachers use the accredited VCAA curriculum and assessment documents as the source of content for the teaching and learning programs
- provide comprehensive course advice to students, including the consequences of receiving an N or a J result for a unit

- provide a process for students to check their personal details stored on the VCAA database on an annual basis
- keep students' personal details secure from unauthorised access
- ensure that there are established procedures for VCE School-based Assessments and that these procedures are applied consistently
- allow for student appeal on adverse school decisions
- ensure that students understand and have access to Special Provision for VCE or VCAL studies
- issue VCE examination timetables to students
- ensure that VCE or VCAL student eligibility reports are run on a regular basis to ensure that students will meet the satisfactory rules of completion of the nominated senior secondary certificate.

4.1 Provision of accredited curriculum and assessments

Teachers must provide learning experiences and assessment opportunities that are in accordance with the currently accredited VCE study designs or the VCAL curriculum documents.

VCE advice

Students undertaking VCE units should be advised of the following in writing:

- that initial school assessments for Units 3 and 4 may change following statistical moderation of School-based Assessments
- the procedures for requesting an extension of time for submitting School-based Assessments.

Placing students in the VCAL

The initial placement of a student in a VCAL learning program requires a decision by the VCAL provider about the appropriate award level. Once students are placed in the appropriate level they can progress at their own pace. If a student is placed at an inappropriate level, they can be re-enrolled in the appropriate level within VASS, in accordance with the schedule of dates provided by the VCAA.

4.2 Checking the accuracy of student data

Students' personal details

Students must submit a **VCE and VCAL Student Personal Details** form that includes their intended program for the year. The information on this form should be entered on VASS. A student who does not identify as male or female may select Gender Diverse. The Gender Diverse category refers to any person who does not identify as either exclusively male or female, including people of non-binary gender.

Each student's personal details (particularly their date of birth), consent permissions, subject enrolment details must be entered on VASS. It is a school responsibility to ensure that eligibility reports for the VCE and VCAL are run periodically, and checked and signed by the students and their teachers, using the **Student Full Details Report** from VASS. Failure to run this report could severely affect students' eligibility for satisfactory completion of their VCE or VCAL certificate. Students should be provided with a new **Student Full Details Report** to sign at the end of each enrolment cycle to ensure any requested changes have been made. Students should also be advised that the address on their **Student Full Details Report** is the one their Year 12 results will be mailed to at the end of the academic year. Students must be enrolled on VASS using their legally registered name as per the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria, or the relevant state or national agency. Students, when signing their personal details form under the General Declaration, attest that they are enrolling using their legally registered name.

Transgender students

Schools that have students who are in the process of gender affirmation/transition should contact Student Records and Results, VCAA for further advice in relation to recording student details on VASS and the reporting of their results.

Changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Legislation May 2020

From 1 May 2020, a student who has legally changed the sex that is recorded on their birth certificate, through the Births Deaths and Marriages registry process, may present this birth certificate to their school (if under 18 years of age and currently in school) or to the VCAA (if over 18 and no longer in school), so that their record can be updated.

All fee-paying international students must be correctly identified

The onus is on VASS users to ensure that students' personal details are entered accurately on VASS. It is essential to include the correct date of birth. Without this, the system cannot accurately or efficiently match a student's academic history with their current enrolments. A student's date of birth should never be invented or guessed, as it cannot be changed later.

Students' addresses

Only the preferred postal address for a student is stored on VASS. It is mandatory to enter an address line, suburb, state and postcode. If a student's address is unknown, schools should enter the school address as the student's address. The postal address is used by the VCAA when mailing final results.

To ensure the successful delivery of final results, the VCAA undertakes to validate the addresses of all students enrolled in at least one Unit 3–4 sequence and all students who are claiming past results. If an error is detected, schools will receive an email before results processing that lists the affected students. Schools should contact students to amend the information.

Students' email addresses

The VCAA requires that schools enter into VASS a non-school email address for each student enrolled at senior secondary level. This will support results delivery (at Unit 3–4 level) and communication with students, including the Premier's VCE Awards.

Changes to students' personal details

Results will be printed using the student's name as entered on VASS. The results for students with enrolments in any VCE Unit 3–4 sequence will be mailed to the student addresses as entered on VASS. The [Important Administrative Dates](#) has deadlines for amending this information. The VCAA cannot accept changes of address after this date because results processing will have already begun. Students who have applied for tertiary studies through the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) must notify VTAC directly of changes to personal details occurring after the deadline.

Matching students with previous results

Matching of student details is done on the basis of name, date of birth and gender. Slight differences in spelling, an inaccurate date of birth or a change of name may mean that a student who has attended more than one school might be assigned multiple student numbers, each having only part of the student's academic record.

As the matching process will occur as soon as a student is registered, it is essential that the system be able to match a student's academic history with their current details. If a match is found on the database for a particular student, the student is allocated their previous student number, and their previous results and enrolments for the current year are combined to make up a complete academic history for the student. Therefore, the personal details entered for the student must be accurate. Schools should not estimate dates of birth to enrol students. If details are not correct, these matches cannot occur and the student will

have two student numbers, each part of their academic history. This may lead to the student not being awarded the certificate in which they are enrolled.

4.3 Security of student data

All VCE, VCAL and VET data on VASS must remain secure and the privacy of students' personal and academic details must be protected. see 7.2 Privacy in this section.

4.4 Security of student numbers and Results Service password

The student number is a key identifier that allows the VCAA to securely maintain student result data and to identify the student for a VCE examination. Students should have full confidence that the enrolment and result record maintained by the VCAA is accurate, complete and confidential.

The confidentiality of a student record should be restricted to the student, administrative staff at their home school and assessing school, VCAA staff who have a specific role in the maintenance of that data, and VTAC for the purpose of calculating the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). Any other access requires the written consent of the student.

Each student should be given a printed copy of their **Student Full Details Report** so they are aware of their student number. Lists of student numbers and names should not be printed and published or displayed on school noticeboards or otherwise made available to members of the school community.

VCE students are required to create a password when registering at the Results and ATAR website or Results and ATAR app. Students should be advised that they should keep their Results Service password in a secure place to avoid unauthorised access to their results via the Results Service at the end of the year.

4.5 Integrity of VCE School-based Assessments

At the beginning of the academic year, schools must provide students with clear written details of both the VCAA rules and the school's rules and procedures.

Principals are responsible for the administration of the VCAA's rules and instructions in their school. They must ensure that teachers are using only the currently accredited VCE study designs.

To ensure the integrity of School-based Assessment in all VCE units, schools should:

- develop a document that clearly states the school's expectations in relation to the development and delivery of School-based Assessment and the steps teachers must take to ensure the security of the content
- keep assessment tasks, including tasks in development, out of the reach, view and access of students until they are delivered
- where possible, avoid storing assessment tasks on open school networks and unsecured media such as USB sticks, and avoid sending assessment tasks by unsecured means such as emails
- have students sign a declaration that they will abide by their school's policies and rules relating to the appropriate use of the internet
- when delivering the same School-based Assessment across several different discrete classes, minimise the time lag between classes. If this is not possible, the assessment task should be suitably modified for each class
- ensure that tasks are not recycled from one academic year to another to prevent student use of other student work from previous academic years
- suitably modify commercially produced materials to ensure the school can authenticate student work
- suitably modify publicly available materials to ensure the school can authenticate student work.

For all units in the VCE, schools must specify the work that a student must do to achieve an S for a unit and the conditions under which the work is to be done. The school must inform each student in writing of the following:

- all work they need to complete to achieve an S for the unit
- all work they need to complete for School-based Assessment for the assessment of levels of achievement
- class attendance requirements
- how to submit work
- timelines and deadlines for completing work
- procedures for obtaining an extension of time
- internal school appeal procedures.

Decisions about satisfactory completion of a unit are solely the responsibility of the school. Results for each unit must be based on a judgment of satisfactory or non-satisfactory achievement of outcomes.

In order to support students with additional opportunities to achieve a satisfactory result, schools should have an established process to support the delay of satisfactory completion decisions for the VCE that is applied consistently across studies and units. The teacher is responsible for judging satisfactory completion of a unit. By reporting satisfactory completion, the teacher is certifying that the student has achieved the set of outcomes for the unit according to the rules set out by the VCAA and the school.

Schools should refer to the Scored assessment: School-based Assessment section for more information.

Each VCE unit result must be determined on the basis of evidence of achievement of outcomes completed during the academic year in which the student is enrolled. The VCAA recognises that some schools will begin teaching programs in the last weeks of the academic year before enrolment in the study. These programs are generally one to three weeks in length; for Units 3 and 4, they must not include formal School-based Assessment for the assessment of levels of achievement.

4.6 Administration of Special Provision

Procedures must be established to identify students who may require Special Provision, to ensure consistent and fair decisions are made about appropriate assistance for students. Application procedures for Special Provision must be given in writing to all students and the school must retain the necessary documentation used to support decisions.

Students may apply to their school for Special Provision for classroom learning and School-based Assessment. Schools are responsible for making an application to the VCAA, on behalf of a student, for Special Examination Arrangements for VCE external assessments. Students are responsible for applying for a Derived Examination Score.

If a student's application for Special Provision for classroom learning and School-based Assessment is rejected, either in full or in part, the student should be advised in writing of the reasons for the decision within 14 days. The student has the right of appeal to the school within 14 days of receiving the decision.

5 When schools fail to meet their obligations to students

In exceptional cases, the VCAA may consider an application by a principal that students have been disadvantaged because of a teacher's failure to teach a prescribed text or their failure to teach and/or assess a significant part of the accredited VCE study design, VCE VET program or VCAL unit. This is known as a teacher error application. The VCAA will not investigate matters concerning teacher qualifications and/or quality of teaching staff.

Only an application by the principal will be considered. The principal must write to the Senior Project Officer, Quality Assurance, VCAA to apply on behalf of students who may have been disadvantaged by a teacher error and provide an outline of the alleged error.

An investigation into the matter will be undertaken by the VCAA. This may include interviewing all parties involved. The VCAA may determine that there is no teacher error or that the school must provide an additional opportunity for each student to complete assessment, or may determine that each student should be treated as having obtained in the examination, or other form of assessment, a standard or result determined by the VCAA, or another outcome appropriate to the matter.

The VCAA will not enter into a dispute between a student and their school as to whether an error occurred. The process applies only to cases in which the principal believes an error may have been made that may have disadvantaged students in terms of their VCE or VCAL results.

The application must be lodged at the VCAA not later than the last day of the academic year in which the teacher error is alleged to have occurred. Late applications will not be accepted.

6 Partnerships

The VCAA recommends that schools with fewer than five enrolments in any VCE Unit 3–4 study (note that English and EAL are separate studies) form a partnership with another school or with a community organisation to enhance the curriculum provision or assessment arrangements for students. These are the possible formal arrangements:

- VCE small-group partnerships for statistical moderation of School-based Assessment
- VCAL partnerships for the extension of learning programs and resources.

6.1 Forming and documenting a partnership

Once schools have formed partnerships, the details must be entered on VASS and approved by each school in the partnership.

The **VCAA Partnership Agreement** form is available on VASS. Schools must first exchange partnership agreements and then enter the partnership details directly on VASS. Each school is required to keep their own copy of the partnership agreements and each copy must be signed by the principal of each school. The agreement is to be retained at the school and should not be forwarded to the VCAA; however, the VCAA may request it for audit purposes.

6.2 Managing small-group partnerships for statistical moderation of VCE School-based Assessment

Best practice

The VCAA expects that participating teachers will follow best practice when conducting partnerships, including the following processes:

- school principals should be informed of the initial formation of the partnership, the ongoing maintenance of the partnership, and the resulting moderation of School-based Assessment scores
- teachers in the partnership should make contact as early in the academic year as possible and keep written records of meetings, telephone calls, emails and any other relevant interaction
- school principals should be kept informed of any conflict that may arise and the measures taken to resolve any issues
- there should be an initial meeting that covers the requirements of the study design for each of the chosen assessment tasks and the assessment criteria, and for coursework

- teachers are required to agree on the procedures for ensuring comparability of assessment tasks and the schedule and marking schemes of any tasks to be done in common
- teachers should be clear and consistent about the application of the mandated criteria and descriptors for the School-assessed Task
- each school should mark the assessment tasks of its own students and select student tasks for moderation
- each school should enter the scores for its own students on VASS
- each school should send a copy of the VASS printout of the scores for all School-based Assessment tasks to its partner schools to verify that scores have been entered correctly.

Refer to the Scored assessment: School-based Assessment section for information on producing a combined set of comparable School-based Assessment scores.

Reporting scores to the VCAA

Each school enters the scores for its own students on VASS and sends a copy of the VASS printout of the assessments for all School-based Assessment tasks to the partner school to verify that the scores have been entered correctly. If a Score Amendment Sheet (SAS) is subsequently filed with the VCAA, it must be signed and dated by the principal of each school in the partnership.

Each partnership school must keep copies of the following documents at the school:

- a single list of the moderated scores for all students in the partnership (from all schools involved)
- a copy of the partner school's VASS printout of the assessments for all School-assessed Coursework tasks (to verify that the scores have been entered correctly)
- a **VCAA Partnership Agreement** form signed by the school principal.

Once partnership details are entered on VASS, schools must check that each school in the partnership has checked ('ticked') the approval button. Partnerships cannot be considered valid by the VCAA unless all schools in the partnership group have approved their involvement. In addition, the statistical moderation process cannot run for partnerships in which one or more schools has unapproved status. Partnerships cannot be entered directly on VASS after the closing date.

Schools can search for potential partner schools through VASS.

Exemption from partnership requirement

Exemption from the requirement to form partnerships may be granted following written application to the VCAA outlining why the formation of a partnership is impossible or undesirable in a particular circumstance. The exemption request letter must be endorsed by the school principal. Exemption requests can be accepted up until the submission of student results in any given academic year.

Exemption requests will be processed within 10 working days. The outcome of each request will appear in the status column on the VCE Partnerships screen on VASS. If an exemption request is unsuccessful, the principal will be notified in writing.

Schools with moderation groups that comprise fewer than five enrolments at the time of moderation should retain all student work contributing to School-based Assessments and make this work available to the VCAA, if requested.

Assistance for schools participating in small-group moderation

The VCAA provides a wide range of resources to support schools and teachers engaged in small-group partnerships, including access to professional development and exemplars of best practice.

When to dissolve a partnership

If a teacher in a partnership is not satisfied that the partnership is working satisfactorily, it is in the best interests of the students concerned that the teacher dissolves the partnership. Unsatisfactory partnerships can result when:

- regular and sufficient communication is not maintained
- teachers do not agree, or a compromise cannot be reached, on the standard of set tasks and assessment, the outcomes of moderation, and/or the level and spread of student scores
- a teacher feels pressured to agree to assessments they believe do not best reflect student ability.

How to dissolve a partnership

If a partnership is not working satisfactorily despite teachers' attempts to reach a resolution, the partnership can be dissolved before student results are entered. Requests for dissolution of a partnership must be submitted in writing and endorsed by the principal of each school involved. These requests are to be addressed to the Manager, Student Records and Results Unit, and must list the reason or reasons for the request. The VCAA will then remove the partnership from the database and award an exemption if necessary (that is, for the school with fewer than five enrolments). Alternatively, the 'small school' can form a partnership with another school.

7 Maintenance of school records

Schools must establish procedures to keep records and documentation of decisions relating to:

- unit completion and graded assessments (including VCE School-based Assessments)
- student appeals and resulting decisions
- applications and decisions relating to VCE Second Language and English as an Additional Language (EAL) eligibility
- agreements to work in partnership with other providers in determining initial School-based Assessments
- applications for extensions of time, with supporting documentation
- applications for, and approvals of, Special Provision, with supporting documentation
- student absences, and whether or not these are approved
- any interviews with a student and any resulting decisions.

Schools should advise students that they need to retain work completed for assessment until the end of the academic year in which the work was undertaken. Schools may wish to supervise the storage of student work for this purpose, but it is not required.

Work assessed as N, or which may for other reasons be the subject of dispute at a later date, should be retained at the school. Such work may be retained in original or photocopied form.

7.1 Retention of VCE School-based Assessments

The decision to return School-based Assessments to students rests with the school. Schools should have access to work completed for assessment until the end of the academic year in which the work was undertaken.

As part of the School-based Assessment Audit program, the VCAA may request copies of specific items of School-based Assessment completed by students. The School-based Assessment Audit dates are published as part of the VCAA [Important Administrative Dates](#).

7.2 Privacy

Laws relating to the privacy of personal information affect collection, access to, use, disclosure, security and storage of student and parent/guardian information.

The *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and the *Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)* set legal standards for the way the Victorian public sector collects and handles the 'personal information' and 'health information' of individuals. The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)* requires public authorities to act compatibly with human rights, including the right to privacy. Victorian government schools must comply with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act*, the *Health Records Act* and the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act*. The *Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth)* may apply to the collection and handling of personal information about individuals by non-government schools, who should seek their own advice in this regard. Schools may be required by DET or their sector authority to have a privacy policy.

7.3 Access to student data

Schools registered with the VRQA are required to ensure that parents of a student have access to accurate information about the student's achievement and performance. This information must include at least two written reports per academic year relating to the student's performance. This is a requirement of the minimum standards for registration of a school [regulation 60 and Clause 3 of Schedule 4 of the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*].

Schools should seek their own advice from DET, the relevant sector authority or their legal adviser about providing information to parents/guardians and students, to ensure they comply with applicable privacy legislation.

Students should be allowed to access their VCE or VCAL records during the course of their study and, at the discretion of the principal, after completion of the course.

7.4 Security and storage

Schools should store student and parent/guardian personal information securely and protect it from misuse, loss, unauthorised access, modification and disclosure, and in accordance with applicable privacy legislation. This may mean a locked filing cabinet or cupboard within a locked room that is accessible only to persons authorised by the principal, or secure data storage for digital records.

School copies of results should be held separately from collections of student work. Duplicate master records should also be stored separately. Information stored electronically, on databases or portable storage devices, should be kept securely and in such a way that records are not accessible to unauthorised persons.

Schools should seek their own advice in relation to compliance with legislation and good practice for the storage of personal, confidential and sensitive information. School privacy policies (if required) should address data security.

7.5 Freedom of Information requests

Students, parents and guardians at government schools may be able to request access to school documents by making a Freedom of Information (FOI) request under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*. An FOI request for access to government school records should be sent to the FOI and Privacy Unit at DET, or emailed to foi@education.vic.gov.au.

The VCAA holds records related to students' personal details, enrolment and assessment. FOI requests for access to documents held by the VCAA should be sent to the Freedom of Information Officer, Legal Services Unit, VCAA, 2 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, 3000, or emailed to vcaa.foi@education.vic.gov.au. Schools must not process such applications. Further information about FOI and the VCAA is available on the VCAA website.

7.6 Maintenance and disposal of records

Advice for government schools/providers

Government schools are obliged to keep and dispose of school records in accordance with Retention and Disposal Authorities (RDA) made under the *Public Records Act 1973 (Vic)* (prov.vic.gov.au). RDAs describe the categories of records kept by schools and specify the minimum period for which they should be retained.

The relevant government school RDAs are:

- PROS01/01 Retention and Disposal Authority for Records of School Records
- PROS10/09 Retention and Disposal Authority for Records of Education and Early Childhood Development Functions

Advice for non-government schools/providers

Non-government schools may be guided by the retention periods specified for government school records, or they may wish to use the 'Records Retention Schedule for non-Government Schools' produced by the Australian Society of Archivists. Alternatively, they may have their own internal records authority for school records, and may wish to seek their own advice about record keeping.

VASS administrators should refer to the *VASS New Users Guide* for comprehensive details on using VASS. If VASS administrators experience problems, including password and login issues, they should contact VASS Operations.

Administrative information: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

1 About the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) is a body corporate continued under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic), which is available from www.legislation.vic.gov.au. The vision of the VCAA is to be a global education leader. The mission of the VCAA is to provide high-quality curriculum, assessment and reporting to enable learning for life. The *VCAA Strategic Direction 2018–2022* is available on the VCAA website.

The VCAA Board is responsible for the governance of the VCAA and it acts within the scope of the functions, powers and obligations conferred upon it by the *Education and Training Reform Act* and other relevant legislation. The VCAA Board consists of not fewer than eight and not more than 15 members, one of whom is the Secretary to the Department of Education and Training (DET) or their representative. The remaining members are appointed by the Governor in Council on the nomination of the Minister for Education. Schedule 2 of the *Education and Training Reform Act* sets out general provisions for authorities, including the VCAA.

1.1 Responsibilities of the VCAA

As set out in section 2.5.3 (1) of the *Education and Training Reform Act*, the VCAA is responsible for:

- developing high-quality courses and curriculum and assessment products and services
- carrying out functions as a body registered with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)
- providing linkages that will facilitate movement between courses.

1.2 Functions and powers

The functions and powers of the VCAA are set out in part 2.5 of the *Education and Training Reform Act*. Particular reference should be made to [section 2.5.3](#) and [section 2.5.5](#).

2 VCAA obligations to schools

2.1 Quality assurance: VCE Languages audit

The criteria for eligibility for Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Second Languages are independent from each other. In either of these cases, the student must provide evidence of their eligibility and the VCAA will audit the evidence provided by students who apply for enrolment in a VCE Second Language study or EAL.

Auditing of the Second Language provision will be undertaken by the VCAA. The purpose of auditing is to:

- monitor school procedures
- monitor documentation that supports each student's application
- establish standards of best practice
- ensure that students are correctly enrolled in the appropriate study.

Schools may be asked by the VCAA to provide responses to questions presented in questionnaire format about school procedures and home school and assessing school communications.

2.2 Quality assurance: VCE School-based Assessment Audit

School-based Assessment is an essential feature of the VCE, allowing for local flexibility in both teaching and assessment practice. As part of the VCAA's ongoing monitoring and quality assurance program for the VCE, assessment tasks for School-based Assessment in each VCE study and scored VCE VET program can be requested for audit from schools. The VCAA's audit of School-based Assessment is conducted in line with the powers set out in Sections 2.5.3 and 2.5.5 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* and the requirements set out in Section 4.1.2 of the Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority 'Guidelines and Standards for the Registration of Awarding Bodies and the Accreditation of Senior Secondary Qualifications'.

Schools providing the VCE must deliver the course to the standards established by the VCAA, ensure the integrity of student assessments and ensure compliance with the requirements of the VCAA for the relevant assessment program. For School-based Assessment, the standards and requirements are stated in the assessment specifications set out in the relevant VCE study design and the VCE assessment principles. The School-based Assessment Audit checks that schools are compliant with these requirements.

The VCAA will draw any irregularities identified by the auditing process to the attention of the principal. In the event of serious irregularity, the Executive Committee of the VCAA will determine whether disciplinary or other procedures will apply and may alter schools' assessments in the light of evidence presented. A more detailed description of the process of the VCE School-based Assessment Audit is provided in the *Scored Assessment: School-based Assessment* section.

2.3 Quality assurance: VCE school audits and observer visits

Each school authorised to host VCE external assessments is visited periodically by the VCAA. Visits occurring before VCE external assessment periods are for the purpose of checking processes schools have in place for administering VCE external assessments and to ensure VCAA security requirements have been met (audit visit). In addition, the VCAA may visit a school during a VCE external assessment period to observe the conduct and administration of a VCE external assessment (observer visit).

2.4 Quality assurance: VCAL

The quality assurance process ensures that there is a common understanding among teachers regarding assessment judgments and the design of assessment tasks for the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) levels. It provides an opportunity for teachers to clarify their understanding about the appropriate VCAL level and tasks for students. The process provides the opportunity for professional development, where discussion about education practices and assessment advice is encouraged.

A VCAL Quality Assurance Panel is set up in each VCAL quality assurance region to:

- establish regional benchmarks for consistency in assessment of VCAL levels and VCAL learning outcomes
- provide advice to VCAL providers that will enable them to confidently design VCAL unit assessment tasks and to make assessment judgments about successful achievement of the learning outcomes for VCAL units

Information about this process is circulated to VCAL providers by the VCAA at the start of the academic year.

3 VCAA obligations to students

3.1 Collection of student enrolment data

The VCAA collects personal information from students for the purpose of managing their enrolment in the VCE, VCAL and VET. Personal information is collected from the student through the school or provider and entered on the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS), which retains information for all students enrolled in the state. A student record includes the student's address and contact details, assessment details, and any other information concerning their VCE or VCAL status, for example, Special Provision.

The VCAA keeps all information collected secure and confidential. The information is accessed only by relevant VCAA staff members, who deal with the specific processes for which the information was collected. Students' personal information is not disclosed to other persons or organisations without students' knowledge and, where relevant, consent, unless required or permitted by law.

The VCAA is a Victorian public sector agency and required to comply with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)*.

3.2 Provision of student assessment records

The VCAA makes records of student results available to students or their nominated representatives in accordance with section 2.5.3(2)(c) of the *Education and Training Reform Act*. At the end of each year, the VCAA provides a Statement of Results for VCE, VCAL and VET students.

Further copies of Statements of Results will be made available if requested by the student. Depending on the circumstances, a student may authorise a person to obtain a copy of their results on their behalf. Proof of identity of the student or of the nominated representative will be required at the time of collection. Fees will apply unless there are exceptional circumstances and the VCAA waives the fee. Any other request for student data will be referred to the VCAA for consideration.

3.3 Access under the Privacy and Data Protection Act

Under the *Privacy and Data Protection Act*, students have the right to request access to personal information held about them by the VCAA. Individuals seeking access to personal information held about them by the VCAA should email the VCAA Privacy Officer at vcaa.privacy@education.vic.gov.au. In some circumstances, an application under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)* may be necessary.

3.4 Victorian Student Number

The Secretary to DET established the Victorian Student Register (VSR) under Part 5.3A of the *Education and Training Act*. The VSR records Victorian student numbers and related information about all students under 25 years of age in (i) government and non-government schools; or (ii) undertaking Vocational Education and Training (VET) with a technical and further education (TAFE) institute, a registered training organisation (RTO) or an adult and community education (ACE) provider (referred to collectively as VET providers).

The VCAA maintains the VSR and carries out various functions on behalf of the Secretary.

The VSN provides the capability to accurately detect patterns of student movement through, and departure from, the Victorian education and training system. It enables the collection and analysis of timely and accurate data about education in Victoria.

Students, parents and guardians may apply for information recorded in the VSR relating to a student. The Secretary may authorise certain persons and bodies to access, use or disclose Victorian student numbers or related information for certain purposes, including monitoring and ensuring student enrolment and attendance, ensuring education or training providers and students receive appropriate resources, statistical purposes relating to education or training, research purposes relating to education or training, and ensuring students' educational records are accurately maintained.

4 VCAA committees and terms of reference

4.1 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee established under section 2.5.7 of the Act comprises the VCAA Chair, the Chief Executive Officer and three Board members. The key responsibilities of the Committee include:

- providing a forum for consideration of matters relating to VCAA and making decisions on those matters for which authority is delegated at times when the full Board is not scheduled to meet and/or did not achieve a quorum for a scheduled meeting
- providing support to the Board and, where so resolved by the Board, make decisions on its behalf
- exercising any function or authority determined by the Board when so required
- considering matters determined by the Board or following from a request of the CEO, as and when required
- advising the VCAA Board of all recommendations and proposed actions that are outcomes of a meeting of the Committee whether the Committee has met in session or out of session
- acting at all times in the best interests of both the VCAA and the Victorian community.

4.2 Early Years–10 Curriculum and Assessment Committee

The Early Years–10 Curriculum and Assessment Committee comprises VCAA Board members and representatives from Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, Independent Schools Victoria and the Department of Education and Training.

The committee provides expert advice and makes recommendations to the VCAA in relation to the Early Years to Year 10 on:

- policies, criteria and standards for curriculum and assessment for the Early Years to Year 10
- the relationship between the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) and the F–10 curriculum and the F–10 curriculum and senior secondary pathways in education and training, including the VCE, VET and VCAL
- the administration of the NAPLAN program (Years 3, 5, 7 and 9)
- monitoring and reporting student participation and performance in Early Years–Year 10 assessment programs
- the provision of materials for schools and early childhood settings, and of professional development for teachers and educators, to support the implementation of Early Years–Year 10 curriculum and assessment programs
- research on matters relating to Early Years–Year 10 curriculum, standards and assessment at a national and international level.

4.3 Senior Secondary Curriculum and Assessment Committee

The Senior Secondary Curriculum and Assessment Committee comprises nominated VCAA Board members and representatives from the senior secondary education sector, tertiary education sector, industry, Catholic, independent and government sectors.

The committee provides expert advice and makes recommendations to the VCAA Board on:

- the development, evaluation and approval of curriculum and assessment designed to be undertaken in the senior secondary years
- policies and procedures for the design, delivery and evaluation of curriculum and assessment products and services for the VCE, VCE VET and the VCAL
- patterns of participation and quality of outcomes relating to courses of study in the senior secondary years
- research on matters relating to senior secondary curriculum and assessment.

4.4 Audit Committee

The VCAA Audit Committee comprises VCAA Board members and independent external members.

The VCAA Audit Committee assists the VCAA in fulfilling its monitoring and oversight responsibilities, and in the independent review and assessment of the effectiveness of systems and controls. The responsibilities include financial management, risk management, corporate governance, performance and sustainability, and audit and business assurance activities. The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* and the *Financial Management Act 1994* guide the Committee in compliance accountabilities and responsibilities.

4.5 Review Committees

The Review Committees consist of three members, one of whom must be a Board member and Committee Chair.

A review committee is established only when required, and is responsible for:

- hearing student appeals against decisions of their school to impose penalties in respect of contraventions of VCAA assessment rules relating to school-based assessment
- conducting hearings into allegations that students have contravened the VCAA examination rules or obtained an assessment by fraudulent, illegal or unfair means and imposing penalties where appropriate in accordance with the requirements of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. Penalties range from reprimands to amending or cancelling students' grades.

4.6 International Committee

The International Committee comprises the VCAA Board members, the CEO and representatives of the Department of Education and Training, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, Victorian tertiary sector, independent international education and business consultants.

The VCAA International Committee gives advice to the VCAA Board and makes recommendations on policy, strategy and operational matters on VCAA international activities and engagement, including:

- assessing applications from schools to deliver VCAA curriculum and assessment offshore
- licensing of VCAA products and services for use overseas
- risk management and quality assurance related to the offshore delivery of VCAA products and services
- alignment of VCAA international activities with VCAA, departmental and government policy and strategy objectives.

Administrative information: Student enrolment

1 Registration: VCE and VCAL Student Personal Details form

Students must complete and submit the relevant **VCE and VCAL Student Personal Details** form to their home school for each academic year in which they enrol. The accuracy of student details should be audited against information provided on a student's form. Students must use their legally registered names when enrolling in a senior secondary qualification. Schools should request the student's birth certificate or change of name document, both of which are issued only by Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria to ensure the accuracy of student names and birth dates.

If a student's enrolment changes, it is the schools' responsibility to ensure that VCE and VCAL eligibility reports are run on VASS; these should be run periodically during the year. By running eligibility reports regularly, schools will be able to identify where there are issues with students not being able to meet satisfactory completion of that Senior Secondary Certificate. If errors are reported, the errors must be fixed and then the eligibility report run again.

The following sections on the form should be checked, where applicable.

1.1 General declaration

Before undertaking any studies, all students must sign an agreement to abide by Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) regulations.

1.2 Consent for disclosure to other organisations

Students must give permission for their data to be forwarded to newspapers and other government bodies for the calculation of awards and prizes and for the Department of Education and Training (DET) On Track survey. This must be done for each academic year of enrolment.

1.3 Permission for use of student work

Students are asked to grant copyright permission for the use of their work in publications and productions approved by the VCAA.

1.4 Students with past results

A 'past result' is any result in Matriculation, HSC, TOP, T12, STC, VCE or VCAL in a previous year (unless the result was achieved in the year immediately before the current academic year and the student is continuing at the same home school).

Students with past results will need to provide sufficient personal details to enable their records to be matched to database records. The VCAA database matches a student's records based on their student number or all of the following data: date of birth, first name, family name and gender. Students who have past results and who know their student number should indicate this on their form.

If a student's records are not matched, the student may not be awarded the certificate in which they are currently enrolled. Home schools can view on the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) all past results for VCE, VCE VET and VCAL achieved by students, including results from a student's previous school.

1.5 Fee-paying international students

Overseas students wishing to undertake the VCE, VCAL or International Baccalaureate (IB) must indicate if they are a fee-paying international student when completing their form.

2 VCE enrolment

The only VCE studies with enrolment restrictions are English as an Additional Language (EAL), VCE Second Languages and VCE Chinese Language, Culture and Society.

The following VCE studies consist of more than four units:

- History
- Applied Computing
- Australian and Global Politics
- Mathematics
- Music.

Except for units that are deemed to be equivalent, there are no restrictions within a study on the number or combinations of units that students may undertake or for which credit may be gained towards satisfactory completion of the VCE. For example, students may obtain credit in VCE Applied Computing for Units 3 and 4 of both Data Analytics and Software Development. However, to get credit for a sequence, students must satisfactorily complete both Units 3 and 4 from the one study. see the Qualifications: Victorian Certificate of Education section for full details.

2.1 Students seeking EAL status

As the satisfactory completion of an English study is a compulsory requirement for achieving the VCE, students who are unfamiliar with the English language because they are from non-English-speaking backgrounds or who are deaf or hard of hearing may have access to EAL status. Students applying for EAL status should indicate this on their **VCE and VCAL Student Personal Details** form. Identifying a student as having EAL status does not automatically enrol the student in EAL.

Students who complete Bridging EAL, which is available only as Units 1 and 2, are not automatically considered eligible for EAL status for Units 3 and 4 of EAL.

Students from a non-English-speaking background

To apply for EAL status, each student is required to submit an **Application for Enrolment in English as an Additional Language Units 3 and 4** form to the school. This is designed to assist schools in evaluating a student's EAL status. Schools should maintain a record of all completed applications. Schools should not enrol a student in EAL unless they have received all documentation verifying that the student meets the EAL eligibility criteria.

A student may be eligible for EAL status if they meet two criteria

For Criterion 1, the student must satisfy one of the following:

- On the first day of the calendar year, the student must not have been a resident in Australia or New Zealand or other predominantly English-speaking country for more than seven years. The period of seven years is to be calculated cumulatively over the student's whole life. The calculation of time spent in Australia is made from the date of last arrival plus any previous periods of time spent in Australia or

any predominantly English-speaking country. Time spent out of Australia during school holidays should be included in the accumulation towards the seven years because there would have been no disruption to education during these periods.

- The student is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person whose first language is not English.

For Criterion 2, the student must satisfy the following:

- English has been the student's major language of instruction for a total period of not more than seven years over the period of their education. Schools must sight the student's overseas school reports to confirm that the language of instruction was not English during this period.

Special circumstances for EAL status

There are special circumstances that may be considered by the VCAA in determining a student's eligibility for EAL status, including:

- minimal or no primary school education
- material interruptions to schooling during primary years, particularly if there were changes to the language of instruction
- material interruptions to schooling after arrival in Australia.

Circumstances not considered for EAL status

The following are not grounds for a special application for EAL status:

- the language spoken in the student's home
- the standard of the student's spoken and written English
- the failure of the student's school to provide EAL assistance to the student.

Determinations about EAL status

If a student clearly meets the conditions, the principal has the authority to grant this provision. Such applications should not be sent to the VCAA; they should be retained on the school file.

If a decision is not clear, the principal may apply to the VCAA for a determination using the **Application for Enrolment in English as an Additional Language Units 3 and 4** form. Only if a determination is sought from the VCAA should the completed application form, together with all supporting documentation, be forwarded to the Student Records and Results Unit as soon as possible.

Students who have resided and studied in Singapore or India

VASS disables EAL approval for students whose country of origin is Singapore or India, even though the student may have resided in Australia for less than seven years. A message on VASS will appear, stating 'EAL eligibility for this country of origin can only be approved by the VCAA'. The school must forward the application to the VCAA for a thorough assessment. These applications need to include supporting school documentation and passport stamp and/or International Movement Records, to determine whether the student is eligible for EAL. If the application is reviewed by the VCAA, and the approval granted, it will be entered on VASS and the school will be able to enrol the student in EAL.

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing

Students seeking EAL status on the grounds of being deaf or hard of hearing must:

- produce evidence of a hearing test administered by the Australian Government Hearing Services Program, or an equivalent body, not more than two calendar years before the year of enrolment in a Unit 3–4 sequence. The audiogram and accompanying report submitted must show that the student has a hearing loss of 60 decibels or greater in their better ear. Other aspects of hearing loss, such as issues relating to sound frequencies, should be noted in the report. The report should be written in an accessible language, with the implications of the audiogram results clearly explained

- have been ascertained by the Visiting Teacher Service as being eligible for assistance on the basis of being deaf or hard of hearing, or be enrolled in a school for the deaf or hard of hearing or a recognised unit or facility for the deaf or hard of hearing attached to a regular school.

Schools can make decisions about the eligibility of a deaf or hard of hearing student for EAL status on the basis of these criteria. If necessary, advice may be sought from the Student Records and Results Unit.

If the principal has approved the student's application, their status can be entered on VASS. If the principal is uncertain about a student's eligibility, they should apply to the VCAA using the **Application for Enrolment in English as an Additional Language Units 3 and 4** form. All evidence as described in the eligibility criteria must be supplied with the application.

To satisfy the requirements of English or EAL, students who are deaf or hard of hearing may undertake an alternative assessment task to the one specified in the English/EAL study design. For those students who are deaf or hard of hearing and who have a limited capacity for oral communication, an alternative may be a data presentation (for example, using Microsoft PowerPoint) or a presentation using Auslan, which is translated into speech by an Auslan interpreter.

School-based arrangements for EAL

Studies have been designed so teachers can develop courses appropriate to the needs of their students. The flexibility in the study design should be used to take account of a student's comparative unfamiliarity with the English language.

2.2 Students seeking enrolment in VCE Second Language studies

There are specific eligibility requirements for VCE Second Language studies in Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese. These studies are designed to cater for students who have learnt all they know of the language in an Australian school or similar environment.

All enrolments in Units 3 and 4 of a VCE Second Language study must be approved by the VCAA. Enrolment in VCE Second Language Units 1 and 2 studies does not need to be approved by the VCAA.

The home school is responsible for submitting the relevant **VCE Second Language Studies Units 3 and 4 Application** form, which should be submitted with the relevant supporting documentation in the academic year before enrolment. Schools should meet this deadline so that students are aware of their Second Language status at the beginning of the academic year in which they are enrolled. If this is not possible, schools should enrol students who may have difficulty meeting the required Second Language criteria into a First Language class until approval is granted. If the school does not offer the relevant First Language, the student should be enrolled in Distance Education at the Victorian School of Languages (VSL).

The student must provide sufficient evidence to support their application. The home school principal or their delegate must then make an initial assessment, using criteria and advice that has been provided by the VCAA, and complete the Principal's Declaration section of the relevant VASS forms. All accompanying documentation must be in English or have been translated into English by a recognised translation authority.

The responsibility for providing supporting documentation rests with the student. The VCAA may not permit enrolment in the study if forms are not complete or the supporting documentation is incomplete or is deemed insufficient.

Eligibility for Second Language studies

The criterion for eligibility for a VCE Second Language study is the number of years the student has been educated in a school where the specific language is the medium of instruction. Students who have learnt all they know of the language in an Australian school are eligible for VCE Second Language enrolment.

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| Chinese Second Language | A student is not eligible for Chinese Second Language if they have either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> completed one year (12 months) or more of education in a school where Chinese is the medium of instruction completed three years (36 months) or more of residence in any of the VCAA-nominated countries or regions (China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau). |
| Chinese Second Language Advanced | A student is eligible for Chinese Second Language Advanced if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> they have completed no more than seven years of education in a school where Chinese is the medium of instruction the highest level of education they have attained in a school where Chinese is the medium of instruction is no greater than the equivalent of Year 7 in a Victorian school. <p>As the formal education commencement age for a Victorian student is five years of age, all applicants will be deemed to have commenced formal education by the end of their fifth year of age, regardless of their setting.</p> |
| Indonesian Second Language | A student is eligible for Indonesian Second Language if they have completed no more than seven years of education in a school where Indonesian or Malay is the medium of instruction. |
| Japanese Second Language | A student is eligible for Japanese Second Language if they have completed no more than seven years of education in a school where Japanese is the medium of instruction. |
| Korean Second Language | A student is eligible for Korean Second Language if they have completed no more than seven years of education in a school where Korean is the medium of instruction. |
| Vietnamese Second Language | A student is eligible for Vietnamese Second Language if they have completed no more than seven years of education in a school where Vietnamese is the medium of instruction. |

Applying for VCE Second Language studies (Units 3 and 4 only)

Student enrolment responsibilities include:

- completing the relevant VCE Second Language Studies Units 3 and 4 application, giving details of their language background
- ensuring that all requested information is correctly provided and that the 'Certification by student and parent or guardian' section is completed
- providing the school with relevant documents in English (or translated into English by a recognised translation authority) to support their applications.

The student has the responsibility for providing supporting documentation. Students should contact the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd (NAATI) on 1300 557 470 or (03) 9642 3301. The VCAA will not permit students to enrol in the study if the application form is not complete, or the supporting documentation is incomplete or deemed insufficient to allow eligibility to be determined. The following information may also need to be provided as supporting documentation to the VCAA:

- Students who have Australian citizenship must provide a copy of their birth certificate or passport showing their date of arrival in Australia and country of residence.
- Students who have attended school overseas must provide reports from the school showing languages studied and years of attendance.
- Students who have had non-attendance at school in any year, or part year, from the age of six years must provide official relevant documentation. Acceptable documentation may be an official letter from the school in the country concerned, a report from a medical officer in that country, or a statement from the education authority in that country.

- Students who have lived overseas must provide passport entry and exit dates that detail international movement. Students who have misplaced their passports may obtain this information from the Department of Home Affairs.

The principal of the home school, or their delegate, must make an initial assessment using criteria and advice provided by the VCAA, and complete the Principal's Declaration section of the application form.

The home school must:

- certify that the information provided in the form and supporting documentation is true and correct before submitting them to the VCAA
- inform the student and their assessing school if the student is deemed to be ineligible. The application forms of these students should be forwarded to the VCAA only if endorsement of the school's recommendation is required
- forward application forms and a copy of relevant supporting documentation to the Student Records and Results Unit
- check the student's eligibility approval on VASS
- enrol students on VASS if their eligibility for VCE Second Language study is approved
- notify the assessing school of the VCAA's decision concerning a student's eligibility (by forwarding a **Student Full Details Report**).

Schools should contact the Student Records and Results Unit for advice about:

- student transfers
- students arriving from overseas at the commencement of the academic year
- criteria for eligibility
- enrolment procedures.

Exceptional circumstances

If a principal considers that a student who does not clearly satisfy the criteria should be allowed to enrol in the study due to exceptional circumstances, an application detailing the circumstances (supported by appropriate documentation) should be sent to the Student Records and Results Unit for consideration.

Difficulty in obtaining documents to explain non-attendance at school is not an exceptional circumstance. Appropriate documentation must be provided.

Approval for Second Language status will not be granted because of a student's standard of writing, speaking or listening in the language.

Chinese studies enrolment

There are four VCE Chinese studies available for enrolment; three of these studies have specific eligibility requirements.

Students planning to enrol in Units 1 and 2 Chinese Second Language or Chinese Second Language Advanced and who are also considering further studies at Units 3 and 4 level are advised to discuss the eligibility requirements with their VCE coordinator before finalising their VCE program.

| | | | | | |
|--|------|-----------|--|-----------|--|
| Chinese First Language | LO04 | Units 1–2 | Application is not required for enrolment in Units 1 and 2 | Units 3–4 | Application is not required for enrolment in Units 3 and 4 |
| Chinese Second Language Advanced | LO48 | Units 1–2 | Application is not required for enrolment in Units 1 and 2 | Units 3–4 | Application is required for enrolment in Units 3 and 4 |
| Chinese Second Language | LO39 | Units 1–2 | Application is not required for enrolment in Units 1 and 2 | Units 3–4 | Application is required for enrolment in Units 3 and 4 |
| Chinese Language, Culture and Society | LO57 | Units 1–2 | Application is not required for enrolment in Units 1 and 2 | Units 3–4 | Application is required for enrolment in Units 3 and 4 |

2.3 Students seeking enrolment in Chinese Language, Culture and Society

A student is not eligible for Chinese Language, Culture and Society if they have either:

- undertaken six months or more of education in a school where Chinese is the medium of instruction
- resided for 24 months or more in any VCAA-nominated countries or regions (China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau).

2.4 Students seeking enrolment in VCE Modern Languages

Enrolment in VCE Modern Language Units 3 and 4 studies does not need to be approved by the VCAA; however, students are required to declare their status as either a First Language Learner or a Second Language Learner.

A student will be considered a Second Language Learner if they have completed all their schooling in Australia or they have accumulated less than seven years of education in a school where the language they are enrolling in was the main language of instruction.

First and Second Language Learners undertake the same curriculum and examinations; however, the VCAA uses the two language learner categories in the study score calculation process for VCE Modern Languages.

For each applicable study, study scores will be calculated based on Second Language Learners. The outcomes from these calculations will then be applied to all students. This process maintains the rank order of all students within the study, but ensures that the study scores of Second Language Learners are not impacted by First Language Learners.

This applies to students enrolling in: Arabic, Armenian, Bosnian, Chin Hakha, Croatian, Dutch, Filipino, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Karen, Khmer, Macedonian, Maltese, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Sinhala, Spanish, Swedish, Tamil, Turkish and Yiddish.

Students will need to complete the [Declaration for enrolment in VCE Modern Languages Units 3 and 4](#) form and submit this to their home school. Students should submit declaration forms to their home school with the relevant supporting documentation for the principal's certification, before they are enrolled in the language study.

The home school is responsible for recording each student's status on VASS as either a First or Second Language Learner in the language of study. Language learner statuses are required to be entered on VASS before the enrolment deadline for VCE Unit 3–4 sequences.

3 VCAL enrolment

There are no restrictions on the VCAL studies students may enrol in. The decision about the level in which a student enrolls should be made by the VCAL provider in consultation with the student and should take into account the student's preparation and degree of readiness. It is critical that the certificate level is correct as this may affect the student's satisfactory completion.

4 VET enrolment

Students should be enrolled in the certificate and all units of competency they expect to complete in the current academic year only, rather than the complete qualification. If a student does not complete a unit of competency and wishes to complete it in a following academic year, they must be re-enrolled in the following academic year.

There may be restrictions on the VET training students can undertake because of industrial arrangements, the nature of the industry from which training is derived, and/or regulatory requirements. The enrolment into a qualification designated as an apprenticeship only is not permissible where a student does not have a valid, current training plan. The VCAA requires all schools wishing to enrol students into Certificate IV or Diploma qualifications to complete an **Application for Higher Level Qualifications** form, which is available on the VET page of the VCAA website. The decision about the content of the training program will be made by the school in consultation with the registered training organisation (RTO).

After enrolments have been finalised, a VCE or VCAL Student Eligibility Report should be run in VASS.

Schools should comply with the deadlines (which some sectoral authorities use to determine their funding arrangements) set out in the [Important Administrative Dates](#) for the following:

- finalising unit of competency enrolments within VCE VET scored Unit 3–4 sequences
- finalising unit of competency enrolments for any students undertaking any certificate type (VE1, VE2 or VE3)
- withdrawing students from units of competency from a VCE VET scored Unit 3–4 sequence
- finalising Assessment Plan information for VCE VET scored Unit 3–4 sequences.

5 International Baccalaureate registration

International Baccalaureate (IB) students need to be identified as such on VASS and the same attention to detail should be given to their personal details as required for VCE and VCAL students.

All Australian Year 12 IB students are required to sit the General Achievement Test (GAT) for the calculation of a notional Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). These students should complete the **International Baccalaureate (IB) Student Personal Details** form. All international Year 12 IB students are required to be enrolled on VASS by the deadline in [Important Administrative Dates](#) so that this information can be forwarded to VTAC. The GAT is optional for international students at the school's discretion; however, if students do not sit the GAT, an ATAR will not be calculated (they will, however, receive a notional ATAR statement).

There is an administrative fee for each IB student sitting the GAT (as per the [Summary Schedule of Fees and Charges](#)). The VCAA invoices students through their school. Each school is responsible for the collection of VCAA payments from its students. Schools are required to submit one cheque to cover all IB students included on the invoice. Where schools have an IB student wishing to undertake a VCE study, the principal must request permission for this enrolment from the VCAA before entering the enrolment on VASS. The school should provide to the Student Records and Results Unit a full course outline of the IB program the student is undertaking and provide the VCE study the student wishes to undertake. This VCE study must be different from any study being undertaken as part of their IB program.

6 Year 10 students without a program

Schools are required to identify Year 10 students on VASS regardless of whether they are enrolled in a VCE, VCAL or IB program. The course type for these students will be VCE and if a student does not have a VCE, VCAL or IB program, the school will be required to tick the PDO box on the enrolment screen identifying the student as PDO. This information is collected for the purposes of the DET On Track project. The **Year 10 Student Personal Details** form must be completed by such students. The school should hold these forms until the following year.

7 Atypical enrolment in VCE or VCAL

There are some students who do not start and finish their VCE or VCAL at the one school or within a continuous timeframe, including those who:

- transfer from one school to another within Victoria
- transfer from another state system to the VCE or VCAL
- transfer from another country to the VCE or VCAL
- require a break in their VCE studies due to personal circumstances (interrupted studies).

There are some students who combine their VCE studies with Higher Education Studies at university. The records of all such students need to be appropriately managed.

7.1 Students transferring within Victoria

If VCE or VCAL students transfer from one Victorian school to another, schools use VASS for the transfer procedure. When a student transfers to another school, the school that the student is leaving is required to transfer the student on VASS, so they can be enrolled at the new school. If this is not done, the new school must contact the student's former school and request the transfer. Students should not be transferred until the new home school is known.

A student must not be enrolled at the new school until correct transfer procedures have been completed, to ensure that a second student number is not created. Multiple records in the same academic year for the one student may lead to the student not being awarded their VCE or VCAL.

Students who transfer during the academic year must have results for units or School-based Assessment recorded on VASS at the time they transfer.

VCE transfers

If a VCE student transfers:

- very early in the academic year and completes all outcomes at the receiving school, the receiving school determines satisfactory completion for both Units 3 and 4
- very late in the academic year, having completed all outcomes at the original school but sitting any examinations at the receiving school, satisfactory completion of Units 3 and 4 is determined by the original school

- midway through the academic year and completes Unit 3 at the original school, that school determines satisfactory completion of the unit, while the receiving school determines satisfactory completion for Unit 4
- part way through completion of a unit, the original school enters all information on its assessments for any outcomes completed before transferring the student to the receiving school, while the receiving school determines satisfactory completion of the remaining outcomes and the unit.

The scheduling of assessment tasks at the receiving school may mean that a student would not have the opportunity in the normal teaching program to complete their remaining tasks for the unit. The receiving school should provide support for the student to complete any missing tasks, including the necessary teaching and preparation for the task. The scheduling of other tasks for the unit may prevent this, or the student may be disadvantaged by an overload of work in comparison with other students in the class. In such cases, the principal may award an S for the unit on the advice of the teacher of that study, if the student has completed sufficient work overall for a valid decision to be made.

VCAL transfers

If a VCAL student transfers:

- very early in the academic year and completes all learning outcomes at the receiving school, the receiving school determines satisfactory completion for any VCAL units
- midway through the academic year and has completed any units/learning outcomes at the original school, that school determines satisfactory completion of the units, while the receiving school determines satisfactory completion of any other units
- part way through completion of a unit, the original school provides any information on learning outcomes completed before transferring the student to the receiving school; the receiving school will determine satisfactory completion of the remaining learning outcomes and the unit.

7.2 Students transferring from interstate on exchange programs

Students transferring from interstate on exchange programs may have late enrolments approved. Written applications should be made to the Manager, Student Records and Results Unit at the VCAA.

7.3 Students transferring from interstate during Year 11

How schools deal with students who transfer from interstate during Year 11 will depend on the time of year that the student transfers. The following examples describe the varying procedures.

Case 1: Student arrives before the end of Term 1

The school to which the student transfers should:

- request documentation of the student's progress from their previous school
- enrol the student in VCE units in the usual way
- determine a reasonable expectation for completion of work in each VCE unit in which the student enrolls, taking into account the time remaining in the teaching period
- assess the student's satisfactory completion of units on the basis of the expectations established in the previous steps and the information provided by the student's former school.

Students cannot at this stage be credited with completion of a unit by virtue of work completed at their previous school.

Case 2: Student arrives before the end of Term 2

The school to which the student transfers should:

- request documentation of the student's progress from the previous school
- determine what would constitute a reasonable work program for the student for the remainder of the teaching period
- apply for credit on the basis of work undertaken at the interstate school, taking into account work completed at the Victorian school, if appropriate
- enrol the student in VCE units in the usual way.

Case 3: Student arrives before the end of Term 3

The school to which the student transfers should:

- request documentation of the student's progress from the previous school
- apply for credit the student should receive
- enrol the student in VCE units in the usual way
- determine a reasonable expectation for completion of work in each VCE unit in which the student enrolls, taking into account the time remaining in the teaching period
- assess the student's satisfactory completion of units on the basis of the expectations established above and the information provided by the previous school.

Case 4: Student arrives after the end of Term 3

The school to which the student transfers should:

- request documentation of the student's progress from the previous school
- determine a reasonable work program for the student for the remainder of the teaching period
- apply for credit for studies undertaken interstate, taking into account work completed at the Victorian school, if appropriate.

Students arriving in a Victorian school after enrolments for that year are closed will have to enrol in the following year.

7.4 Students transferring from interstate during Year 12

How schools deal with students who transfer from interstate during Year 12 will depend on the time of the academic year that the student transfers. The following cases describe the procedures schools should follow.

Case 1: Student arrives before the last day for enrolment in Unit 3–4 sequences

The school to which the student transfers should:

- request documentation of the student's progress from their previous school
- enrol the student in VCE units in the usual way
- determine a reasonable expectation for completion of work in each VCE unit in which the student enrolls, taking into consideration the time remaining in the teaching period
- assess the student's satisfactory completion of units on the basis of the expectations established in the previous procedures and the information provided by the previous school
- apply for credit for units completed at Year 11 and/or Year 12 level.

Case 2: Student arrives after the last day for enrolment in Unit 3–4 sequences

The school to which the student transfers should:

- request documentation of the student's progress from their previous school
- determine a reasonable work program for the student for the remainder of the teaching period
- apply to the VCAA for credit for studies undertaken interstate, taking into account work completed at the Victorian school, if appropriate.

Students who receive credit at Unit 3 and 4 level will be permitted to enrol in Unit 4. Wherever possible, it is expected that students enrolling in only Unit 4 will enrol in VCE studies that are related to the interstate subjects on which the credit granted for Unit 3 level is based. Requests to enrol interstate students directly into Unit 4 must be made in writing to the Manager, Student Records and Results Unit.

Students who are awarded credit for Unit 3 of a study completed interstate in 2020 and who complete Unit 4 of a similar VCE study and two or more graded assessments will have a study score calculated. This applies only to the current year of enrolment. Students who obtain an N for Unit 4 cannot return in the following year to satisfy the unit and have a study score calculated.

Students who obtain an N for Unit 4 may return in the following year, but must enrol in the Unit 3–4 sequence. An S for Unit 4 will satisfy the sequence. A study score will be calculated only if the student satisfactorily completes Units 3 and 4 in the one year.

Case 3: Student arrives after the deadline for withdrawing from a Unit 4 study

Students transferring from interstate during Year 12 after the deadline for withdrawing from a Unit 4 study will not be permitted to enrol in Unit 4 for that year.

7.5 Students arriving from overseas

Students transferring from overseas may have late enrolments approved. Written applications should be made to the Manager, Student Records and Results, VCAA.

Students arriving from overseas during Year 11

How schools deal with students transferring from overseas will depend on the time of year the student arrives. The procedures outlined for interstate transfers during Year 11 also apply to overseas transfers.

Students arriving from overseas during Year 12

Overseas students may complete the VCE in one year if the VCAA awards them credit at Unit 1 and 2 level. For overseas students transferring during Year 12 in the period before the last day for enrolment in Unit 3–4 sequences, schools should follow the same steps as those described in Case 1 in 7.4 Students transferring from interstate during Year 12. Students transferring from overseas after the last day for enrolment in Unit 3–4 sequences will not be permitted to enrol in Units 3 and 4.

7.6 Late enrolments in VCAL for exchange students

Late enrolment in VCAL for exchange students who are transferring from interstate or arriving from overseas on exchange programs and wishing to enrol in a VCAL program require approval. Written applications should be made to the Manager, Student Records and Results. Providers should consider the following:

- Some of a student's prior studies may contribute to one or more of the VCAL strands or as a general credit towards the VCAL. Providers should contact the VCAL unit at ycaa.vcal@edumail.vic.gov.au.
- Providers should ensure that a student's VCAL program is a valid program. see the *Qualifications: Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning* section.

- Students may be eligible for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for some VCAL units. Further information on VCAL RPL can be found in Section 4 of the VCAL Unit Assessment Planning Guide.
- Students arriving after a VCAL unit has commenced may not be able to successfully complete all the learning outcomes in the time allocated to the unit.

The VCAA website provides information on overseas qualifications and their credit into the VCE. This information may also be useful in determining credit into the VCAL at the appropriate level.

7.7 Interrupted Studies students

Interrupted Studies status enables students to complete VCE Units 3 and 4 and have a study score calculated over two academic years. The principal or principal's delegate, on behalf of the student, applies to the VCAA once the **Interrupted Studies Status Application** form (on VASS) has been completed.

The Interrupted Studies provision is primarily designed as a means to manage a student's program to ensure access to the full range of assessments. Schools will need to demonstrate a student's eligibility in the application documentation, the action taken so far in managing the student's circumstances, and the arrangements being made by the school to ensure that the student can complete their studies when they return to study in the following academic year.

Eligibility for Interrupted Studies

Students who are enrolled in Units 3 and 4 and undertake a recognised overseas exchange program or experience serious illness or other major adverse personal circumstance during the course of the academic year may apply for Interrupted Studies status and withdraw from Unit 4 of a sequence. Students may apply for Interrupted Studies status for their whole program of studies or for only part of their program (for example, interrupting two studies of an enrolment of five studies).

Students who will be unable to satisfactorily complete Unit 3 in a study before their departure should consider Compassionate Late Withdrawal from the study, encompassing both Units 3 and 4.

Interrupted Studies status is not granted to students who wish to enrol in an alternative course of study or participate in activities of personal interest. Schools may consider making specific arrangements for a student who chooses to participate in sporting events either interstate or overseas and who will be absent from school for a brief period. These arrangements should focus on allowing students to achieve satisfactory completion of outcomes.

Students who take up full-time employment or a full-time apprenticeship but maintain their commitment to the VCE by continuing enrolment in at least two sequences of Units 3 and 4 may be considered eligible.

Australian Defence Force personnel may apply for Interrupted Studies status. Schools should contact the Student Records and Results Unit for advice.

There is no specific date by which the VCAA must receive applications; however, Interrupted Studies status will not be granted to students who satisfy the outcomes for Unit 4 but were unable to complete VCE external assessments. In these cases the student may be eligible to apply for a Derived Examination Score.

Sample program structures

Eligible students may vary their program to suit their circumstances. The following table outlines two examples. The first student needs to take a complete break from study. The second student has continued with two of their five studies and taken a complete break in three studies, then chosen to repeat one of the continued studies the following year, repeat Unit 3 of two of the interrupted studies, and complete Unit 4 of each of the interrupted studies.

| Type of Interrupted Studies | First year | Second year | | Third year | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|
| Student 1: Complete break | English Units 1 and 2 Mathematical Methods Units 1 and 2 Chemistry Units 1 and 2 Media Units 1 and 2 Literature Units 1 and 2 | English Unit 3 Mathematical Methods Unit 3 Chemistry Unit 3 Media Unit 3 Literature Unit 3 | | | English Unit 4 Mathematical Methods Unit 4 Chemistry Unit 4 Media Unit 4 Literature Unit 4 |
| Student 2: Partial break | English Units 1 and 2 Mathematical Methods Units 1 and 2 Chemistry Units 1 and 2 Media Units 1 and 2 Literature Units 1 and 2 | English Unit 3 Mathematical Methods Unit 3 Chemistry Unit 3 Media Unit 3 Literature Unit 3 | English Unit 4 Mathematical Methods Unit 4 | Mathematical Methods Unit 3 Media Unit 3 Literature Unit 3 | Mathematical Methods Unit 4 Chemistry Unit 4 Media Unit 4 Literature Unit 4 |

Returning to complete Unit 4 studies

A student is not automatically flagged as a returning Interrupted Studies student when they resume their studies the following academic year. The VCAA requires notification in writing that the student has returned and has been enrolled in the relevant studies.

Arrangements for a student's return to school with Interrupted Studies

In preparation for a student's return to undertake Unit 4 of a study commenced in a previous academic year, schools are strongly advised to check the curriculum content to ensure continuity of the sequence. If there are significant curriculum changes, teachers should ensure students receive advice and additional preparatory work.

Students who return to a different school after Interrupted Studies

A student who returns to a different school after Interrupted Studies should inform their new school that they have Interrupted Studies status to ensure enrolment in Unit 4 of the studies for which they were granted this status.

Inability to return to school after Interrupted Studies

If a student is unable to return to school to complete Unit 4 at the agreed time, the school may apply on their behalf for an extension of Interrupted Studies for a further 12 months. Applications for extension must be in writing from the school principal and include current medical or other professional documentation to support the application.

Repeating studies

It is not intended that students who are granted Interrupted Studies status repeat Unit 3, but they may do so if they wish to use it as an opportunity to improve assessment results. If a student was awarded an N for Unit 3 because of illness or other serious cause, they should repeat the unit. They must complete all set tasks in accordance with the study design to assess learning outcomes in the academic year of their return.

8 Withdrawal from study

Students may choose to withdraw from their studies at any time. However, the records of their enrolment can be withdrawn from a unit only if the enrolment date for that unit has not passed. Student enrolments cannot be withdrawn from the database if there are results recorded for the enrolment.

8.1 Compassionate Late Withdrawal

A student may, under exceptional circumstances, be given approval for Compassionate Late Withdrawal from VCE Units 3 and 4. The principal or principal's delegate, using the **Application for late VCE and VCAL enrolment amendments** form, must apply to the Manager, Student Records and Results, on the student's behalf, for permission to withdraw from one or more VCE Unit 3 and 4 studies. Documentation of the exceptional circumstances must be included. Compassionate Late Withdrawal is not available to students who are simply not coping with the demands of VCE studies. This provision is designed to assist students who have made a genuine attempt to continue with their VCE studies while suffering major adverse circumstances, but find that they cannot complete their studies. If the exceptional circumstances claimed are for medical reasons, evidence from a qualified person – for example, a general practitioner or psychologist – is required as part of the application. No fees apply for Compassionate Late Withdrawal.

Compassionate Late Withdrawal from a Unit 3 and 4 study will not be approved if a student has a final reported grade for an examination or School-based Assessment. If the student has scores for an examination or School-based Assessment associated with Unit 3 only, and wishes to continue with that study the following year, the school may apply for Interrupted Studies status on the student's behalf.

8.2 Total withdrawal from the VCE or VCAL

Students wishing to withdraw from the VCE or VCAL must first complete a **Student Exit** form (on VASS). It is not possible for schools or individuals other than the student to withdraw a student's enrolment without the student's written permission. The **Student Exit** form should be incorporated into the school's exit procedures and documentation and should be stored at the school; the withdrawal must be entered on VASS. Withdrawal from VCE or VCAL can be completed by the school provided the enrolment date for that unit or units has not passed.

9 Fee-paying international students

Fee-paying international students studying at a Victorian school who wish to undertake the VCE, VCAL or IB must indicate that they are a fee-paying international student on their **VCE and VCAL Student Personal Details** form. Note that IB and VCAL studies are not available to international students studying at a Victorian government school.

International students are students from overseas who do not hold Australian citizenship, do not have permanent residence, and are in Australia on a visa that permits them to study. Some international students are required to pay fees to study in Victoria and others are not. Fee liability is determined each education provider. International students in Australia on a recognised overseas exchange program are not required to pay fees to attend school in Victoria and are not required to pay VCAA fees.

In Victorian government schools, the fee-paying status of international students is set in accordance with 2.2.9 (1) of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, Ministerial Order 819 – Fees for Overseas Students in Government Schools and the [International Student Visa Fee Table](#) (Fee Table) document. The Fee Table assists Victorian government schools to correctly identify which international students must pay fees based on the visa they hold. Fee-paying international students wishing to study at a Victorian government school must enrol in the Department of Education and Training's International Student Program, administered by the Department's International Education Division. Queries about the fee-liability of international students at Victorian government schools, can be directed to the International Education Division: (03) 7022 1000 or international@education.vic.gov.au.

In non-government schools, such as schools operating under the Catholic Education Commission of Victorian (CECV) or Independent Schools Victorian (ISV), the fee-paying status of international students is set by each school. Contact the relevant schools for further information on the fee liability of international students at these schools.

9.1 VCAA administration fee for fee-paying international students

The VCAA administration fee invoiced to fee-paying international students covers the cost of enrolment, assessment and examination procedures, printing and delivery of results, and the forwarding of results to VTAC. The VCAA invoices students through their schools after the last day for enrolment in a Unit 3–4 sequence. No payments should be sent until invoices have been received. A tax invoice for the school will not be issued. If the accounts department at the school requires a tax invoice in order to issue a cheque, the control report and student invoices may be photocopied before being distributed to the students.

The VCAA fees for fee-paying international students are listed in [Summary Schedule of Fees and Charges](#) on the VCAA website. These fees are GST exempt.

As fees are dependent on unit enrolments, it is essential that student enrolments are correct at the time of invoicing. Students must be enrolled in their complete program for the academic year before the last day for enrolment in a Unit 3–4 sequence. Schools should pay particular attention to the enrolments of students who are studying units at other assessing schools, for example, VCE Language providers.

First-, second- and third-round invoice and payment due dates for fee-paying international students are listed in [Important Administrative Dates](#). Schools are required to distribute invoices, collect payments and submit one payment either by cheque or bank transfer to cover all students invoiced. Note that payments made by students directly to the VCAA will not be accepted and will be returned to schools.

Fee-paying international students should be made aware that failure to pay all VCAA invoices received over the period of their enrolment in the VCE program (which may be over one or more years) will result in final results being withheld from the student, the school and VTAC.

Principals are required to ensure that the list of fee-paying international students provided by the VCAA is a complete record of all VCE and VCAL students with this status in the school. The list, which needs to be certified by the principal as correct, must be returned to Student Records and Results, VCAA.

If any student's status needs to be amended, either to or from fee-paying status, the required amendment is to be made on VASS and the **Student Full Details Report** forwarded to Student Records and Results with a brief explanation.

9.2 VCAA fee refund policy for fee-paying international students

If VCAA fees have been received for a student who has been incorrectly flagged as a fee-paying international student or who formally withdrew prior to the enrolment date, the VCAA will refund the school. An international student who is granted Australian residency status after the enrolment date must still pay the fees invoiced.

10 Student observance of assessment and attendance rules

At the beginning of each academic year, students agree in a signed declaration to abide by the rules and instructions relating to the conduct of the VCE assessment program. This includes school rules related to their assessment, both School-based Assessment and VCE external assessments.

Students must also sign a declaration that they will abide by their school's policies and rules relating to the appropriate use of the internet.

Schools should refer to the *Scored assessment: School-based Assessment* and *Scored assessment: External assessment* sections for detailed information on VCAA rules relating to assessment, and what to do if there is a breach of these rules.

10.1 VCE attendance

All VCE units involve at least 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction. A student needs to attend sufficient class time to complete work. The school sets minimum class time and attendance rules. If a student has completed work, but there has been a substantial breach of the school's attendance policy, the school may be unable to authenticate the student's work completed across the outcome. Where the school chooses to assign an N result for the unit, because the work cannot be authenticated, the school must assign an N for the outcome that cannot be authenticated.

A school policy and set of procedures to cover absence from School-based Assessment tasks should be published and made available to staff, students and parents. When a student is absent from school for prolonged periods, or has been unable to complete all School-based Assessment tasks because of illness or other special circumstances, the school may, upon application from the student, grant Special Provision for School-based Assessments. In this case, the student should not be penalised for lack of attendance. Special Provision may allow a student to work from home for a period of time. Schools should ensure they retain documentation about any decisions relating to granting provisions for School-based Assessment, including supporting evidence.

In the situation where a student is allowed to work from home, the school must have in place additional measures to be able to authenticate the student's work as their own. Advice about authentication measures is provided in the *Scored assessment: School-based Assessment* section.

10.2 VCAL attendance

Within a school setting, a VCAL learning program would normally be based on a full-time load of scheduled and unscheduled learning (1000 hours). Attendance in a school setting is determined by school regulations. In other educational settings the nominal hours may vary, taking into consideration the specific needs of the student.

VCAL programs often include learning outside the school, including VET classes and structured workplace learning. Expectations related to these settings are set by the RTO or workplace.

A school policy and set of procedures related to VCAL attendance should be published and made available to staff, students and parents.

Assessment: Satisfactory completion of units

1 Satisfactory completion of VCE units

For satisfactory completion of a Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) unit, students must demonstrate their achievement of the set of outcomes as specified in the study design. The decision about satisfactory completion of outcomes is based on the teacher's judgment of the student's overall performance on a combination of set work and assessment tools related to the outcomes. Students should be provided with multiple opportunities to develop and demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills required for the outcomes for the unit.

The decision to award an S for satisfactory completion of a unit is separate from the assessment of levels of achievement for study score calculation. VCE unit results (S or N) contribute to satisfactory completion of the certificate.

Final School-based Assessment scores contribute to the calculation of a study score. Where the assessment item developed combines the demonstration of outcomes (S or N) and levels of achievement (scored assessment), best practice would support students who did not meet the outcome through the completion of the assessment item being afforded additional opportunities to demonstrate the outcome. For example, a teacher may consider work previously submitted, provided it meets the requirements. Students may not resubmit work to improve a School-based Assessment score.

1.1 Satisfactory VCE unit result

The student will receive an S (satisfactory) for a unit if the teacher determines that the student has:

- produced work that demonstrates achievement of the outcomes
- submitted work that is clearly their own.

Decisions about satisfactory completion of a unit are solely the responsibility of the school. Results for each unit must be based on a judgment of satisfactory or non-satisfactory achievement of outcomes.

At the beginning of the academic year, schools must provide students with clear written details of both the VCAA rules and the school's rules and procedures. For all units in the VCE, schools must specify the work that a student must do to achieve an S for a unit and the conditions under which the work is to be done. More details are provided in 4.5 Integrity of VCE School-based Assessments in the *Administrative information: Schools and providers* section.

1.2 Not satisfactory VCE unit result

The student will receive an N (not satisfactory) for the unit when one or more of the following occurs:

- the work does not demonstrate achievement of the outcomes
- the student has failed to meet a school deadline for the assessment task, including if an extension of time has been granted for any reason, including Special Provision
- the work cannot be authenticated, for example through lack of attendance
- there has been a substantial breach of VCAA rules and the school's rules and procedures.

1.3 Redeeming outcomes – submitting further evidence for satisfactory completion

If, in the judgment of the teacher, work submitted by a student does not meet the required standard for satisfactory completion, the teacher may consider other work relating to outcomes undertaken and submitted by the student for the unit. This work may include class work, homework, additional tasks or discussions with the student that demonstrate their achievement of the outcome. The school may decide to delay the decision about satisfactory completion to allow a student to complete or submit further work.

A student may only submit further evidence, or resubmit a School-based Assessment for reconsideration, to redeem an S for the outcome. Students may not resubmit to improve a School-based Assessment score.

1.4 VCE unit result of J

If a student is no longer attending a unit but they have not officially withdrawn by signing a **Student Exit** form, the symbol J will be included on VASS.

The J result can only be used if the student:

- is no longer attending class
- has not submitted work for assessment.

The J result is recorded on the VCAA database, but is not reported on the student's Statement of Results. Units with a J result are made available to the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) and are treated as equivalent to those with an N result.

1.5 Lost, stolen or damaged work

If a teacher or student has lost work or had work stolen or damaged, they must make a written statement explaining the circumstances. The statement must be signed, dated and filed at the school. Schools must keep a record of the loss or damage, but should not report it to the VCAA. The principal, acting on advice from the teacher, and on the basis of records kept, shall determine the unit result for the student.

1.6 Care in the use of technology

A student who uses technology to produce work for assessment is responsible for ensuring that:

- there is an alternative system available for producing assessable work in case of malfunction or unavailability
- hard copies of the work in progress and back-up versions are produced regularly.

2 Satisfactory completion of VCAL units

2.1 Satisfactory VCAL unit result

A student will receive an S (satisfactory achievement) for all Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) units when they have demonstrated achievement in all learning outcomes for the VCAL unit.

All VCAL assessment activities should be assessed by the teacher to verify their successful completion. The elements in the VCAL curriculum documents further describe the learning outcomes and are intended as a guide for teachers in the design of assessment tasks to ensure consistency in how learning outcomes are interpreted and assessed.

To be credited with satisfactory unit results, students must demonstrate achievement in all learning outcomes in that unit.

The curriculum components in a VCAL learning program must be assessed in accordance with the requirements and guidelines outlined in the curriculum documents for the VCAL units.

The VCAL provider coordinates the assessment and collection of results for all curriculum components within the VCAL learning program. Students will receive an S or N (not yet completed) result for each VCAL unit.

Teachers assessing students who have particular needs must maintain the validity and reliability of assessment. Flexible assessment methods should be used to allow students to demonstrate the successful completion of learning outcomes without disadvantage.

Teachers should use a variety of assessment tasks that provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of each learning outcome. Students should be observed on more than one occasion and, wherever possible, in a range of contexts to make sure the assessment is consistent, reliable, fair and equitable.

For VCE units included in the VCAL learning program, assessment must be in accordance with the VCE study designs.

2.2 Recording of VCAL learning outcomes

VCAL providers who record an N for a VCAL unit can record an S for individual unit learning outcomes that have been achieved (existing credit). Access the entry screen for the recording of individual learning outcomes via: VASS > Results Admin > VCAL Results Entry > Unit.

Providers can also produce a number of relevant reports:

- Results Admin > Unit results > by class
- Results Admin > Unit results > by student.

VCAL students with existing credit will be required to complete only the outstanding VCAL unit learning outcomes that were not achieved, to record an S for the unit. There is a two-year period for recognition of individual VCAL learning outcomes. This will assist VCAL students who have interruptions to their studies, including students who:

- have a significant illness
- have significant personal hardship
- are returning to VCAL after changes to their career pathway (for example, a student has left VCAL to take up employment, but then lost their job)
- have other interruptions to their study (for example, a student has become disengaged and left school)
- have taken a long time to achieve their VCAL.

Recognition of existing credit is not intended for students who have participated in activities of personal interest that led to their exit from the original educational program.

3 Satisfactory completion of VET units

3.1 Satisfactory VET unit of competency result

Students will receive an S for a unit of competency if they have been assessed as competent for the unit. The final assessment decision is made by their registered training organisation (RTO).

Satisfactory completion of VCE VET units is calculated automatically as students satisfactorily complete units of competency. Most VCE VET programs consist of four VCE VET units containing one Unit 3–4 sequence. The exceptions are for some Certificate II qualifications where the credit is only at Units 1 and 2 level and some larger Certificate III qualifications, which may provide two Units 3–4 sequences.

Not yet competent VET unit of competency result

Students will receive an NYC (not yet competent) result for a unit of competency if they have not yet demonstrated competence. This may be as a consequence of not completing the unit or not being able to demonstrate competence as required by the unit of competency. If a student has not satisfied sufficient units of competency to the nominated hour value to be awarded satisfactory completion of a VCE VET unit, the result will be left blank.

Scored assessment: School-based Assessment

There are two forms of School-based Assessment for VCE Units 3 and 4:

- School-assessed Coursework, which consists of a set of assessment tasks that assesses each student's level of achievement in Units 3 and 4 outcomes as specified in the study design. Schools provide a score for each component of coursework specified in the study design. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) aggregates these scores into a single total score for each student, which is then statistically moderated against the examination scores in the study. The General Achievement Test (GAT) may also be used in statistical moderation.
- School-assessed Tasks, which are set by the VCAA to assess specific sets of practical skills and knowledge. Teachers assess the student's level of achievement on the basis of a rating against criteria specified by the VCAA. Schools provide a score for each criterion. The VCAA aggregates these scores into a single total score for each student, which is then statistically moderated against the examination scores in the study. The GAT may also be used in statistical moderation.

School policies and procedures, including the conditions and rules under which School-based Assessment will take place, must be communicated to students and parents at the beginning of the academic year or when a student enrolls in any Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) unit at the school.

Each VCE unit result must be determined on the basis of evidence of achievement completed during the academic year in which the student is enrolled. The VCAA recognises that some schools will begin teaching programs late in the year before enrolment. These programs are generally one to three weeks in length but must not include formal School-based Assessment.

1 Authentication

Principals are responsible for the administration of VCAA rules and instructions in their school. One of these rules is that students must ensure that all unacknowledged work submitted for assessment is genuinely their own.

Teachers may consider it appropriate to ask students to demonstrate their understanding of the task at, or about the time of, submission of the work. If any part or all of the work cannot be authenticated, the matter must be dealt with as a breach of rules.

1.1 School-assessed Coursework

Teachers must develop courses that include appropriate learning activities to enable students to demonstrate achievement of outcomes. Undue assistance should not be provided to students while undertaking assessment tasks.

Students should be clearly informed of the timelines and the conditions under which assessment tasks are to be conducted, including whether any resources are permitted.

Work completed outside class

Most work for the assessment of unit outcomes and School-assessed Coursework will be completed in class; however, this does not preclude normal teacher expectations for students to complete research and learning activities that contribute to gaining key knowledge and skills outside of class time.

Additional work and study undertaken outside of class time will be required as part of the student's regular learning program. The setting and marking of work with a formative focus provides students with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills, and for teachers to provide diagnostic feedback.

A task for the assessment of unit outcomes may require preliminary preparation and activities associated with the task (for example, gathering necessary research data). The amount of work to be completed as homework is decided by the teacher, taking into account the nature, scope and purpose of the task. Students should be advised just before beginning the task that some information or data might be collected outside the classroom.

For School-assessed Coursework undertaken outside of class time, teachers must monitor and record each student's progress through to completion. This requires regular sightings of the work by the teacher and the keeping of records in the **Authentication Record for School-based Assessment** form (available as a download on VASS).

Drafting

Teachers are not required to formally sight drafts or to record students' completion of drafts unless it is for authentication purposes. Drafting can remain a part of a teaching and learning strategy, and students may do preliminary drafting; however, drafts are not to be submitted to the teacher for the purpose of getting feedback on an incomplete task that will contribute to the total School-assessed Coursework score. Teachers must not mark or provide comments on any draft submitted for School-assessed Coursework.

1.2 School-assessed Tasks

Teachers must ensure that there is a sufficient range of topics within their class to distinguish each student's work and, therefore, to assist in the authentication process.

Teachers must monitor and record each student's development of work, from planning and drafting through to completion, in the study specific **School-assessed Task Authentication Record** form. This requires regular sightings of the work by the teacher.

Observations of individual work done in class should be recorded. The teacher and student must sign each recorded observation.

1.3 Strategies for avoiding authentication problems

To reduce the possibility of authentication problems occurring in VCE Units 1 to 4, or problems being difficult to resolve:

- teachers should ensure that tasks are kept secure prior to delivery, to avoid unauthorised release to students and thereby compromising the assessment. Tasks should not be sent by mail or electronically without due care
- a significant amount of class time should be spent on the task so that the teacher is familiar with each student's work in progress and can regularly monitor and discuss aspects of the work with each student
- students should document the specific stages of the development of work, starting with an early part of the task, such as the topic choice, list of resources and/or preliminary research
- copies of each student's written work should be filed at given stages in their development
- assessment tasks should not be recycled, unless modifications are made to ensure that students are unable to use other students' work from a previous academic year
- where commercially produced materials are being used for School-based Assessment, the school should ensure the tasks meet the requirements of the study design and that they have been sufficiently modified to be unique to the school to enable student work to be authenticated
- where publicly available materials are being used for School-based Assessment, the school should ensure the tasks meet the requirements of the study design and that they have been sufficiently modified to be unique to the school to enable student work to be authenticated
- if there is more than one class of a particular study in the school, the school should apply internal moderation and/or cross-marking procedures to ensure consistency of assessments between teachers.

Teachers are advised to apply the same approach to authentication and record keeping, as cross-marking sometimes reveals possible breaches of authentication. The early liaison on topics and sharing of draft student work between teachers enables earlier identification of possible authentication problems and the implementation of appropriate action

- students should acknowledge tutors, if they have them, and discuss and show the work done with them. Ideally, liaison between class teachers and tutors can provide the maximum benefit for students and ensure that tutors are aware of the authentication requirements. Similar advice applies to students who receive regular help from a family member.

2 Scheduling assessment tasks

Teachers are advised to give students the dates for completion of assessment tasks in advance, taking into account the [Important Administrative Dates](#). The Assessment Schedule has the dates by which schools must submit results to the VCAA, and should be used in conjunction with the Important Administrative Dates.

Schools should take into account issues of authentication and student workload in deciding when specific details of tasks are given to students.

An extension may be needed to account for circumstances in which a student or group of students has not been given appropriate time to undertake or complete School-based Assessment.

2.1 Rescheduling assessment tasks for an entire class

If teachers wish to reschedule an assessment task because their students are not ready to be assessed, or due to other circumstances, they should provide adequate notification to all students in the class or classes.

An extension of time for all students in a class should be given only on the condition that they are all given adequate notice and that no student in the class or in another class is advantaged or disadvantaged.

2.2 Rescheduling an assessment task for an individual student

Extension of time for an individual student to complete a task should be granted only in special circumstances.

An extension of time may be permitted, but not into the next academic year.

Schools are required to have a policy outlining conditions under which an extension of time for individuals may be granted. It should be common across all VCE units within a school and should contain details including:

- a formal process for applying for an extension of time
- the rules of eligibility
- the maximum period for an extension
- conditions under which an extension will be allowed.

Extensions for tasks related to units of competency contributing to scored VCE VET sequences cannot be permitted beyond the final date for results submission. Unit completion is essential for finalising study scores, which must be calculated at the same time for all VCE studies.

3 Determining initial School-based Assessments

Each school should have established procedures for determining School-based Assessments and should apply these procedures consistently. There should be consistency in the decisions made by teachers of individual studies and in the decisions made by multiple teachers of one study.

The VCAA recommends that all teachers review the Statistical Moderation report (available on VASS) related to their study. Where the internal assessment scale is misaligned against the external assessment scale the school may wish to consider establishing a professional partnership with another provider to further develop teacher capacity to align internal and external assessment scales.

3.1 Determining initial School-based Assessments where there is more than one class in the school

If there is more than one class in a study, teachers should engage in consultation to arrive at School-based Assessments. Schools have considerable experience in assessment, but the following approaches will help schools to review their arrangements or establish new practices with regards to cross-marking and/or internal moderation.

Approach 1

- Teachers meet to discuss performance descriptors/assessment criteria, topics and approaches used for the task.
- Teachers grade the task from their own classes.
- Teachers swap samples and carry out blind marking.
- If necessary, teachers mark further tasks or reassess tasks from their own class.
- Difficult cases are further discussed before results are entered.

Approach 2

- Teachers combine and distribute the student tasks among themselves for assessment.
- The results are returned to the class teacher, who reassesses all tasks or the tasks of students who have unexpected results.
- Unusual cases are considered by all teachers concerned.

Approach 3

- Samples from all classes are distributed.
- All teachers assess the same tasks.
- Differences in results are discussed to gain a clearer and more consistent understanding of the application of the performance descriptors/assessment criteria.
- When all teachers are confident they have a consistent understanding of the application of the performance descriptors/assessment criteria, each teacher assesses tasks from their own class.

3.2 Determining initial School-based Assessments in partnership with another school

Refer to the *Administrative information: Schools and providers* section for information about setting up partnerships specifically for School-based Assessment. It is recommended that initial discussions take place at the beginning of the academic year between teachers in different schools.

It is useful to swap some drafts of typical work early in the process of completing the School-based Assessment. The earlier a common understanding between teachers is established, the more smoothly the process will be completed.

Teachers in schools that are combining their individual assessments will find it useful to discuss, and come to an agreement on, student completion dates.

Producing a combined set of comparable scores for a School-based Assessment

The following steps are recommended:

1. Participating teachers should discuss the requirements of the study design, the chosen assessment tasks for each outcome, the performance descriptors/assessment criteria for each task or outcome, and the assessment program of each of the partnership schools. This communication should occur as early as possible, and not later than the expected date of completion of the first designated assessment task for the unit.
2. The teachers should establish agreement on the procedures to be followed to ensure comparability of assessments. This includes the scheduling and marking schemes of any tasks to be done in common.
3. Each school assesses the assessment tasks of its own students. It is expected that the schools with more than one class for the study will apply their own procedures to achieve comparability of assessments within their school.
4. Each school selects student tasks for cross-marking. For small-group partnerships, this should include all the tasks from the school with the small group, and at least an equivalent number from the partner school. For other partnerships, teachers should agree on an appropriate number, preferably at least five pieces from each school. For each task, the second marking should be 'blind'; that is, made without any knowledge of the assessment given by the student's own teacher.
5. Teachers then discuss both assessments for each task and agree on a final score. If the teachers cannot reach consensus, the two scores should be averaged or adjusted appropriately. As a result of the cross-marking exercise, it may be necessary to adjust the assessments of other tasks not included in the cross-marking.
6. When all assessments have been finalised, the scores for each student on each task should be collated in a single list for the partnership. Each school must keep a copy of this list, as the VCAA may request it for analysis purposes.

4 VCE Units 3–4 School-assessed Coursework

School-assessed Coursework consists of a set of assessment tasks that assesses each student's level of achievement in VCE Unit 3 and 4 outcomes as specified in the study design.

4.1 Preparation for School-assessed Coursework

Advice for teachers

For each new or revised VCE study since 2015, information that was formerly contained in a separate *Assessment Handbook* has been incorporated into a single *Advice for Teachers* publication. Studies accredited before 2015 have both an *Advice for Teachers* publication and an *Assessment Handbook*.

The VCE *Advice for Teachers* and *Assessment Handbook* publications contain assessment information about Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework. Advice is provided on how to construct and incorporate assessment tasks and how to grade these tasks using performance descriptors. The publications are not published annually.

The *Advice for Teachers* and *Assessment Handbook* publications are available from the VCE study pages on the VCAA website. Notification of any changes to assessment advice during the course of study will be made available to teachers via the *VCAA Bulletin* and VCAA website.

4.2 Initial assessment

Schools are responsible for the initial assessment of School-assessed Coursework. The basis for this is the teacher's rating of the performance of each student on the tasks specified in the study design. The *Advice for Teachers/Assessment Handbook* for each VCE study provides advice on the assessment of School-assessed Coursework tasks.

Schools should not attempt to apply an 'additional' ranking process after assessments have been completed. This approach is unnecessary, and schools should not try to determine individual rankings for students as a separate part of the assessment process.

4.3 Feedback to students

After assessment tasks are submitted and marked, teachers should provide feedback to students. Appropriate feedback includes:

- advising on particular problem areas
- advising on where and how improvements can be made for further learning
- reporting S or N decisions and/or written comments on students' performance against each outcome.

Schools may choose this as a basis for reporting to parents. In providing this feedback, teachers may give students their marks on individual School-assessed Coursework tasks. If providing marks, teachers must advise students that their total School-assessed Coursework scores may change following statistical moderation.

Schools should include in student VCE Handbooks, advice:

- about the 'conditional' nature of any School-assessed Coursework marks given to students
- that total scores for School-assessed Coursework may change as a result of statistical moderation.

Although schools may permit students to submit further evidence for satisfactory completion of a unit, students may not submit further tasks for the reconsideration of School-assessed Coursework scores awarded by the school.

The decision about whether or not to return School-based Assessments to students rests with the school.

4.4 Lost, stolen or damaged School-assessed Coursework

If a teacher or student has lost a School-assessed Coursework task, or it has been stolen or damaged, they must complete a written statement explaining the circumstances. The statement must be signed, dated and filed at the school. The principal will determine an initial score for the assessment task, acting on advice from the teacher and on the basis of records kept.

5 VCE School-assessed Tasks

This section applies to the School-assessed Tasks for the following Units 3–4 studies:

- Algorithmics (AL03)
- Art (AR03)
- Applied Computing
 - Data Analytics (IT02)
 - Software Development (IT03)
- Media (ME03)
- Product Design and Technology (DT03)
- Studio Arts (SA03)
- Systems Engineering (SE03)
- Visual Communication Design (VC03).

School-assessed Tasks are used to measure a student's level of achievement in Unit 3 and 4 outcomes as specified in the study design. The criteria to be used for School-assessed Tasks are published annually on the associated study webpage.

5.1 Topic selection

The VCE study designs outline the task requirements for assessment purposes. Schools should select topics in accordance with these requirements. Any additional information on School-assessed Tasks will be published in the *VCAA Bulletin* and on the relevant VCE study pages. The responsibility for the selection of appropriate topics lies with the school.

Schools may share advice and information on the selection of topics. Teachers are encouraged to discuss the selection of topics among themselves and obtain advice from the VCAA if there are any doubts.

5.2 Advice on developmental stages of School-assessed Tasks

Teachers are required to provide feedback to students on work in progress for a School-assessed Task.

All changes made in the various stages of development of a School-assessed Task must represent the student's work. It is appropriate in the developmental stages of the work for the teacher to ask questions and to offer general advice (for example, about alternative strategies). However, the teacher must not dictate or make changes that might lead to uncertainty about the student's authorship or ownership of the work.

For VCE Visual Communication Design, VCE Media and VCE Studio Arts, the teacher's formal written comments should be made on only one draft of the written component of the School-assessed Task. If written comments are made, the draft containing the teacher's comments must be initialled and dated by the teacher, and made available to the VCAA, if required. There is no drafting requirement for the other School-assessed Tasks.

The following forms of teacher assistance are not appropriate and may constitute undue assistance:

- providing detailed advice on, corrections to or actual reworking of a student's drafts, production or folio
- providing structured outlines with detailed suggestions or instructions for completing work
- providing or interpreting data and providing content or concepts not already mentioned by the student in draft work or in their design briefs.

5.3 Assessment of School-assessed Tasks

Schools are responsible for the assessment of School-assessed Tasks. The sole basis for this assessment is the set of criteria for the award of scores, published each year by the VCAA on the VCE study pages of its website. The VCAA provides detailed descriptors of levels of performance for each criterion. These criteria are mandated and schools must use the descriptors when making assessment judgments.

Further advice may be provided from time to time for particular studies, details of which are announced in the *VCAA Bulletin* and published on the relevant study page of the VCAA website. Teachers should use this advice and attend any relevant professional development activities that may be available.

Principals are responsible for ensuring that teachers receive all relevant assessment material and that they use the current year's assessment criteria and advice published on the relevant VCE study page to accurately assess students' work.

Assessment sheets for School-assessed Tasks

The VCAA provides assessment sheets, specifying the criteria for the awarding of scores, which are published annually and made available on the relevant study page of the VCAA website. Schools must use the current year's assessment sheets.

Each criterion has a numerical scale of 0 to 10 and schools award a score for each criterion. Each criterion score is to be entered on VASS and must be submitted by the relevant date. Schools are advised to retain their copies of assessment sheets until the final results date at the end of the academic year.

Submitting results to the VCAA

The assessing school should enter School-assessed Task scores by the due date specified for each study in the Assessment Schedule.

5.4 Feedback to students

Schools may provide feedback to students on School-assessed Tasks. It must be made clear to students that school assessment may change as a result of the statistical moderation process.

5.5 Lost, stolen or damaged School-assessed Tasks

If a teacher or student has lost a School-assessed Task, or the task has been stolen or damaged, they must complete a written statement of the circumstances. The statement must be signed and dated. The school must complete the **Report on Lost, Stolen or Damaged School-assessed Tasks and Externally-assessed Tasks** form, enter an estimated score on VASS, and send the form by email to school.assessment.vcaa@education.vic.gov.au.

The principal, acting on advice from the teacher and on the basis of records kept, will determine an initial assessment.

5.6 Student transfers after the due date

If a student transfers after the due date for the study in which the School-assessed Task is scheduled, the student's School-assessed Task must stay with the assessing school until after the return of student work.

6 VCE VET School-assessed Coursework

In order to be eligible for a study score, students must demonstrate competence in the units of competency that make up the Unit 3–4 sequence. Students must also satisfy all the requirements of scored assessment.

Each scored VCE VET program requires the satisfactory completion of three School-assessed Coursework tasks that are integrated into the delivery of the VET training program. An assessment plan is required for each VCE VET scored program. Full details of the assessment process for scored VCE VET programs are published in the *VCE VET Assessment Guide*.

7 Managing score amendments

When the due date for assessments has passed, student results that have been entered on VASS for that cycle will be locked. Any administrative errors in entering the results must be amended using a *Score Amendment Sheet* (SAS), which is generated through VASS. The completed SAS must be signed by the principal or their delegate, and forwarded to the Manager, Student Records and Results Unit, with:

- a written explanation of the reason for the alteration to the score, signed by the principal
- a copy of the original assessment sheet.

If the SAS is received after the final grade has been allocated, the VCAA will determine the final grade.

8 VCE School-based Assessment Audit

The School-based Assessment Audit checks that School-based Assessment is conducted in line with VCE assessment principles and the requirements of the relevant study design.

Principals are encouraged to support teachers whose studies are being audited throughout this process.

The School-based Assessment Audit occurs in two stages for both Units 3 and 4. The first stage involves the completion of a study-specific questionnaire. Teachers complete the questionnaire on behalf of the school. The second stage involves only schools that have been asked to provide evidence of any aspect of the assessment, including tasks, assessment information provided to students, marking schemes or criteria, moderation processes or samples of student work.

The audit examines School-based Assessments for compliance with requirements and to also identify irregularities (for example, instances where the VCAA's requirements have not been followed). The audit findings assist in planning the VCAA's assessment advice and professional development support for teachers. Schools will receive feedback on the findings of the audit.

A more detailed overview of this process is provided in the document [General Advice on the School-based Assessment Audit](#) on the VCAA website.

If a school is being audited for a VCE VET study, the supporting documentation from teachers of scored VCE VET programs should include:

- the three scored tasks set by the teacher or trainer
- a copy of the assessment plan for the identified VCE VET program.

9 School-based Assessment: Breaches of rules and investigations

Schools are responsible for ensuring that students comply with VCAA rules for School-based Assessment. For advice on School-based Assessment, refer to 'Work completed outside class' and 'Strategies for avoiding authentication problems' in the Scored assessment: School-based Assessment section, and the [VCAL assessment](#) webpage on the VCAA website.

Schools should have their own policy and procedures for dealing with allegations that students have breached VCAA examination rules or School-based Assessment authentication rules. The policy and procedures should be clear about roles and responsibilities and who the decision-maker is in relation to any alleged breaches. The school policy and procedures should set out the process that will be followed when an allegation is received, the communication that can be expected from the school during the process of investigation and decision-making, the opportunities that will be available for the student to respond to allegations and the possible penalties and the avenues of appeal.

The school policy and procedures should be made available and explained to students and others in the school community at the start of the academic year.

A student undertaking assessment under test conditions as part of School-based Assessment in Units 1 to 4 must comply with VCAA examination rules. The VCAA examination rules are published on the VCAA website and distributed to all VCE providers and students in both the GAT brochure and *VCE Exams Navigator* each year.

9.1 Rules for authentication of School-based Assessment

Students must observe and apply rules for the authentication of School-based Assessment. Students must sign an authentication record for work done outside class when they submit the completed task.

The VCAA authentication rules state that:

- a student must ensure that all unacknowledged work submitted for assessment is their own
- a student must acknowledge all resources used, including
 - texts, websites and other source material
 - the name and status of any person who provided assistance and the type of assistance provided
- a student must not receive undue assistance from another person in the preparation and submission of work
- acceptable levels of assistance include:
 - the incorporation of ideas or material derived from other sources (for example, by reading, viewing or note taking), but which have been transformed by the student and used in a new context
 - prompting and general advice from another person or source, which leads to refinements and/or self-correction
- unacceptable forms of assistance include:
 - use of, or copying, another person's work or other resources without acknowledgement
 - corrections or improvements made or dictated by another person
- a student must not submit the same piece of work for assessment in more than one study, or more than once within a study
- a student must not circulate or publish written work that is being submitted for assessment in a study in the academic year of enrolment
- a student must not knowingly assist another student in a breach of rules
- in considering if a student's work is their own, teachers should consider if the work:
 - is atypical of other work produced by the student
 - is inconsistent with the teacher's knowledge of the student's ability
 - contains unacknowledged material
 - has not been sighted and monitored by the teacher during its development.

10 Investigation of breaches of School-based Assessment rules

Some guidance on process and procedures for dealing with breaches of VCAA examination rules or breaches of School-based Assessment authentication rules is provided in the following section, but this is not a substitute for schools developing and familiarising students with the school's own policy and procedures.

10.1 Reporting alleged breaches of rules in School-based Assessment

The school's policy and procedures should make clear who is responsible for receiving reports of allegations of breaches of rules in School-based Assessment. The principal or an authorised member of the principal class may wish to be the initial point of contact for reports, and may wish to delegate the conduct of investigations to a person of appropriate seniority and experience.

Allegations may be made by any person with information that suggests rules have been breached, for example, a teacher, a student, a parent or an external party such as a tutor.

Allegations should be handled sensitively and may need to be kept confidential.

On receipt of an allegation, the student's work should not be accepted for assessment, pending the conduct of an investigation by the school. The original of the final version of the work is to be retained by the school. The student should be given a copy of the work.

10.2 Preliminary investigation

On receipt of an allegation, the person responsible for investigating alleged breaches of rules should assess the allegation and conduct a preliminary investigation to determine if there is any substance to the allegation requiring further, more rigorous investigation. Detailed records of the preliminary investigation should be kept and may be used in any later decision-making. The school may decide it is appropriate to appoint an external person to carry out the investigation and report back to the decision-maker.

10.3 Investigation

The purpose of the investigation is to determine whether there is any substance to an allegation that a student has breached VCAA examination rules or School-based Assessment authentication rules. If so, the evidence should be put to a decision-maker for determination as to whether the allegations are proven, or not proven.

The investigator must approach the investigation with an open mind and act fairly and without bias. They should consider any allegation against the student, the evidence of anyone who might have something relevant to say about an allegation, and any documents or information that may shed light on whether an allegation has substance or not. Some or all of the information and evidence gathered during the investigation may show that the allegations against the student are unfounded; this evidence should not be discounted.

The investigation may include discussions with the teacher supervising the assessment and any other witnesses, including other students.

Relevant evidence includes:

- any instructions given to students by the teacher about the conditions under which the School-based Assessment was to be undertaken (including the VCAA examination rules)
- the student's work

- if an allegation relates to the use of unauthorised notes or cheating or copying from other students, copies of those notes or another student's work or any other evidence of copying or cheating, such as unacknowledged source material
- samples of other work by the student for comparison, if relevant
- the teacher's record of authentication
- the teacher's opinion about the student's work
- accurate notes of conversations with witnesses, the teacher and the student.

If this investigation suggests there is any substance to any allegation, the student should be informed in writing of the nature of the allegation, and be invited to attend an interview to respond to the allegation. Adequate notice of the interview should be given to the student, who should be given the opportunity to bring a support person to the interview. The support person is there to provide moral support, rather than to represent the student or to speak on their behalf.

If a student elects not to attend an interview, they should be given an opportunity to respond in writing to any allegation against them.

The student's parents or guardians may be advised of the nature of the allegations, depending on the school's policy in relation to reporting discipline matters.

If the allegation raises the suggestion that a student has submitted work that is not their own, the investigator should ask the student to provide evidence that demonstrates that the work submitted is their own and/or was completed in accordance with VCAA requirements.

The student may be asked to:

- provide evidence of the development of the work
- discuss the content of the work with the teacher and answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the work
- provide samples of their other work
- complete, under supervision, a supplementary assessment task related to the original task.

10.4 Decision-making

The school's policy and procedures should make clear who in the school has the authority to decide if a student has breached examination or authentication rules. The principal may wish to make the decision following receipt of a report from a staff member or other person appointed to carry out the investigation.

Alternatively, the principal may wish to delegate their authority to make decisions about alleged breaches of VCAA examination and authentication rules to a hearing panel formed of members appointed by the principal.

It is important that the decision-maker is not the investigator of the allegations. The material gathered during the investigation should be provided to the decision-maker, including evidence (if any) that suggests the allegations are not proven, as well as any responses the student provided during the course of the investigation.

If the decision-maker forms an independent view that the evidence against the student is insufficient to justify a meeting or hearing, the decision-maker should confirm in writing to the student that no further action will be taken.

If the decision-maker considers that there is sufficient evidence to justify a meeting or hearing to decide whether or not the allegations are proven, a hearing or meeting should be convened. The decision-maker should reserve their judgment until they have heard from the student at the meeting or hearing.

The following principles apply to whoever is given the authority to make the decision regarding alleged breaches of rules:

- The decision-maker must act fairly and without bias.
- The student must receive at least 24 hours' written notice of the meeting or hearing conducted by the decision-maker. The notice should include:
 - the date, time, place and likely duration of the meeting or hearing
 - the allegation/s against the student
 - the names of all decision-makers
 - advice that the student may bring a support person to the meeting or hearing (see below)
 - the name of a contact person if the student has queries about the meeting or hearing
 - a copy of any evidence that the decision-makers will consider at the meeting or hearing, including whether any witnesses will be present at the meeting or hearing
 - the possible outcomes, including penalties.
- It is generally appropriate, depending on the age and circumstances of the student, to allow a parent, guardian or other support person to be present at any interview, meeting or hearing. The meeting or hearing should be conducted at the school, in an environment that is not intimidating for the student, but that is appropriate given the nature of the allegation/s.
- At the meeting or hearing, the decision-maker must explain the purpose of the meeting or hearing to the student and confirm the allegation/s against the student and the possible outcomes.
- The decision-maker may ask questions of the student.
- The student must be given the opportunity at the meeting or hearing to respond to the evidence against them and to ask questions of any witnesses present at the meeting or hearing.
- The decision-maker must consider all evidence and submissions carefully, including the student's response, and whether the allegation/s (and the student's defence) is supported by evidence that is relevant and credible.
- The decision-maker must take into account all relevant factors and no irrelevant factors.
- The decision-maker must decide on the balance of probabilities whether the allegation/s is proven – the allegation/s does not have to be proven beyond reasonable doubt.
- The decision-maker must decide, in relation to an allegation/s found to be proven, whether a penalty should be imposed, and, if so, what penalty is appropriate. Possible penalties include:
 - a verbal or written warning
 - detention or suspension
 - refusal to consider the student's work but giving the student the opportunity to re-submit the work if there is sufficient time before the due date for submission of results according to the VCAA schedule
 - refusal to accept the part of the student's work found to have been completed in contravention of VCAA rules and determination of the appropriate result for the relevant outcome forming part of the VCE unit
 - refusal to accept any part of the work, awarding an N for the outcome.
- The decision-maker should inform the student of the decision and any penalty to be imposed at the meeting or hearing, and of the student's right to appeal the decision to the VCAA. The decision-maker should keep accurate records of their decision, the reasons for their decision and the penalty imposed, to enable the school to confirm these matters in writing.

After the meeting or hearing, the school must write to the student to confirm:

- the findings of the decision-maker in relation to the allegation/s against the student (setting out each allegation, and corresponding decision)
- the reasons for the decision on each allegation, and the supporting evidence

- any penalty that will be imposed
- information about the student's right to appeal to the VCAA, including that the appeal must be lodged no later than 14 days after the student receives written notice of the decision from the school.

The school should retain all material related to the allegation/s, in case the student wishes to appeal a decision.

If the student's work was accepted for assessment and a breach of VCAA rules was discovered after the work had been assessed, the penalty should be applied and, if necessary, the student's records adjusted. For example, the original outcome result may change from an S to an N. If an N is awarded for an outcome, an N will be awarded for the unit concerned.

Similarly, the detected breach of VCAA rules may result in a score change. This score change should be communicated to the VCAA through the completion of the Score Amendment Sheet (SAS).

Other outcomes may be appropriate if, for example, the breach of VCAA rules relates to the student's conduct in disrupting a School-based Assessment task conducted under test conditions.

11 Student appeals against school decisions about breaches of VCAA rules

The school's policy and procedures about breaches of VCAA examination rules or School-based Assessment authentication rules should include information about the student's statutory right of appeal against the school's decision.

Section 2.5.21 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* provides that a student may appeal to the VCAA against a decision by the school, and any penalty imposed by the school, in respect of a contravention of the assessment rules of the VCAA relating to School-based Assessments. This right of appeal does not apply to decisions about the satisfactory completion of a course arising from a student's attendance, or other disciplinary decisions of a school not arising from a contravention of VCAA assessment rules.

An appeal against a school decision must be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), VCAA no later than 14 days after the student receives written notice of the decision from the school. On receipt of a notice of appeal from a student, the CEO of the VCAA must nominate an employee of the Secretary of the Victorian Department of Education and Training to interview the parties to the appeal and attempt to resolve the matter.

11.1 Notice of school decision following interviews

Following the interview conducted by the VCAA, the school must notify both the student and the VCAA, in writing and within seven days, that it has either:

- rescinded its decision and any penalty imposed
- rescinded the penalty imposed
- reduced the penalty imposed
- confirmed both the decision and the penalty imposed.

11.2 Student appeal

If the school rescinds its decision and any penalty imposed in relation to the student, the student's appeal to the VCAA is taken to have been withdrawn.

The VCAA must ask the student to either withdraw the appeal or confirm that the appeal is to proceed if the school has:

- rescinded the penalty imposed
- reduced the penalty imposed
- confirmed both the decision and the penalty imposed.

11.3 Appeal hearing

If a student elects to proceed with an appeal, the CEO, VCAA must refer the appeal to a Review Committee for hearing and determination. An appeal of this nature is conducted as a re-hearing that is, hearing the evidence from both the student and the school, from the beginning, and the Review Committee makes its own decision on the evidence. It is not a review of the school's procedures and handling of the allegation/s against the student.

If the Review Committee is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the student has breached the VCAA rules relating to School-based Assessment, it may either:

- reprimand the student
- if practicable, permit the student to resubmit the schoolwork required for either
 - assessment in the study or the course
 - satisfactory completion of the study or the course
- refuse to accept part of the work and request the school to assess the student on the remainder of the work submitted
- amend the student's School-based Assessment results.

Scored assessment: External assessment

Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) external assessments are any centrally set tasks assessed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA), including written, oral, electronic/digital, aural and performance tasks conducted according to the requirements of accredited study designs and VCE VET programs.

Throughout this section the terms ‘VCE examination’ and ‘VCE external assessments’ refer to any VCE examination, the General Achievement Test (GAT) and the Extended Investigation Critical Thinking Test. The home school is the school responsible for the administration of all student data and course enrolments through the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) and for ensuring that all their students have been allocated to an examination centre/room. A student can have only one home school at any given time.

1 VCE examinations

VCE examinations are set by VCAA-appointed panels. VCE examination specifications and sample material (by study), and an archive of past examinations and examination reports, are available on the VCAA website.

1.1 Integrity of VCE written examinations and VCE examination administration

VCE providers with students enrolled in one or more VCE or scored VCE VET Unit 3–4 sequences must meet the VCAA requirements for the conduct and administration of the GAT and VCE examinations, as outlined in the *Agreement to Conduct and Administer VCE External Assessments*.

Principals are required to complete and sign this agreement annually, certifying they will comply with all VCAA requirements for conducting and administering VCE external assessments. Principals must ensure school personnel associated with the administration of VCE external assessments are aware of VCAA requirements.

Principals are reminded of the serious consequences that may result from non-compliance. If a serious breach of this agreement occurs, a school’s capacity to host VCE external assessments will be subject to review.

2 Eligibility to undertake VCE external assessments outside Victoria

Students who sit VCE examinations must be living in Victoria and enrolled at a school or institution authorised by the VCAA as a VCE provider, except if a student:

- is a bona fide resident of Victoria but is temporarily interstate or overseas
- is on an exchange program overseas
- is a student on exchange in Victoria and is returning home immediately before or during the VCE external assessment period
- is representing Australia for an official duty, for example, in a sporting, academic, military or cultural event
- has a parent/guardian who has been asked to work interstate or overseas
- has completed a substantial part of their course of study in Victoria and has moved temporarily or permanently interstate or overseas.

Schools must submit an **Application to sit VCE external assessments interstate or overseas** form to the VCAA.

Evidence of eligibility must be submitted with the application form.

Events such as family holidays, birthdays and weddings are not considered valid grounds for an application to sit VCE external assessments interstate or overseas.

3 VCE external assessment periods and timetable

The VCAA determines the timing of VCE external assessment. Schools must issue each student with an individual Student Examination/Assessment Timetable after the release date for each VCE external assessment period. For VCE Languages oral and performance examinations and Extended Investigation oral presentation, schools must issue each student with their advice slips and where relevant, Program Sheets/Statements of Intention and Information Booklets.

The dates for the VCE examination timetable are published on the VCAA website.

The VCAA develops the VCE examination timetable using enrolments in order to:

- minimise the number of students required to sit more than two examinations on a given day
- minimise the number of clashes of two examinations in the same session
- avoid scheduling another examination on the same day as English and English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- ensure the VCAA has sufficient time to complete marking within the available timeframe.

The VCE examination timetable is published on the VCAA website after it has been approved by the VCAA Board.

The VCE examination timetable is also printed in the VCE Exams Navigator, which must be issued to students by their home school.

3.1 Students with three examinations timetabled on one day

Schools that have students with three examinations timetabled in a single day during an examination period will be notified of the arrangements for these students by the VCAA.

The VCAA will permit students who have three examinations timetabled on a single day to have an additional 10 minutes per hour for the final examination on that day. This may be taken as extra working time or as supervised rest breaks. Students are not obliged to use the extra time entitlement and are permitted to leave the examination before their revised finish time.

Students who complete three examinations in a single day are entitled to receive a Derived Examination Score (DES) for the third examination. These students will not be required to apply for a DES.

To be eligible for additional time and the DES, students must attend all three examinations on the day and attempt the questions on the paper to the best of their ability. The DES should be seen as a safety net, not a substitute examination score. Many students will, if they apply themselves diligently, exceed or equal their predicted DES in their third examination completed on that day. The VCAA will compare each student's actual examination score and their calculated DES and award the student the higher of the two.

Note: students need to have completed the course of study leading to the examination and have a result for at least one other graded assessment in the same study to be eligible for the calculation of a DES.

3.2 Timetable clashes

If a student has two examinations timetabled for the same session, one of the examinations will be moved to another session on the same day. Principals may consult the student and, on behalf of the student, request which examination is to be moved to a different session.

Note: VCE Languages examinations, Music written examinations and VET Creative and Digital Media examinations cannot be moved to a different session.

3.3 Early starts

Principals can apply to the VCAA (with supporting evidence) for permission to begin VCE written external assessments up to 30 minutes earlier than stated in the official timetable. Approval to begin at the earlier times will be confirmed by the VCAA in writing to the principal. The principal must notify students and parents in writing of the new start and end times.

3.4 Late arrivals

Each VCE written external assessment commences with a reading period that is included in the times shown in the VCE examination timetable. Students must check the starting time of each VCE written external assessment and arrive before the commencement time, and must familiarise themselves with the rules about late admission. If a student is late, the VCAA reserves the right to determine whether or not a student's response materials will be accepted.

The procedure for the admittance of late students is outlined on the VCAA website Examination Rules and is also published in the *VCE Examination Manual* and *VCE Exams Navigator*.

3.5 VCAA examination rules

Students are required to observe the VCAA rules for the conduct of VCE external assessments that are conducted by or on behalf of the VCAA, as well as the day-to-day rules of the institution hosting the external assessment. VCAA rules shall apply with appropriate and reasonable modifications for students who have disabilities or other impairments. The rules are available on the VCAA website and are also published in the *VCE Examination Manual*, GAT brochure and *VCE Exams Navigator*.

3.6 Student identification requirements for VCE external assessments

All students undertaking a performance or Languages oral examination or the Extended Investigation oral presentation will be required to provide personal identification at the registration point for their assessment. The personal identification must consist of a clear photograph of the student and their full name. Most existing student identification cards or personal documents (for example, a school ID card, a public transport ID card, a passport or a driver's licence) are sufficient. Students undertaking the oral component of the VCE Languages examination will be required to identify themselves by stating, in English, their student number.

Students completing a VCE written examination are required to write their VCAA student number on the response materials. Students attending a location other than their home school may also be required to provide personal identification before entering examination room.

VCAA student numbers are provided to students by their home school.

3.7 Materials and equipment authorised for use in the GAT and VCE written examinations

Materials authorised by the VCAA for use in the GAT and VCE examinations are listed on the VCAA website and are included in the *VCE Examinations Manual*, the GAT brochure and *VCE Exams Navigator*.

3.8 Irregularities

Irregularities are events that significantly interrupt and adversely affect a student's performance immediately before, or during, a VCE external assessment that are outside their control. Examples of events that can occur and could be classified as an irregularity are:

- power failures, emergency evacuations and other disruptive events
- printing and/or collating errors in examination question/answer books
- excessive noise/interference
- incorrect interpretation of examination conditions or rules by supervisors
- procedural issues with the conduct of Languages oral or performance examinations, or the Extended Investigation oral presentation.

If reasonably possible and practical, minor disruptions will be rectified and remedied at the time of the external assessment by the supervisor, for example, replacing faulty books.

In the event of major disruptions to the conduct or administration of an external assessment, the supervisor should refer the matter to an authorised person at the school.

Further details including the requirements for making an application are provided on the VCAA website and are also published in the *VCE Examination Manual* and *VCE Exams Navigator*.

4 Marking external assessments

VCE external assessments will be subject to independent marking by assessors appointed by the VCAA. If necessary, there will be discrepancy marking by an additional assessor, who will assess the task without knowledge of the previous assessments.

4.1 Indicative grades and the anomalous grades check

Indicative grades for all VCE external assessments, apart from the Music Style and Composition Externally-assessed Task must be submitted before the relevant external assessment period. The primary purpose of collecting these indicative grades is to support the quality assurance procedures for marking the external assessments. They assist in identifying possible anomalous marking of individual student responses. Indicative grades will also be used in the calculation of the DES.

The indicative grade is the school's prediction of a student's actual level of achievement on the examination. Indicative grades are a letter grade, from A+ to E/UG (ungraded) or NA (not assessed); note that plus (+) can be used, but minus (-) is not available for input. Class teachers of the same study at the school should confer on the comparability of the indicative grades given to their students.

The rank order and level of spread of the indicative grades for the school cohort in the study are of prime importance. The indicative grades for the school cohort are moderated by the VCAA to ensure that they are statistically reliable. If they are not statistically reliable, they will not be used.

Strategies for arriving at an indicative grade

The VCAA has no preferred position on how a school arrives at a set of indicative grades, except to advise that there should be coherence in the process. All teachers at the school should be provided with advice by the principal on the definition and purpose of the indicative grade, and a suitable means of arriving at a set of indicative grades for the school cohort.

Examples of strategies used by schools include:

- setting practice examinations, which must be held at a time that allows entry of the indicative grade on VASS by the due date
- ranking the students by performance in School-based Assessment and then applying an appropriate grade
- basing the grade on prior knowledge of the relative ability of the student in the study.

The VCAA recommends that schools use the indicative grades feedback report on VASS to assist with determining indicative grades. This report shows whether the school's indicative grades for the previous year were generally aligned with the final grades. The indicative grades feedback report is on VASS at: School Admin > School Statistics > Indicative Grades Feedback.

Anomalous grades check process

For all external assessments, except for Further Mathematics Examination 1 and the Music Style and Composition Externally Assessed Task, an anomalous grade check is undertaken before issuing final results. Indicative grades provided by the school, on the condition that they are statistically reliable, are used to identify student assessments with anomalous grades. These students' assessments are then reconsidered by the relevant chief assessor's panel.

The anomalous grades assessments include those where the student's examination outcome is substantially different from that predicted from one or more of:

- the school's indicative grade
- the student's GAT component scores
- for studies with more than one external assessment, the other examination assessment in the study.

In each case, the differences must be statistically significant.

In the interests of students, teachers should be as accurate as possible in their estimation of an indicative grade. If the teacher is accurate (that is, they allocate indicative grades with a similar order and spread to external assessment performance of their students), any possible anomalous marking will be detected, and the assessment referred to the chief assessor for checking. If the teacher allocates indicative grades that are different in order and spread to the external assessment performance of their students, some anomalous assessments may not be detected. If the teacher consistently under- or over-assesses indicative grades for all students, anomalous performance from the pattern given by the school can still be detected. Thus, within the constraints of the grade structure, a school need not be overly concerned about submitting indicative grades with exactly the correct level, but teachers should try to order and spread students' grades as accurately as possible.

Schools may run a report through VASS that lists those students whose scripts/recordings were forwarded to the chief assessor's panel for final determination. The principal may make a written request to the VCAA for confirmation that anomalous examination grades procedures have been correctly applied to a student's external assessments.

5 Externally-assessed Tasks

The Externally-assessed Task, which is specific to Music Style and Composition and Extended Investigation, assesses a student's level of achievement in accordance with the study design and published assessment criteria. Externally-assessed Tasks are marked by assessors appointed by the VCAA.

For more detailed information about the Music Style and Composition Externally-assessed Task, refer to the study page on the VCAA website.

For more detailed information about the Extended Investigation Externally-assessed Task, refer to the study page on the VCAA website.

Teachers must ensure that there is a sufficient range of topics within their class to enable them to distinguish an individual student's work and therefore to assist in the authentication process.

Teachers must monitor and record each student's development of work, from planning and drafting through to completion, in the **Authentication Record for Externally-assessed Task** form. This requires regular sightings of the work by the teacher.

Observations of individual work done in class should be recorded. The teacher and student must sign each recorded observation. If the school is being audited, this sheet should be included with the work.

6 Student breach of VCAA rules for the conduct of VCE external assessments

Students are required to observe all VCAA examination rules for the conduct of VCE external assessments conducted by or on behalf of the VCAA, as well as the day-to-day rules of the school or institution providing the venue for the external assessment.

Principals and chief supervisors are responsible to the VCAA for the conduct of VCE external assessments. Any alleged breach of the VCAA examination rules or any allegation that a student's assessment has been obtained by fraudulent, illegal or unfair means in relation to any VCE external assessment must be reported to the VCAA. The CEO, VCAA may refer serious cases to a VCAA Review Committee, which will conduct a hearing to consider the circumstances of the alleged breach and, if applicable, determine any appropriate penalty. Further information about the role of principals and other school personnel in investigations is set out in the following sections.

All supervisors of VCE external assessments are issued with directions for the administration of the external assessment and are required to report all alleged breaches of rules to the VCAA.

6.1 Identification of an alleged breach of VCAA rules

If an alleged breach of rules relating to the conduct of a VCE external assessment is detected, the student must be permitted to complete the external assessment, and any discussion considered necessary must be conducted when the external assessment has finished. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the student must be informed by the supervisor or the school that an incident report is being forwarded to the VCAA.

Supervisors must complete an incident report immediately after the external assessment, providing as much information as possible about any alleged breach, including any relevant circumstances leading up to it, and details of what occurred afterwards. It is important to include all matters associated with the incident, no matter how insignificant they may have appeared at the time. The VCAA may contact supervisors for additional information during an investigation into the alleged breach of rules.

Confiscated electronic devices, including mobile phones

Students are required by the VCAA examination rules to surrender electronic devices for investigation. Schools should retain any confiscated electronic device. Devices should not be returned to students without the VCAA's prior approval. Schools may contact VCAA Legal Services unit for further advice.

As part of its investigation into alleged breaches of rules involving the possession of electronic devices, the VCAA may ask the student's school to inspect the device with the consent of the student. If the student is interviewed by the VCAA, the device may also be inspected during the interview in the presence of the student, with the student's consent.

Electronic devices are inspected to check whether the device contains material or activity that indicates it was used to cheat during the student's external assessment. If no suspicious material exists the device can be returned the student upon VCAA's instruction. If illegal or other material requiring mandatory reporting is discovered, this must be reported. Students should be informed of this before the inspection.

Students are required by the rules to cooperate with investigations. A student can withhold consent to inspection of their phone, which will then be treated as a separate breach of the VCAA examination rules.

6.2 Initial investigation

Upon receipt of incident reports about incidents during external assessments, the VCAA may conduct an investigation into:

- a suspected breach of VCAA examination rules
- an allegation that a student's assessment was obtained by fraudulent, illegal or unfair means.

The VCAA will contact schools to request additional information about the student and the incident. This information is considered by the VCAA in determining whether a formal investigation is required. The VCE Coordinator, subject teacher or year coordinator is usually best placed to provide this information.

In conducting an investigation, the VCAA may nominate a person on its behalf to interview the student and any other person who may have information regarding the alleged breach.

A person nominated to interview a student must give no less than 24 hours' notice of the interview to the student, and this notice:

- need not be in writing
- may nominate a time and place for the interview
- must give particulars of the matter under investigation.

In addition to any other matter discussed at the interview, the student must be informed of possible further action by the VCAA and possible consequences to the student.

The person who conducts the interview must submit a written report of the interview to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), VCAA as soon as practicable after the interview.

Decision to proceed to hearing or issue a written reprimand

The CEO, VCAA may, after considering a report of the interview, issue a written reprimand to the student or request that a Review Committee conduct a hearing into the matter under investigation.

The VCAA will notify the school if a student's case has been referred to a Review Committee and will request that the school send a representative to the hearing. School support for students is important, and review committees will ask the school representative to speak about the student's character and school experience.

6.3 Review Committee

A Review Committee consists of three people who are either members of the VCAA Board or staff of the VCAA. The Chair of the Review Committee must be a member of the VCAA Board.

Assessment may be withheld pending a decision

The VCAA may withhold the assessment of a student who is required to attend a hearing before a Review Committee until whichever of the following is later:

- the decision of the Review Committee and the expiry of the period of 14 days after the day on which the Review Committee gave its decision verbally at the hearing
- if the student applies to an Appeals Committee for review of the decision, notification to the VCAA by the Appeals Committee of its determination of the application.

The VCAA will advise the school if a student's results have been withheld. Where possible, the VCAA aims to finalise all breach of rule investigations and hearings prior to the VTAC cut-off date for students to submit changes of preference to VTAC.

Notice of hearing

The CEO, VCAA must give a student who is required to attend a hearing before a Review Committee:

- written notice of the hearing not less than seven working days before the hearing is due to commence
- copies of the information and documents the VCAA will refer to at the hearing, no less than five working days before the hearing is due to commence.

Procedure of the Review Committee

At a hearing:

- subject to the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)*, the procedure of a Review Committee is at its discretion
- the proceedings must be conducted with as little formality and technicality as the requirements of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the proper consideration of the matter permit
- a Review Committee is not bound by rules of evidence but may inform itself in any way it thinks fit
- a Review Committee is bound by the rules of natural justice.

Cross-examination of witnesses

The cross-examination of witnesses in a hearing before a Review Committee is at the discretion of the Review Committee. An exercise of this discretion must be consistent with the rules of natural justice.

Legal representation for the student

A student may be represented by a legal practitioner at a hearing before a Review Committee.

Person assisting the Review Committee

A Review Committee may be assisted by a person nominated by the VCAA. A person assisting a Review Committee under this section:

- is entitled to be present during the proceedings
- must ensure that all relevant information is put before the Review Committee, but must not act as prosecutor
- must advise the Review Committee on any matter on which it seeks to be advised but must not adjudicate on the matter.

Decision of the Review Committee

If a Review Committee is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that a student has contravened the VCAA examination rules or obtained a VCAA assessment by fraudulent, illegal or unfair means, the Review Committee may do one of the following:

- reprimand the student
- amend or cancel the student's grade for the external assessment in which the contravention occurred
- amend or cancel the student's grade for the external assessment in which the contravention occurred, and also amend or cancel any or all of the student's assessments in the same study, including cancellation of satisfactory completion of the study
- amend or cancel the student's grades for external assessments or other assessments in one or more other studies, including cancellation of satisfactory completion of the study
- cancel all the student's grades for external assessments and other assessments conducted by the VCAA during the year in which the contravention occurred or the assessment was obtained, including cancellation of satisfactory completion of the certificate.

Notification of decision

A Review Committee must give its decision:

- verbally at the hearing
- in writing to the student no later than seven days after the hearing.

A Review Committee must set out in its written decision:

- the reasons for its decision
- the findings on material questions of fact that led to the decision.

A Review Committee must notify the VCAA without delay of its decision.

Principals are advised in writing of the outcome of Review Committee hearings.

6.4 Review by an Appeals Committee

A student affected by a decision of a Review Committee may apply for review of the decision by an Appeals Committee on one or both of the following grounds:

- the decision was unreasonable
- the penalty imposed was too harsh.

An application must be made by notice in writing to the CEO, VCAA no later than 14 days after the day on which the Review Committee gave its decision verbally at the hearing. The CEO, VCAA must refer an application to an Appeals Committee for determination.

A student may make a written submission to the Appeals Committee but is not entitled to be heard in support of the written submission or to appear before the Appeals Committee.

An Appeals Committee must review a decision made by a Review Committee having regard to all the documents before it, the written decision of the Review Committee, and any written submission made by the student.

In determining an application for review of a decision made by a Review Committee, an Appeals Committee may:

- affirm the decision under review
- vary the decision under review
- set aside the decision under review.

An Appeals Committee must notify the VCAA without delay of its determination of an application for review under this section.

Appointment of an Appeals Committee

An Appeals Committee consists of three members appointed by the Minister to determine applications for review. The Minister may appoint more than one Appeals Committee at any time.

A member of an Appeals Committee must not be a member of the VCAA, a member of a committee of the VCAA or an employee of the VCAA. The members must have, between them, knowledge of the assessment programs of the VCAA, the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the field of secondary education.

Notification of alteration of record of student assessment

If a student's assessment is amended or cancelled, the VCAA:

- must give written notice to the student concerned
- may give written notice to any other person to whom a copy of the student's record has previously been provided.

Scored assessment: VCE and VET assessment summary

1 VCE studies and revised assessment in 2021

The results of School-based Assessments and external assessments (including examinations) contribute towards a student's study score in each Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) study and towards their Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). All VCE studies have three graded assessments in each Unit 3–4 sequence, and include at least one external assessment. Unless otherwise noted, examinations are held at the end of the academic year.

| Study | Graded assessment | Type of assessment | Contribution to study score (%) |
|---|-------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Accounting AC03 | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 2 | Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 3 | Written examination (2 hours) | 50 |
| Agricultural and Horticultural Studies AH03 | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework | 30 |
| | 2 | Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework | 30 |
| | 3 | Written examination (1½ hours) | 40 |
| Algorithmics AL03 | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Task | 20 |
| | 2 | Unit 4 School-assessed Task | 20 |
| | 3 | Written examination (2 hours) | 60 |
| Applied Computing Data Analytics IT02 Software Development IT03 | 1 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework | 20 |
| | 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Task | 30 |
| | 3 | Written examination (2 hours) | 50 |
| Art AR03 | 1 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework | 20 |
| | 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Task | 50 |
| | 3 | Written examination (1½ hours) | 30 |
| Biology BI03 | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework | 16 |
| | 2 | Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework | 24 |
| | 3 | Written examination (2½ hours) | 60 |
| Business Management BM03 | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 2 | Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 3 | Written examination (2 hours) | 50 |
| Chemistry CH03 | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework | 16 |
| | 2 | Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework | 24 |
| | 3 | Written examination (2½ hours) | 60 |
| Classical Studies CS03 | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 2 | Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 3 | Written examination (2 hours) | 50 |
| Dance DA03 | 1 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 2 | Performance examination (2½–5 minutes) ¹ | 50 |
| | 3 | Written examination (1½ hours) | 25 |
| Drama DR03 | 1 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework | 40 |
| | 2 | Solo performance examination (7 minutes maximum) | 35 |
| | 3 | Written examination (1½ hours) | 25 |

| Study | Graded assessment | Type of assessment | Contribution to study score (%) |
|---|-------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Economics EC03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| English: English EN01 English as an Additional Language EN09 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (3 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| English Language EL01 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Environmental Science EV03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 20 30 50 |
| Extended Investigation XI03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Critical Thinking Test (70 minutes) Externally-assessed Task | 30 10 60 |
| Food Studies FY03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 30 30 40 |
| Geography GE03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Health and Human Development HH03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| History: Australian History HI08 Ancient History HI17 Revolutions HI13 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Industry and Enterprise IE03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Legal Studies LS03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Literature LI01 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Further Mathematics MA07 | 1 2 3 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination 1 (1½ hours) Written examination 2 (1½ hours) | 34 33 33 |
| Mathematics: Mathematical Methods MA11 Specialist Mathematics MA09 | 1 2 3 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination 1 (1 hour) Written examination 2 (2 hours) | 34 22 44 |
| Media ME03 | 1 2 3 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Task Written examination (2 hours) | 20 40 40 |

| Study | Graded assessment | Type of assessment | Contribution to study score (%) |
|---|-------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Music Investigation MC05 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Performance examination (25–40 minutes) ² | 30 20 50 |
| Music Performance MC04 | 1 2 3 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Performance examination (25–40 minutes) ³ Aural and written examination (1½ hours) | 30 50 20 |
| Music Style and Composition MS03 | 1 2 3 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Externally-assessed Task Aural and written examination (2 hours) | 30 30 40 |
| Outdoor and Environmental Studies OS03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Philosophy PL03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Physical Education PE03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Physics PH03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2½ hours) | 21 19 60 |
| Politics: Australian Politics PS03 Global Politics PS05 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Product Design and Technology DT03 | 1 2 3 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Task Written examination (1½ hours) | 20 50 30 |
| Psychology PY03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2½ hours) | 16 24 60 |
| Religion and Society RE03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Sociology SO03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Studio Arts SA03 | 1 2 3 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Task Written examination (1½ hours) | 10 60 30 |
| Systems Engineering SE03 | 1 2 3 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Task Written examination (1½ hours) | 20 50 30 |
| Texts and Traditions TT03 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| Theatre Studies TS03 | 1 2 3 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Monologue examination (8 minutes maximum) Written examination (1½ hours) | 45 25 30 |

| Study | Graded assessment | Type of assessment | Contribution to study score (%) |
|---|-------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| VCE Languages Classical Greek LO01 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (3 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| VCE Languages Classical Hebrew LO51 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (3 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| VCE Languages Latin LO17 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (2 hours) | 25 25 50 |
| VCE Languages Arabic LO02 Chinese Second Language LO39 Chinese Second Language Advanced LO48 French LO09 German LO10 Greek LO22 Indonesian Second Language LO40 Italian LO14 Japanese Second Language LO46 Korean Second Language LO47 Spanish LO27 Vietnamese Second Language LO31 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Examination: oral component (approximately 15 minutes) Examination: written component (2 hours) ⁴ | 25 25 12.5 37.5 |
| VCE Languages Chinese First Language LO04 Indonesian First Language LO13 Japanese First Language LO15 Korean First Language LO37 Vietnamese First Language LO54 | 1 2 3 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework Examination: oral component (approximately 10 minutes) Examination: written component (2 hours) ⁴ | 25 25 10 40 |

| Study | Graded assessment | Type of assessment | Contribution to study score (%) |
|--|-------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| VCE Languages (CCAFL) ⁵ | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| Armenian LO44 | 2 | Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| Bosnian LO50 | 3 | Examination: oral component | 12.5 |
| Chin Hakha LO53 | | (approximately 15 minutes) | 37.5 |
| Croatian LO05 | | Examination: written component (2½ hours) ⁴ | |
| Dutch LO07 | | | |
| Filipino LO45 | | | |
| Hebrew LO11 | | | |
| Hindi LO36 | | | |
| Hungarian LO12 | | | |
| Karen LO55 | | | |
| Khmer LO16 | | | |
| Macedonian LO20 | | | |
| Maltese LO21 | | | |
| Persian LO32 | | | |
| Polish LO23 | | | |
| Portuguese LO33 | | | |
| Punjabi LO49 | | | |
| Romanian LO42 | | | |
| Russian LO24 | | | |
| Serbian LO25 | | | |
| Sinhala LO34 | | | |
| Swedish LO28 | | | |
| Tamil LO43 | | | |
| Turkish LO29 | | | |
| Yiddish LO52 | | | |
| VCE Languages Auslan LO03 | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 2 | Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 3 | Interactive sign examination | 15 |
| | | (approximately 15 minutes) | 35 |
| | | Sign comprehension and sign production examination (2 hours) ⁶ | |
| VCE Languages Chinese Language, Culture and Society LO57 | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 2 | Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 3 | Examination: oral component | 15 |
| | | (approximately 15 minutes) | 35 |
| | | Examination: written component (2 hours) | |
| VCE Languages Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation LO38 | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework | 30 |
| | 2 | Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework | 30 |
| | 3 | Written examination (2 hours) | 40 |
| Visual Communication Design VC03 | 1 | Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework | 25 |
| | 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Task | 40 |
| | 3 | Written examination (1½ hours) | 35 |

¹ Each dance

² Music Investigation: groups of one assessed performer – maximum 25 minutes; groups of two or three assessed performers – maximum 30 minutes; groups of four assessed performers – maximum 35 minutes; groups of five or six assessed performers – maximum 40 minutes; solo performers – maximum 25 minutes

³ Music Performance: groups of one assessed performer – maximum 25 minutes; groups of two or three assessed performers – maximum 30 minutes; groups of four assessed performers – maximum 35 minutes; groups of five or six assessed performers – maximum 40 minutes; solo performers – maximum 25 minutes

⁴ A single grade is awarded for examinations with separate oral and written components.

⁵ Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Language

⁶ A single grade is awarded for the Auslan examinations.

2 VCE VET programs with scored assessment in 2021

All VCE VET programs with scored assessment have two graded assessments. Unless otherwise noted, examinations are held at the end of the academic year.

| Program | Graded assessment | Type of assessment | Weighting of study score (%) |
|---|-------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Business (BU23) BSB30115 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Community Services (CT41) CHC32015 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Creative and Digital Media (MU07) CUA31015 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Computer-based examination (2 hours) | 66 34 |
| Dance (DN06) CUA20113 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Performance examination (two performances of 2–5 minutes each) | 50 50 |
| Engineering Studies (EG18) 22470VIC | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Equine Studies (EQ05) 22513VIC | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Furnishing (FN20) MSF20516 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Health (CT37) HLT33015 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Hospitality (HS31) SIT20316 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Hospitality (Kitchen Operations) (HS32) SIT20416 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Information, Digital Media and Technology (IN60) ICT30118 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Integrated Technologies (ET16) 22289VIC | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Laboratory Skills (LB21) MSL30118 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Music Industry (Performance) ⁷ (MI19) CUA30915 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Performance examination (duration varies) ⁷ | 50 50 |
| Music Industry (Sound Production) (MI30) CUA30915 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Aural and written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |
| Sport and Recreation (SR41) SIS30115 | 1 2 | Units 3 and 4 School-assessed Coursework Written examination (1½ hours) | 66 34 |

⁷ VCE VET Music Industry: solo performers – maximum 25 minutes; two or three performers – maximum 30 minutes; four or five performers – maximum 35 minutes; six or more performers – maximum 45 minutes.

Scored assessment: General Achievement Test

All students enrolled in one or more Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Unit 3–4 sequences or VCE VET scored Unit 3–4 sequences, including Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) students, are expected to sit the General Achievement Test (GAT).

1 Purpose of the GAT

The GAT is an essential part of the VCE assessment procedure. Although GAT results do not count directly towards VCE results, they play an important role in checking that School-based Assessments and external assessments have been accurately assessed. GAT results are used in the calculation of the Derived Examination Score (DES).

1.1 School-based Assessment and the GAT

The VCAA will apply statistical moderation procedures to School-based Assessment scores to ensure that they are comparable across the state and fair to all students. The statistical moderation process compares the level and spread of each school's assessments of its students in each study with the level and spread of the same students' scores in the external assessment, and adjusts the school scores, if necessary.

In some studies, GAT scores will also be used for statistical moderation. This will be done only if it provides a better match with School-based Assessments throughout the state. The external assessment scores will always have the major influence in the statistical moderation calculations.

1.2 External assessments and the GAT

The GAT is used as part of a final check on external assessment scores. If the final score for an external assessment is significantly different from the score predicted by the GAT, school indicative grades and any other external assessment final scores for the study, the external assessment will be assessed again by the chief assessor. Scores may go up or stay the same, but will not go down as a result of this final check.

1.3 DES and the GAT

The calculation for the DES uses all available scores for the student in the affected study and the indicative grade for any external assessments provided by the school and the GAT component scores. For each approved application for a specific external assessment, the VCAA will calculate a range of possible DES scores, which will be calculated statistically from the student's other assessments, including:

- moderated School-based Assessments
- GAT component scores
- other external assessment scores, if applicable
- indicative grades provided by the school.

The contribution made by the graded assessments, the indicative grade and the GAT component scores is determined by analysis of the comparison data with the final score for the specific external assessments for all students who have not applied for a DES. For all external assessments, the two graded School-based Assessment scores provide the greatest contribution to all the predictors.

If a student is eligible for a DES and the highest of the predictors is greater than the achieved external assessment score, the highest predictor is chosen as the final score for the student in the relevant external assessment.

1.4 Exemption from the GAT

It is important for all students with an enrolment in one or more VCE or scored VCE VET Unit 3–4 sequences to attempt the GAT.

Eligibility for exemption from the GAT

A student may be deemed eligible for an exemption from the GAT if they:

- have a vision or other impairment for which arrangements cannot reasonably be made, given the format of the GAT (Special Examination Arrangements for the GAT can be provided for students who are deaf or hard of hearing)
- are prevented from sitting the GAT by injury, illness, personal trauma or a serious intervening event
- are employed and cannot be absent from work (evidence from their employer is required).

A personal trauma may include, but is not limited to, the death or serious illness of, or an accident involving, a family member.

A serious intervening event may include:

- an accident before or on the day of the GAT
- attendance at a funeral of a family member or other person of close relationship
- attendance at a legal proceeding.

Applications on the basis of an injury, an illness, a personal trauma or a serious intervening event require an appropriate independent professional to complete Section B or C of the relevant application form.

Note: An application for an exemption from the GAT cannot be submitted solely on the basis of:

- a student requiring Special Examination Arrangements
- a student not completing any graded assessment
- Interrupted Studies status or Compassionate Late Withdrawal
- a student being interstate or overseas at the time of the GAT.

Special Examination Arrangements

A request for an exemption from the GAT on the grounds of requiring Special Examination Arrangements will be refused unless the necessary arrangements exceed those normally offered for the GAT.

Students who experience the onset of an illness, the exacerbation of an existing condition or the occurrence of an injury or personal trauma in the period before or on the day of the GAT should discuss with their VCE coordinator a school application for Emergency Special Examination Arrangements, which may assist them to sit the GAT.

Students not completing any graded assessments

Students not completing any graded assessments associated with VCE or scored VCE VET Unit 3–4 sequences are expected to sit the GAT and will not be granted an exemption on these grounds.

Interrupted Studies status and Compassionate Late Withdrawal

It is important for a student who has been granted Interrupted Studies status to attempt the GAT in both academic years, but particularly in the academic year they return to complete the study.

If a student has been withdrawn from all VCE or scored VCE VET units at Unit 3 and 4 level before the GAT, there is no need to apply for an exemption from the GAT. A student who has been withdrawn after the GAT is not eligible to apply for an exemption from the GAT.

Interstate and overseas arrangements

Students may be eligible to sit the GAT interstate or overseas if they:

- are on an exchange program overseas
- are on exchange in Victoria and are returning home immediately before or during the VCE external assessment period
- are representing Australia for an official duty, for example, in a sporting, academic, military or cultural event
- or their parent/guardian, has been asked to work interstate or overseas.

Schools must submit an **Application to sit VCE external assessments interstate or overseas** form to the VCAA.

Evidence of eligibility must be submitted with the application form.

Events such as family holidays, birthdays and weddings are not considered valid grounds for an application to sit VCE external assessments interstate or overseas.

How to apply for exemption from the GAT

If a student's circumstances meet the eligibility requirements for an exemption from the GAT, their school may apply to the VCAA using the **Application for authorised absence from the General Achievement Test (GAT)** form.

Applications on the grounds of accident, illness or injury must be substantiated with evidence from an independent health professional, who will need to complete Section B of the application form.

Applications on the grounds of a personal trauma or serious intervening event must be substantiated with evidence from an appropriate independent professional. This independent professional will need to complete Section C of the application form.

1.5 VCAL and/or VCE VET and the GAT

Students who are enrolled in a VCAL program in 2021 that includes any VCE Unit 3-4 sequences or VCE VET scored Unit 3-4 sequences are expected to sit the GAT.

If a student is enrolled in a VCAL program in 2021, but is not enrolled in any VCE or scored VCE VET Unit 3-4 sequences, they are not expected to sit the GAT.

2 GAT Statement of Results

A GAT Statement of Results is mailed to each student with all other VCE and VCAL results. This statement indicates each student's raw score and their relative score calculated in the same way as a study score, with descriptive comments about their performance on each component. The components are:

- written communication
- mathematics, science and technology
- humanities, the arts and social sciences.

The Statement of Results indicates if a student obtained results in the GAT or had an authorised or unauthorised absence. Schools can access their students' GAT results on VASS at the end of the academic year when results are released. Students cannot apply for a DES for the GAT.

Reporting results: Score aggregation

1 Study scores

A study score indicates how a student performed in relation to all other students who took the study. It is calculated using the student's final scores for School-assessed Coursework, School-assessed Tasks, Externally-assessed Tasks and examinations for each study.

To receive a study score, students must achieve two or more graded assessments in the study and receive an S for both Units 3 and 4 in the same academic year, unless they have Interrupted Studies status and have met these requirements over two academic years.

1.1 Study score calculation

The final score for each graded assessment is standardised. This is done by subtracting the state mean for a graded assessment from the student's final score for that graded assessment, and dividing the result by the state standard deviation for the graded assessment, as per the following formula:

$$\text{Standardised score} = (\text{final score} - \text{state mean}) / \text{state standard deviation}$$

The standardised score for each graded assessment is multiplied by its percentage contribution to the study score. In some studies the graded assessments are equally weighted, while in others they are weighted differently. For English, the formula is as follows:

$$(\text{Standardised Unit 3 coursework score} \times 0.25) + (\text{Standardised Unit 4 coursework score} \times 0.25) + (\text{Standardised November examination score} \times 0.50)$$

Students' weighted standardised scores are summed. For VCE studies, up to three weighted standardised scores are added together. The weighted totals of all students in the study are ranked in descending order. When students have the same total they are given the highest rank of the group; for example, in a study of 1500 students, if three students have the equal highest total, each will be assigned the rank of 1500. The next highest total will be assigned the rank of 1497.

The ranks are then normalised using an inverse normal function. The scores resulting from this transformation are distributed normally, with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. The normalised scores are then converted to a scale with a mean of 30 and standard deviation of 7, truncated at 0 and 50. This produces a possible study score ranging from 0 to 50, with most study scores between 23 and 37. Further adjustments are made for studies that have small numbers of students.

For further explanation there is a [series of videos detailing VCE study score calculations](#), available on the VCAA website.

1.2 Calculating a VCE VET study score

Some VCE VET programs include scored assessment. In these programs students receive a score and a grade for each of two components:

- School-assessed Coursework, a set of tasks students undertake in the Unit 3–4 sequence of their program
- an examination based on the Unit 3–4 sequence, set by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).

The statistically moderated School-assessed Coursework score and the examination score are used to calculate study scores by the same procedures as for other VCE studies.

1.3 Study score calculation for students with Interrupted Studies status

Students who have been granted Interrupted Studies status will have their study scores calculated using graded assessments across two academic years, provided they have achieved two or more graded assessments in the study and received an S for both Units 3 and 4. The best results for each graded assessment across the two years of study are used when the study score is calculated. Contact Student Records and Results for clarification of these calculations. The following table demonstrates how these requirements are applied.

Examples of study scores for interrupted studies

| | First academic year | | Second academic year | | Sequence requirement met | Second academic year study score |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Unit 3 | Unit 4 | Unit 3 | Unit 4 | | |
| Interrupted Study | S | Overseas study/illness | Overseas study/illness | S | Yes | Yes |

1.4 Interstate credit and study scores

A student awarded credit at Unit 3 and 4 level for interstate studies will have a study score calculated only if they have credit for Unit 3 and receive an S result for Unit 4 in a similar VCE study, and have attempted at least two graded assessments in the VCE study.

2 Statistical moderation

School-based Assessment is an important part of the VCE. In many studies it contributes 50 per cent towards the calculation of a student's study score. To ensure fairness when study scores are calculated, it is important that School-based Assessments made by all schools are comparable.

The VCE program gives teachers some flexibility in deciding which teaching and learning activities and coursework assessment tasks they will use to assess the learning outcomes specified in each study design. As a result, coursework assessment from different schools will sometimes be based on different sets of assessment activities, even though they are assessing the same learning outcomes, and therefore cannot be compared.

The VCAA acknowledges that teachers are best placed to measure students' academic achievement; however, measurements are comparable only when they are expressed on the same scale. It is important to remember that statistical moderation does not change the relative performance of students within the statistical moderation group. For each VCE and VCE VET program, the VCAA uses statistical moderation to express students' achievement from all schools on the same scale. This provides fairness for students across the state. To ensure comparability of assessment of School-based Assessment from different schools, the VCAA will apply statistical procedures to each moderation group, study by study.

For VCE studies, moderation groups are the cohort of students in each school undertaking the study, or the total cohort of students from schools that combine for the purposes of assessment and moderation for a particular study.

For VCE VET programs with scored assessment, the requirements of the moderation group have changed from the registered training organisation (RTO) to the identified Assessing Group. An Assessing Group can be:

- home school – a teacher from the school delivers and assesses the scored Unit 3–4 sequence from the VCE VET program
- RTO – students attend an external RTO for delivery of the scored Unit 3–4 sequence from the VCE VET program
- other – students attend another school as part of a VET cluster for delivery of the scored Unit 3–4 sequence from the VCE VET program.

The Assessing Group will be used to define which moderation group students are placed into, and subsequently to which group statistical moderation will be applied, when completing a scored VCE VET Units 3–4 sequence.

Statistical moderation realigns the level and spread of each school's assessments of its students in a particular study to match the level and spread of the same students' scores on a common external score. As the external score is based on examinations done by all students across Victoria, it is a common standard against which school assessments can be compared.

Each VCE study includes at least one external assessment and the VCAA will use the external assessments in each study as the basis for statistical moderation of school assessments. In studies with two external assessments, scores from both will be used.

The VCE assessment program also includes the General Achievement Test (GAT). In a small number of studies GAT and examination scores are a better match with school assessments in the same cohort. In all such cases, the examination scores will always be the major influence. Further information on statistical moderation can be found on the VCAA website.

2.1 Internal comparability of assessments

For statistical moderation, each school's assessments in a study are treated as a single group, not as separate teaching classes. Each school should have established procedures for making School-based Assessments and should apply these procedures consistently. There should be consistency of decisions made by teachers of individual studies and consistency of decisions made by multiple teachers of one study.

2.2 Small-group partnerships

Schools with moderation groups comprising fewer than five enrolments, or schools that might expect such groups to occur as a result of circumstances arising during the year, should form partnerships with other schools of their own choosing, as early in the academic year as possible.

Schools with moderation groups that comprise fewer than five enrolments are encouraged to form partnerships. see the *Administrative information: Schools and providers* section for information about forming small-group partnerships.

2.3 Transferring students

For each transferring student, the VCAA will make a separate decision on how the student's School-based Assessment is moderated for each study. The decisions will be based on the following conditions.

Students who transfer very early in the academic year and complete all assessment tasks at the receiving school

- The receiving school is the assessing school and the moderation group.
- The student's School-based Assessment scores and examination scores are treated in the usual way in the moderation process for the receiving school.

Students who transfer very late in the academic year, having completed all assessment tasks at the original school, but sit the examinations at the receiving school

- The original school remains the assessing school.
- The student's examination score is treated as belonging to the original school.
- The student's School-based Assessment scores and examination scores are treated normally in the moderation process for the original school.

Students who complete all the assessment tasks for Unit 3 at their original school and the assessment tasks for Unit 4 at their receiving school**Example for English**

- The original school is the assessing school for Unit 3 coursework.
- The receiving school is the assessing school for Unit 4 coursework.
- Because the student's School-based Assessment preparation for the examination has been completed at two different schools, the student's scores are removed from the moderation process for both schools.

Once scores have been entered they cannot be removed once the date for such changes on VASS has passed. Therefore, if a student no longer wishes to be assessed for levels of achievement for all or any graded assessments then the school should ensure that NAs are entered for the remainder of that study. The scores already entered will remain.

Students who complete some assessment tasks for the School-based Assessment at their original school and the remainder of the tasks at the receiving school**Example for Mathematics**

The student transfers during the academic year, having completed the Unit 3 tasks of the Unit 3 and 4 School-based Assessment at the original school.

The student completes the Unit 4 tasks of the School-based Assessment at the receiving school.

Example for English

The student transfers early in the academic year, having completed two of the three assessment tasks for the Unit 3 School-based Assessment at the original school.

The student completes the remaining task for Unit 3 School-based Assessment at the receiving school.

In both examples the student's School-based Assessment will be handled as follows:

- The original school will enter the scores for the tasks assessed at that school on the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) before transferring the student to the receiving school.
- The receiving school will enter the scores for the tasks assessed at that school on VASS.
- The student's School-assessed Coursework and examination scores will be removed from the moderation process for both schools.

At the completion of the moderation process for both schools, the VCAA will calculate a moderated 'partial' score for the School-assessed Coursework completed at the original school, using the moderation parameters for that school, and will also calculate a moderated 'partial' score for the School-assessed Coursework completed at the receiving school, using the moderation parameters for the receiving school.

The moderated partial scores from each school will then be added to produce the moderated total score for the student.

If a student arrives at the receiving school having completed only some of the assessment tasks for the School-based Assessment, and those tasks have been done in a different sequence to that of the receiving school, the receiving school should provide support for the student to complete any missing tasks. This support should include the necessary teaching and preparation for the tasks, and scheduling of tasks for the student.

Schools should seek advice from the Manager, Student Records and Results Unit if they are unsure of appropriate measures to take in any of these situations.

3 Final grades

All VCE studies have three graded assessments for each Unit 3–4 sequence. Scored VCE VET studies have two graded assessments for each Unit 3–4 sequence.

Levels of performance in graded assessments are reported as A+ to E, UG (ungraded) and NA (not assessed). UG indicates that the score achieved was too low to assign a grade. NA indicates that the School-based Assessment was not submitted or the examination was not undertaken.

All VCE studies include at least one external assessment, and all except Algorithmics (HESS) have School-assessed Coursework for either a combined Unit 3 and 4 assessment, separate Unit 3 and Unit 4 assessments, or a Unit 3 assessment only. Some studies have School-assessed Tasks; Music Style and Composition and Extended Investigation have an Externally-assessed Task.

Distribution of grade ranges for all assessment components in each study are [reported each year](#) and published on the VCAA website.

3.1 Final grades for VCE and VCE VET School-based Assessment

The minimum score required for each grade for each School-based Assessment in a VCE study and a VCE VET scored program is determined by the VCAA, following statistical moderation of schools' initial scores.

3.2 Final grades for VCE external assessments

The minimum score for each grade is determined by the VCAA at the completion of marking.

Final results: Reporting to schools

1 School access to final results of students

Schools can access the final results of students for the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL), VCE VET (Vocational Education and Training), and the General Achievement Test (GAT) on the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS). The final results for the end-of-academic-year external assessments and all School-based Assessments are released at the end of the academic year.

2 Confirmation of Grades

The principal may, after considering a student's grades for an external assessment, ask the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) to confirm the student's final grade. The request for Confirmation of Grades can be made only if there is a significant discrepancy from the level the school expected the student to attain. A Confirmation of Grades involves an administrative check of the procedures used in finalising the student's grade. This process can be requested for any type of external assessment, including performance, languages, externally-assessed tasks or written examinations.

The principal can request a Confirmation of Grades by using the **Confirmation of Grades Request** form. It is important to ensure that all requested information is provided and endorsed by the principal before submitting the application. Refer to [Important Administrative Dates](#) on the VCAA website for the final day for principals to submit requests for Confirmation of Grades for external assessments.

Note: A Confirmation of Grades cannot be requested for School-based Assessments. Statistical moderation reports for School-based Assessments are available to each school through VASS.

3 VCE Data Service

School staff can use the VCE Data Service to analyse the performance information of their VCE students. The service can:

- assist in identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the performance of groups of students across VCE programs offered by a school
- provide information on the longitudinal progress of students from NAPLAN to VCE
- provide information to inform professional discussions about improving student performance.

School staff can analyse the school's performance using the VCE Data Service, for example, by using the VASS menu: School Admin > VCE Data Service > Reporting.

Note: Data for each year's VCE results is available before the commencement of the next academic year.

4 VCE External Assessment Results Service

Teachers can use the VCE External Assessment Results Service to analyse the performance of their VCE classes in external assessments. In particular, the service can be used to:

- identify strengths and weaknesses in the performance of a class against certain criteria
- consider the effectiveness of current teaching practices
- inform professional learning discussions with fellow teachers that lead to improved teaching practices.

For all external assessments, teachers can use VCE external assessment results service to analyse class performance against that of the state at the:

- summary examination level
- question or criterion level, including extended answer and multiple choice (Response Analysis).

The report can be accessed via the VASS menu:

- School Admin > School Statistics > External Assessments – Summary
- School Admin > School Statistics > External Assessments – Questions/Criteria.

Final results: Reporting to students

At the end of the academic year, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) issues a Statement of Results to all students who have obtained results in Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) units, Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) units, VCE VET (Vocational Education and Training) units and nationally recognised VET units of competency, and VCE and VCAL certificates to students who are eligible.

1 Reporting VCE

1.1 VCE certificate

The VCE certificate contains the student's full name but does not list their individual studies or results. The certificate is issued in the academic year in which the student first satisfies the requirements of the VCE. Students who have previously satisfied the requirements of the VCE certificate, but choose to do additional studies in subsequent years, do not have their certificate reissued.

1.2 VCE Statement of Results

The VCAA issues a VCE Statement of Results to all students enrolled in the VCE as their primary program. This contains:

- a cumulative record of achievement for all VCE and VCE VET units undertaken, and the academic year in which the result was obtained (units awarded a J result will not be printed)
- graded assessment and study scores for each sequence of Unit 3 and 4 studies undertaken, either in the current academic year or earlier (if both Units 3 and 4 are awarded a J result, the entire record for the sequence is not printed)
- credit obtained for study taken overseas, interstate or as part of the International Baccalaureate (IB) or for a vocational certificate
- university studies successfully completed
- a statement indicating whether the student sat the General Achievement Test (GAT)
- if relevant, a statement indicating that the student was granted English as an Additional Language (EAL) status, along with the years in which that status was conferred
- a statement indicating whether or not the student has successfully completed the VCE.

1.3 VCE completion of units

There are two symbols for reporting completion of units on a VCE Statement of Results:

- S (satisfactory), which means all outcomes as specified in the study design have been achieved
- N (not satisfactory), which means that not all outcomes have been achieved or there was a significant breach of VCAA or school rules.

1.4 Reporting graded assessment results

All VCE studies have three graded assessments for each Unit 3–4 sequence. Scored VCE VET studies have two graded assessments for each Unit 3–4 sequence.

Levels of performance in graded assessments are reported as being from A+ to E, UG (ungraded) or NA (not assessed). UG indicates that the score achieved was too low to assign a grade. NA indicates that the School-based Assessment was not submitted or the examination was not undertaken.

For studies undertaken in the academic years prior to 2003, students may have had Consideration of Disadvantage granted to them. This was reported by means of an asterisk against the grades for which it was granted. Grades were reported as *A to *E, *UG or *NA.

Reporting studies with combined Unit 3 and 4 School-based Assessment grades

For studies with a combined Unit 3 and 4 School-based Assessment grade, the grade reported in each academic year is calculated from the available scores for that year. Students may request a statement of grades, estimated from all available scores for the School-based Assessment, from the Manager, Student Records and Results, VCAA.

Reporting Higher Education studies

Student enrolments in a Higher Education study can be viewed through the **Student Full Details Report** on the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) in the week after the last day for enrolment in Unit 3–4 sequences. For information on student results, schools should contact the Higher Education institution at which the student is enrolled.

Students who successfully complete a Higher Education study have the title of the study and the academic year of enrolment reported on their VCE Statement of Results. A Higher Education study may contribute towards satisfactory completion for the award of the VCE as an unscored Unit 3–4 sequence.

1.5 Reporting

A study score indicates how a student performed in relation to all others who took the study. It is calculated using the student's moderated School-based Assessment scores, the Externally-assessed Task (where relevant) and the examination scores for each study.

The maximum study score is 50. For studies with many enrolments (1000 or more) the following table shows the approximate proportion of students who will achieve a study score on or above the stated values. For studies with fewer enrolments the proportions may vary slightly.

Study score distribution

| | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Study score | 20 | 25 | 30 | 35 | 40 | 45 |
| Approximate percentage of students on or above this position (%) | 93 | 78 | 53 | 26 | 9 | 2 |

If the study score is less than 20, the score will be reported to the student as <20. The actual score is sent to the [Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre](#) (VTAC), is available to the student's school on VASS, and is available to the student on the results service, by contacting the VCAA or by applying for a Statement of Study Score.

If the study score is unavailable, the score will be reported to the student as UN. A study score is unavailable when more than one graded assessment is NA, or because the student has not satisfactorily completed both Units 3 and 4 of the study.

1.6 GAT results

Students who obtained GAT results are issued with a statement that contains the scores achieved for each component and a descriptive statement of these results, along with a standardised score for each component.

2 Reporting VCAL

2.1 VCAL certificate

Each student's VCAL certificate is sent to their home school on the scheduled date at the end of the academic year. Students who are eligible for a VCAL Certificate by the first results submission date may receive their certificate in the middle of the academic year if their school elects to participate in the VCAL midyear reporting process.

Each certificate contains the student's full name, but does not list individual studies or results. A certificate is issued in the academic year in which the student first satisfies all requirements.

Students who have previously satisfied the requirements for the VCAL certificate, but who have chosen to do additional studies with the same certificate enrolment, are not issued the certificate again.

2.2 VCAL Statement of Results

The VCAL Statement of Results is issued to students enrolled in the VCAL as their primary program, and students completing some VCE studies as part of their VCAL, and contains:

- a cumulative record of achievement for all VCAL, VCE and VCE VET units undertaken, and the academic year in which the result was obtained. VCAL units awarded an N result and VCE units awarded a J result are not printed
- graded assessment and study scores for each sequence of VCE and VCE VET Unit 3 and 4 studies undertaken either in the current year or earlier; if both Units 3 and 4 are awarded a J result, the entire record for the sequence is not printed
- credit obtained for study undertaken overseas, interstate, as part of the International Baccalaureate or for a vocational certificate
- university studies successfully completed
- a statement indicating if the student sat the GAT
- a declaration stating whether the student has or has not been awarded the VCAL
- the number of credits and a list of strands the student has satisfied towards the VCAL.

2.3 VCAL completion of units

There are two symbols for reporting completion of units on a VCAL Statement of Results:

- S (satisfied), which means satisfactory completion of the curriculum components in accordance with assessment guidelines for accredited curriculum
- N (not yet complete), which is used only for VCE units reported on the VCAL Statement of Results and means that not all outcomes have been achieved or there was a significant breach of attendance rules. VCAL units with an N result are not reported on a Statement of Results.

2.4 Reporting graded assessment results

VCAL units do not have graded assessments.

2.5 Reporting study scores

VCAL units do not have study scores.

3 Reporting VET results

3.1 VET satisfactory completion of units of competency

Units of competency that have been satisfactorily completed are reported on the student's VET Statement of Results. Units of competency not yet completed, although entered as N on VASS, will not appear on the student's Statement of Results.

VCE VET units are reported on both the VCE and VCAL Statement of Results. All certificates and statements of attainment are awarded by the student's registered training organisation (RTO).

3.2 VET Statements of Results

VET Statements of Results are issued to students who satisfactorily complete units of competency in a VCE VET program, a School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship, or a VET certificate.

Each Statement of Results contains a cumulative record of achievement for all units of competency undertaken towards a certificate with a current enrolment. If students are undertaking more than one VCE VET program but are yet to complete all units of competency, results for all programs may appear on one Statement of Results.

4 Delivery of results

Students who have undertaken a VCE Unit 3 and 4 study in any year, or who have pre-VCE results, will have their results package mailed directly to their address as recorded on VASS, on the scheduled date at the end of the academic year. Depending on the student's enrolment, the package may include a Statement of Results for VCE, VCAL, GAT and VET.

Certificates are forwarded to the student's home school on the scheduled date.

Students who have undertaken study at VCE Unit 1 and 2 level only and have not completed any pre-VCE studies will have their results included in the results package sent to their home school on the scheduled date. The school results package will contain:

- VCE Statement of Results for students with only Unit 1 and 2 enrolments
- VCAL Statement of Results for students who do not have a VCE Unit 3–4 sequence in their program
- VCE VET Statement of Results for students who do not have a VCE Unit 3–4 sequence in their program
- VET Statement of Results for students who do not have a VCE Unit 3–4 sequence in their program
- VCE certificates for the current academic year
- VCE Baccalaureate certificates for the current academic year
- VCAL certificates for the current academic year.

5 VCE Results and ATAR Service

Students may obtain their final Year 12 results by accessing a range of services from the VCE Results and ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) Service (the joint VCAA and VTAC service) if they have at least one VCE Unit 3 and 4 enrolment. The ATAR website is also optimised for smartphones and other mobile devices with an internet browser. Students should refer to the *VCE Exams Navigator* for information regarding access to the Results Service.

6 Post-Results and ATAR Service (PRAS)

Post-results and ATAR Service (PRAS) is a joint VCAA and VTAC enquiry service that provides information after the release of results in December. Students, parents and teachers with queries about VCE and VCAL results should phone (03) 9637 3877 (metropolitan callers) or 1800 653 080, or email pras@education.vic.gov.au. Actual results cannot be obtained from this service.

7 Statement of Marks and Statement of Study Score

Students may apply to the VCAA to obtain a Statement of Marks for any or all of their VCE external assessments and the GAT. Students will receive a personalised application form with their VCE results, and a general application form is available on the VCAA website. A Statement of Marks provides the marks obtained for each question or criterion on an external assessment, as well as the maximum marks available. A Statement of Study Score provides details of the calculation of a student's study score for VCE Units 3 and 4 or scored VCE VET Unit 3–4 sequence.

Fees are not required when applying for these statements. Students with vision impairment can request a Statement of Marks in a nominated accessible format for the same fee as the standard format statement.

There is a closing date for applications. There is no provision for late applications. Applications received after this date will not be processed.

8 Inspection of examination response materials

Students' examination papers and recordings remain the property of the VCAA and will not be returned to them, but may be made available for inspection under certain conditions. All written examination papers and audio recordings for Music Performance examinations may be available for inspection. The following materials are not available for inspection:

- video recordings for any performance examination
- recordings of VCE Languages oral examinations and VCE Extended Investigation oral presentations.

Students may inspect their examination papers on application to the VCAA. Students receive a personalised application form with their VCE results that covers Statement of Marks, Statement of Study Score and Inspection of Scripts. A general application form is also available on the VCAA website. Students must obtain the relevant Statement of Marks before an inspection of papers. A fee is charged for each examination paper inspected.

Inspections take place at the student's school, with the principal's permission. The principal must sign the Inspection of Scripts application, which is forwarded to the VCAA. Material will be sent to the principal. An appointment must be made at the school for the inspection. When schools are closed, inspections may take place at the VCAA, in which case the VCAA will make an appointment with the student.

The VCAA allows 15 minutes for the inspection of each examination script. It is recommended that students have their study teacher present. If the study teacher is not available, students should contact their school to discuss a possible suitable substitute. The substitute should be a teacher who is teaching the study at the same level.

Under no circumstances are examination papers, authorised photocopies of the materials or recordings allowed to be taken from the inspection room or copied. Alteration of any material is also not allowed. Students must not take mobile phones into the inspection room. Marks or assessors' comments do not appear on examination papers.

Examination papers and recordings are held only until the end of the inspection period, which is one month after the final day for lodging requests to inspect scripts. The VCAA has permission from the Keeper of Public Records to destroy the material after this date and this is normally carried out each year in April. After this deadline, all scripts and raw assessment data held at the VCAA are destroyed.

9 Final results

Published results are final apart from the exceptional case. No School-based Assessments will be re-marked once results have been released, unless a student appeals to the VCAA against penalties imposed by their school for breach of VCAA examination rules or School-based Assessment authentication rules. There is no provision for a student to appeal to the VCAA against a school's assessment of outcomes for satisfactory completion of a unit.

9.1 VCE examination score review

In exceptional cases the VCAA may consider an application by a principal who believes that there has been an error in the marking of a student's response to one or more questions on a written examination and consequently, the student has been incorrectly assessed.

An application should not be submitted solely on the basis that a student was expected to achieve a higher overall mark. The VCAA will consider a VCE examination score review application made only by the principal or an authorised member of the principal class at the student's school.

Applications must be made in accordance with the VCAA's policy and procedures, which are available by download from VASS. It is a pre-condition of any such application that the student and study teacher have obtained a Statement of Marks and inspected the student's examination response materials.

Schools should refer to the Confirmation of Grades process if they have concern about a student's result for an oral or performance examination.

10 Replacement certificates and Statements of Results

Students who have lost their original certificate or Statement of Results may apply to the VCAA for a replacement. Requests for replacement certificates or Statements of Results should be made on the appropriate forms available on the VCAA website.

10.1 Certified copies

A certified copy is a one-page statement that verifies a student's grades.

10.2 Equivalent qualifications

Statements of equivalent qualification to the VCE may be issued by the VCAA to applicants who have senior secondary school qualifications obtained interstate or overseas.

The VCAA will also assess interstate or overseas qualifications for their equivalence to Year 11.

Applications for assessments of equivalent qualification should be made on the **Application for Statement of Equivalent Qualification** form on the VCAA website.

10.3 Requests for data

Requests for data and information should be emailed to the VCAA at research.vcaa@education.vic.gov.au. There may be a charge for this service. Information about charges for provision of data and information will be provided on request.

Special Provision

1 Special Provision within the VCE and VCAL

The VCAA Special Provision policy aims to provide students in defined circumstances with the opportunity to participate in and complete their secondary level studies.

The underlying principle of the VCAA Special Provision Policy is to ensure that the most appropriate, fair and reasonable options are available for students to demonstrate their capabilities if their learning and assessment programs are affected by disability, illness, impairment or other circumstances. Special Provision should provide equivalent, alternative arrangements for students, but not confer an advantage to any student over other students.

Although there is no limit on the period of time allowed for a student to achieve the VCE or VCAL, the provisions available seek to help a student complete the requirements in a timeframe comparable with their peers.

Individual students may need special provisions in their learning program to achieve the learning outcomes, and in assessment to demonstrate their learning and achievement.

At the same time, students who have been granted Special Provision are not exempt from meeting the requirements for satisfactory completion of the VCE or VCAL, or from being assessed against the outcomes for a study. Students are still required to demonstrate their achievement fairly in meeting the outcomes of the study design as well as completing School-based Assessments and VCE external assessments.

Similarly, the programs and assessment tasks designed for VCAL students should allow each student to successfully complete the learning program without compromising the expectations of each of the components of the program in accordance with course requirements.

Specific eligibility criteria apply to the granting of Special Provision for the VCE or VCAL.

1.1 Types of Special Provision

Special Provision is available to students completing the VCE or VCAL for classroom learning, School-based Assessment and VCE external assessments.

Specific eligibility requirements apply for each type of Special Provision.

For classroom learning and School-based Assessment, the school is primarily responsible for determining eligibility and the nature of the provisions granted. Schools are encouraged to consult the VCAA if they are unsure about appropriate arrangements. The school's policies and procedures should be clearly documented and communicated to students. It is strongly recommended that schools keep records of all decisions made for each student.

For VCE external assessments, which include all VCE examinations, the Extended Investigation Critical Thinking Test and oral presentation and the General Achievement Test (GAT), the VCAA is responsible for determining eligibility and for granting approval in the form of Special Examination Arrangements and the Derived Examination Score (DES).

1.2 Eligibility for Special Provision

Students may be eligible for Special Provision if, at any time, they are adversely affected in a significant way by:

- an acute or chronic illness (physical or psychological)
- factors relating to personal circumstance
- an impairment or disability, including a learning disorder.

These circumstances do not include matters or situations of the student's choosing, such as involvement in social or sporting activities or school events.

Prolonged absence from school or study is not grounds for Special Provision. However, provisions are available to students experiencing severe hardship that may result in prolonged absence.

Students granted Special Provision must still complete all school work related to satisfactory completion of the outcomes of a VCE or VCAL unit. Students absent from school for prolonged periods must still comply with the school's authentication procedures to demonstrate that they have completed the work and that the work is their own.

Students who are eligible for integration funding may not necessarily meet the eligibility criteria for Special Provision in the VCE or VCAL.

English as an Additional Language

Students who have been granted English as an Additional Language (EAL) status on the basis of unfamiliarity with the English language are not eligible for Special Provision on this basis alone, unless they qualify for EAL status because of deafness or hearing loss.

Intellectual disability

The principal has the discretion to approve the enrolment of students with an intellectual disability in the VCE and VCAL. The VCAA does not place restrictions on this discretion. The principal is responsible for advising students of the likelihood of successfully achieving the published unit outcomes and for deciding appropriate arrangements at the school level.

If a student will be unable to succeed within the specified framework of the VCE or VCAL, it may be more appropriate for the student to undertake a parallel, individualised teaching and learning program rather than enrol in VCE or VCAL studies. This strategy allows the student to participate in class with their peers and continue social engagement, and is more likely to eventuate in a positive outcome. In this case, the school would issue its own report on the student's individual achievement.

An integration support group within the school may advise the principal that formal enrolment in either a full or restricted VCE or VCAL program is the most appropriate action. In either case, the school decides the most appropriate program for the student.

The VCAA does not approve Special Examination Arrangements solely on the grounds of an intellectual disability.

1.3 Management of students requiring Special Provision

If a student requires Special Provision but is still deemed to be at risk of not being able to meet either the unit outcomes or satisfactory completion of the VCE or VCAL, the school should develop a management plan. One of the first steps in developing a management plan should be the establishment of a support group to help the student in undertaking the VCE or VCAL. Ideally, this support group should be established in the years before the commencement of VCE or VCAL. Similarly, if a student becomes chronically unwell during the course of their VCE or VCAL, a support group should be established.

The establishment of a support group also provides a focus for the administrative aspects of managing the student's program of study. In addition, a support group allows for a formal structure through which decisions are made and actions verified. Involvement with a support group presents teachers with an opportunity to become better informed about the medical or personal situations of students.

A support group may include the student, a parent of the student, teacher/s or others nominated as having responsibility for the student, and any aides of the student. If appropriate, the support group should seek the advice of specialist consultants. The principal must ensure that advice from the support group is considered and implemented if it is judged to be consistent with VCE or VCAL policy.

Choosing a program of studies

The school, through the support group, should provide advice to the student to help them choose a program of studies. Such advice should encourage the choice of interesting and challenging studies, taking into consideration the nature of the student's hardship and maximising their opportunity to learn. If a student with a disability wants to undertake a study where, given the student's particular disability, it will be problematic for the student to demonstrate the unit outcomes, the restraints and difficulties of proceeding with the study need to be made clear to the student. The expected time for completion of the program should be taken into consideration. If it is anticipated that a student will need deadline extensions to complete work, students may be advised to enrol in fewer units in a given year.

Use of assistive technology

In developing the study program, schools should consider the role of technology in terms of how it could be used to enhance the learning process. For some students the use of technology is a requirement to effectively access education. Every effort should be made to ensure that facilities and technology are available to help students achieve the objectives or learning outcomes of a unit.

While the use of technology in learning strategies is encouraged, the use of new and emerging technologies should first be discussed with the VCAA, to avoid using technology that is not appropriate or suitable for use in a VCE external assessment as part of Special Examination Arrangements; if this is the case, the use of the technology for School-based Assessment may need to be reconsidered. The technology used for School-based Assessments should be consistent with what the student will be allowed to use in a VCE external assessment.

Assistance from aides

Students may require assistance from an aide in order to effectively engage in the process of learning. If this is required, other assessment provisions, such as additional time to complete tasks, may be required. Assistance from aides may take the form of, for example, a reader, a clarifier or a scribe, depending on the nature of the student's circumstance. Generally, this provision is for students with long-term disabilities.

A student's current aide is not eligible to be appointed as a reader, a clarifier, a scribe, an interpreter or a supervisor in a VCE external assessment, unless in exceptional circumstances. The VCAA Special Provision team can provide further advice.

Deferral of VCE studies

Students completing a VCE study at Unit 3 and 4 level may be eligible for Compassionate Late Withdrawal if they are suffering major adverse circumstances and are unable to complete Unit 3.

Students who are unable to complete Unit 4 because of adverse circumstances should consider an application for Interrupted Studies.

2 Special Provision: Classroom learning and School-based Assessment

Schools may approve special provisions and arrangements for both classroom learning and School-based Assessments. The VCAA recognises that school personnel, because of their knowledge of individual students and their circumstances, can sensitively vary the school assessment programs to accommodate student circumstances.

Schools should consult the VCAA if they are unsure about evidence and/or appropriate arrangements and may opt to submit a formal early application for Special Examination Arrangements (from Year 9) which will provide clarity and certainty about what provisions are appropriate. The VCAA recommends that schools approve arrangements for classroom learning and School-based Assessments that are consistent with the Special Examination Arrangements likely to be approved by the VCAA.

Students who are suffering long-term conditions and have not been granted arrangements by the school for classroom learning and School-based Assessments may not be eligible for similar Special Examination Arrangements for these long-term conditions.

The VCAA requires schools to maintain records of their decisions.

2.1 Eligibility for Special Provision for classroom learning and School-based Assessment

Students are eligible for Special Provision for classroom learning and School-based Assessment if their ability to demonstrate achievement is adversely affected by:

- an acute or chronic illness
- a long-term impairment or disability
- personal circumstances.

Decisions on whether to approve special provisions for classroom learning or School-based Assessment is a school decision, must be based on evidence and made using a range of appropriate sources including professional testing and reports, educational assessments and teacher observations.

2.2 Strategies

Course completion

There are a number of ways in which schools can make alternative arrangements to assist students with their learning and enable them to be assessed against the unit outcomes, including:

- rescheduling classroom activities and/or an assessment task
- allowing the student extra time to complete work or an assessment task
- setting a substitute task of the same type
- replacing a task with a different type
- using a planned task to assess more outcomes, or aspects of outcomes, than originally intended
- using technology, aides or other special arrangements to complete classroom learning and/or undertake assessment tasks
- deriving satisfactory completion of outcomes or a score from other assessments or work in the particular study completed by the student (if the provisions already mentioned are not feasible or reasonable).

The decision made by the school needs to reflect the best interests of the student and should be based on the available medical or other professional advice.

Students who are granted an extension of time are required to complete the work and undertake the task in the same way as other students.

Rescheduling classroom activities and/or an assessment task

Learning or tasks that have been missed through illness or other serious cause may be rescheduled. If a student has been absent for prolonged periods through illness or other serious cause, they should not be overloaded on their return to school with the classroom learning they have missed and/or scheduled or rescheduled tasks. Careful consideration needs to be given to the management of the student's workload.

Allowing the student extra time to complete work or an assessment task

In some cases the school may decide to allow the student extra time to complete work. Additional time may be given immediately after the specific class, at the end of the school day, or during free time during the day, or the student may take work home to complete. If an assessment task is undertaken outside the usual class time, the student must sign the appropriate **VASS Authentication Record** form.

The conditions for which an extension of time may be approved should be consistent for all VCE and VCAL units within the school, and given in writing to students. An extension of time may extend from Semester 1 to Semester 2, but not into the next academic year. Flexibility exists within the VCAL for students who require more time to complete the work. Extensions of time must not exceed the deadlines for the reporting of results to the VCAA.

When granting extra time to students for specific activities associated with classroom activities or an assessment task held under test conditions, it is important to keep in mind whether an application for Special Examination Arrangements has been approved for a student requesting additional time for one or more of their VCE external assessments.

If a school plans to submit an application for Special Examination Arrangements requesting additional time for a student with a long-term condition, it is important for the school to initially trial this arrangement during classroom activities. At the same time the VCAA strongly recommends schools contact the VCAA Special Provision team to discuss the student's history and the appropriateness of this type of provision before an application is submitted, preferably well before the student begins studies at senior secondary level.

Setting a substitute task of the same type

Another task of the same type can be set, for example a case study on the same topic but with different questions, or an essay on the same issue but with a different contention.

Replacing a task with a different type

Another task can be chosen from the assessment task types specified in a study design. If alternatives are available, the assessment tasks must be of comparable scope and demand. Where the task type is specified, schools may devise a task that is of comparable scope and demand; for example a 1000-word essay may not be replaced with five multiple-choice questions as this is not comparable.

Using a planned task to assess more outcomes, or aspects of outcomes, than originally intended

Schools may use a single task to allow a student to demonstrate the achievement of more than one of the learning outcomes for a study.

Using assistive technology, aides or other special arrangements to complete classroom learning and/or undertake assessment tasks

Every effort should be made to ensure that facilities and assistive technology are available to enable students to participate in classroom learning and access all assessment tasks in their study program.

Computers, specialist software, recording devices and other technology can be made available to help students to complete work. If word-processing software is used, a spell-check may be activated as part of its operation. Other specialist equipment used in conjunction with computers is encouraged for students who are vision impaired. Audio equipment may also be used to supply assessment tasks to students who cannot access text (for example, students with vision impairment). If new technology has become available, and the school intends to apply for Special Examination Arrangements, the VCAA should be contacted to ensure that proposed technology is considered appropriate and suitable for use in VCE external assessments.

Students with a physical disability or other impairment may receive assistance from an aide in both classroom learning and when completing a task in order to demonstrate achievement of a learning outcome. Such assistance may include an aide's recording or participating on behalf of the student in a laboratory or field activity or physical activities. Students may also use a scribe, a clarifier, assistive technology or other arrangements to complete work or tasks. If a school knows that a student requires Special Examination Arrangements, it should trial the same arrangements in classroom activities and School-based Assessments. Schools are encouraged to contact the VCAA if they are unsure about appropriate arrangements.

For classroom learning, a scribe who is familiar to the student can be used. However, for School-based Assessments, scribes may not be closely associated with the students, and students requiring scribes will

need to be supervised separately. If such arrangements are made, the principal should ensure that the VCAA procedures for authentication have been implemented, and that the teacher is able to attest, to the best of their knowledge, that all unacknowledged work is the student's own.

Practical tasks for performing or for visual arts may not be undertaken by an aide.

Deriving satisfactory completion of outcomes from other assessments or work completed by the student

Satisfactory completion of an outcome may be determined based on other work completed by the student in the study. The result may be determined at the time, or later in the period over which the unit is conducted, depending on the availability of work on which determination is to be based.

It is important for schools to record how such results are determined. A student needs to have completed sufficient work to enable teachers to make a reliable and fair judgment.

Deriving scores from other assessments or work completed by the student

If an extension or substitute task is not feasible or reasonable, or if the task is difficult to duplicate, a score may be derived from other assessments undertaken, or work completed in the study, by the student. The score may be determined at the time, or later in the period over which the graded assessment is conducted, depending on the availability or range of assessments on which determination is to be based.

It is important for schools to record how scores are derived. A student needs to have completed sufficient work to enable teachers to make a reliable and fair assessment. The final score given to the student takes into account the student's circumstances and their overall level of achievement relative to other students in the school.

School-assessed Tasks, Music Style and Composition Externally-assessed Task, and Extended Investigation Externally-assessed Task Written Report

Some VCE studies require completion of a folio, production item or research report. Students who may be injured, ill or experiencing adverse personal circumstances during the time designated by the school for the completion of these types of tasks should be encouraged to complete the task.

The school could consider a range of options for the student, including:

- allowing an extension of time for the student to complete the task, but within the timeframe for the school to lodge the score by the relevant VCAA submission date. If the student is given an extension, but the work is still not complete by the due date, it should be assessed by the teacher as it is and that score sent to the VCAA
- contacting the VCAA (via a letter from the principal) for permission to allow the student an extension of time to complete the task that will enable a score to be submitted after the VCAA submission date. A **VASS Score Amendment Sheet (SAS)** must be lodged when the score becomes available
- allowing the student to complete the task in an agreed extended timeline for satisfactory completion purposes only; that is, if the student receives an S result for the VCE unit outcome, but is awarded a score of NA (not assessed) for the task
- deriving a score for the task based on work completed and/or other assessments.

3 Special Examination Arrangements for VCE external assessments

3.1 Eligibility for Special Examination Arrangements

Special Examination Arrangements may be approved for students with disabilities, illnesses or other circumstances that affect their ability to access a VCE external assessment.

Special Examination Arrangements applications are made to the VCAA through the student's school and must be endorsed by the principal. Such applications will be considered by the VCAA in accordance with its policies.

The VCAA recognises that some students with a disability, as defined in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cwlth), or illness may require Special Examination Arrangements to enable them to access the examination/test questions and communicate their responses in a timed external assessment.

In designing and approving Special Examination Arrangements, the VCAA is mindful of the need to balance the competing demands of providing students with the opportunity to perform at their optimum and the academic integrity of the assessment process.

The VCAA considers a large number of applications for Special Examination Arrangements every year. As it is the school that makes the application on behalf of students, and will ultimately administer their VCE external assessments, the VCAA's consultation with a student and/or their representative will usually take place through their school.

Schools must not permit a student to receive Special Examination Arrangements without the VCAA's approval. Failure to comply with these instructions may constitute a breach of the rules governing the conduct of VCE external assessments.

The VCAA considers each application for Special Examination Arrangements on the basis of independent professional and/or educational and academic assessments, any school-based evidence and recommendations provided with the application, and the VCAA's assessment.

Disability and/or illness does not automatically entitle a student to Special Examination Arrangements. The prime consideration is the impact of a disability and/or illness on the student's capacity to undertake their VCE external assessments and, if necessary, what reasonable adjustments can be made to enable the student to complete VCE external assessments on the same basis as students without a disability and/or illness.

The professional, educational and academic assessments, along with school-based evidence, will be considered by the VCAA on a case-by-case basis. The VCAA will make a decision based on all evidence received with an application.

Early engagement and application

The VCAA encourages schools to engage with the VCAA as early as possible to discuss any issues relating to managing students completing secondary level studies (Years 7–12) who may be eligible for or require special provision.

Early engagement allows schools to discuss interventions and implement appropriate provisions for school-based assessments, in the years preceding VCE, to ensure they are consistent with Special Examination Arrangements likely to be approved for VCE external assessments.

For long term or permanent conditions, it may be appropriate for a school to submit a formal early application for Special Examination Arrangements from Year 9 onwards. Evidence requirements for early applications are consistent with applications submitted on behalf of students enrolled in one or more VCE or scored VCE VET Unit 3–4 sequences.

An early application that is approved by the VCAA will provide schools and students with certainty about the provisions that will be in place for the student when enrolled in one or more VCE or scored VCE VET Unit 3–4 sequences and allows schools to implement these provisions from Year 9 onwards.

Any advice given or decisions made by the VCAA in relation to early engagement or formal early applications will need to consider the National Protocols for Test Administration (NPTA) which cover rules and requirements for NAPLAN special provision (referred to as disability adjustments).

Once an early application has been assessed by the VCAA, the responsibility will rest with the school to contact the VCAA in the period leading up to and including the year in which a student enrolls in their first VCE or scored VCE VET Unit 3–4 sequence to discuss variations to a student's provisions as a result of any change in their existing circumstance(s) or due to the onset of a new condition.

In some cases, such as a condition that presents episodic symptoms, the VCAA may require updated and timely evidence at particular stages during the student's secondary schooling. At the same time, other evidence/cognitive assessments will not be required to be submitted again.

Schools should contact VCAA Special Provision on 1800 205 455 to discuss procedures associated with submitting a formal early application.

3.2 Submitting an application for Special Examination Arrangements

Schools can apply for Special Examination Arrangements in the year the student first enrolls in a VCE or scored VCE VET Unit 3–4 sequence. However, the VCAA strongly encourages schools to engage with the VCAA as early as possible to discuss issues relating to appropriate provisions and evidence requirements.

Students who are approved for Special Examination Arrangements can generally expect that these arrangements will be replicated for any additional VCE Units 3–4 sequences undertaken in subsequent years. The VCAA reserves the right to request additional and/or updated evidence when it is deemed necessary. Students with health impairments or a mental health condition may be required to submit current medical evidence pertinent to each assessment period.

What schools need to do

Schools are responsible for identifying who may be eligible for special provision for both School-based Assessments and VCE examinations. Many students will already be known to school staff having been identified through established and ongoing support programs and discussions with teachers and/or parents.

Schools must consider individual student's circumstances, any existing special provisions for classroom learning and/or School-based Assessments, teacher observations and professional evidence when determining which Special Examination Arrangements to apply for.

The VCAA recommends that special provisions at the school level are consistent with those likely to be approved by the VCAA. Special provisions approved by the school may not necessarily meet the eligibility criteria established by the VCAA for Special Examination Arrangements. The fact that a school has approved special provisions for a student's classroom learning and/or School-based Assessments is insufficient grounds for seeking such arrangements for VCE external assessments without the appropriate supporting evidence.

Schools should consult the VCAA if they are unsure about appropriate arrangements.

Applications for Special Examination Arrangements need to be made to the VCAA through the student's school using the VCAA's Special Provision Online (SPO) system by the closing date.

What the VCAA will do

To enable an informed professional judgment, the VCAA will not process an application until all the relevant evidence has been supplied. If necessary, the VCAA will contact schools to request additional information.

In processing Special Examination Arrangements applications, the VCAA will establish an expert Special Examination Arrangements panel, comprised of educational psychologists, medical practitioners, senior examination assessors and other relevant professionals, to assist VCAA staff with decisions.

The VCAA reserves the right to seek additional information from the school or any of the professionals named in an application.

The VCAA's decision regarding Special Examination Arrangements approved and/or denied will be communicated to the school via email.

The school is responsible for communicating the decision to the student.

If an application has been denied, a new application may be submitted if there is a new diagnosis or evidence that an existing condition has deteriorated.

3.3 Administering approved Special Examination Arrangements

Schools must ensure a copy of any approved Special Examination Arrangements are distributed to the student, relevant school personnel (i.e., VCE Coordinator) and the examination chief supervisor.

School personnel must ensure there is a common understanding between the school, student and supervisor as to precisely what any approved Special Examination Arrangements entail.

3.4 Emergency Special Examination Arrangements

Schools may submit an emergency application if a student experiences a sudden illness, accident or personal trauma immediately before or during the assessment period.

Medical evidence for emergency applications must contain:

- a diagnosis
- the date of diagnosis
- the date of onset
- an outline of symptoms and treatment
- comments on the likely effect of the illness or condition on the student's capacity to complete VCE external assessments
- any medical recommendations for particular Special Examination Arrangements.

As it does with all its Special Examination Arrangements decisions, the VCAA will apply consistent criteria when assessing emergency applications.

For situations that arise just before an assessment period, schools should use the Emergency Special Examination Arrangements application form. This application will be available two weeks prior to the commencement of each period for VCE external assessments.

If a student is ill on the day of, or during, an external assessment, the school should contact VCAA Special Provision to seek approval for immediate Emergency Special Examination Arrangements. Follow-up medical documentation must still be provided.

Any attempt by a student to falsely claim to an examination supervisor to have Special Examination Arrangements when these have not been approved by the VCAA may constitute a breach of examination rules and must be reported to the VCAA.

3.5 Appealing a decision

Schools may appeal a VCAA decision. Appeals must be submitted in writing by the school within 14 days of receiving a decision email. The appeal must state why the VCAA decision is being challenged and reference the evidence supplied in the original application. Appeals should include any supporting new evidence, including any other professional's letter of support, educational and academic tests not previously submitted, and/or school-based evidence and observations.

The VCAA will establish an independent panel to review any new evidence submitted with the original application. The VCAA will process all appeals within 21 days of receipt of an appeal. The outcome will be communicated to schools via email. The school is responsible for communicating an appeal decision to the student.

New evidence may also be submitted to support an application if there is a new diagnosis or deterioration in an existing condition.

3.6 Types of Special Examination Arrangements

Special Examination Arrangements can include the following.

Rest breaks

Rest breaks are typically approved at a rate of 10 minutes per hour of the 'total examination writing time'.

Rest breaks are in addition to all reading or writing time.

In specific circumstances, the VCAA may approve 'unlimited rest breaks' to facilitate management of a significant medical or physical condition.

Students may decide how to manage their allocation, including when and how long each break will be, with the supervisor noting the start and end times on the Special Examination Arrangements Rest Break Log Sheet.

The rest break allocation displayed on the Special Examination Arrangements Advice Slip should not be exceeded. Students must be offered the full allocation of reading and writing time, in addition to the time taken for rest breaks.

Students:

- are not permitted to leave their table or leave the examination room during rest breaks, except in special circumstances as approved by the VCAA
- are not permitted to read or write or access the examination/test questions or their responses during a rest break; papers must be turned face down during a rest break
- may use their rest break to relax, rehearse previously learned coping strategies, focus their thoughts or reflect on their responses.

Extra working time

Extra working time is typically approved at a rate of 10 minutes per hour of the 'total examination writing time'. In specific circumstances, the VCAA may approve 'extra working time' in excess of 10 minutes per hour.

Separate rooms

If the use of a scribe (or electronic scribe), reader (or electronic reader) or clarifier has been approved by the VCAA, a student must complete their external assessment in a separate examination room.

Where a student is completing their external assessment in a separate room, a supervisor must be present.

Where a school is requesting a separate room for two or more students in the same examination session and the students have the same or similar conditions, a request can be made to seat these students in the same room.

Consent must be attained from both the parents/guardians and students before requesting this provision.

Use of computers and/or assistive technology

The following table outlines the responsibilities of, and actions required by schools, supervisors and students when the use of a computer and/or assistive technology (that is, specific text-to-voice or voice-to-text software) has been approved.

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| The school must: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • only allow a student the use of a computer and/or assistive technology if the VCAA has approved such provision for their external assessment • supply a stand-alone computer that only has access to a word-processing package and approved software • not allow the student to use predictive software or functions • not allow the student to access dictionary functions in examinations where a dictionary is not allowed • not allow the student to access the internet during the examination • check that the computer and any other equipment to be used on the day of the external assessment are functioning properly • supply one memory device per external assessment. Please ensure that no other information is contained on the memory device • clearly label the memory device with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name of the external assessment • VCAA student number • centre number. |
| The supervisor must: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • watch the computer screen at all times to check that the student is not accessing any other programs or documents • remind the student at the commencement of the external assessment that they must save their work at regular intervals • stop the external assessment if problems are experienced with the computer or other software and equipment, and seek appropriate assistance, then resume the external assessment, ensuring no time loss to the student. An Incident Report about the circumstances should be completed and returned to the VCAA with the student's response materials • print the final version of the student's responses at the conclusion of writing time. The student must be present at the time of printing (this must be done when the assessment is completed. The VCAA will not print student work) • place the printed work inside the front cover of the response materials • if necessary, complete all written details on the front cover of the response materials • ensure that the memory device used and the response materials are returned inside the gold envelope • clearly label the memory device with the VCAA student number and external assessment name. |
| Students: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must use a stand-alone computer that has access to a word-processing package and approved software only • must not access any other programs, files, or data. Any use of other programs, files or data constitutes a breach of VCAA rules and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary procedures • may access the dictionary function in examinations where a dictionary is allowed • may access the spell-checker facility in the word-processing package only. Use of predictive text or predictive software is not allowed • must not set language to any language other than English in the word-processing package • must save their work regularly during the external assessment • must include their VCAA student number at the beginning of every page • must include the number of each question or task answered at the beginning of every page, ensuring that it correlates with the examination question or task book • must be present to witness the printing of their work from the memory device. This must be done when the assessment is completed. The VCAA will not print student work. |

Small group rooms

Where a school has two or more students undertaking an examination in the same session, that have the same or similar approved Special Examination Arrangements, can at their discretion choose to seat these students in the same room with appropriate supervision.

Readers

The function of a reader is to read the examination paper and/or the student's responses as often as requested by the student. A person appointed as a reader should have:

- a facility for English and familiarity with the VCE study being examined
- patience and sensitivity to the student's requirements
- an understanding of the need to maintain confidentiality.

The appointed reader may work with the student in any practice examinations.

A supervisor, in addition to the reader, must be present in the examination room and monitor all interactions between the reader and the student.

| Readers can: | Readers cannot: |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read the examination/test questions and any incorporated stimulus or resource material as many times as the student asks them to • read the student's answers back to them • operate a calculator at the student's direction. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist and/or interpret any question/s for the student • advise the student in any way, either by prompting or discussing the answers. |

Electronic readers

If a student is approved the use of an electronic reader or reader software, they must be supervised in a separate room.

| Supervisors must: | Students must: |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (where applicable) allow a student the use of a computer with assistive technology if the VCAA has approved such provision for their external assessment • monitor that the student has access to an approved electronic reader or software only • not allow the student to use word predictive software or functions • not allow students to access dictionary functions in examinations where a dictionary is not allowed • not allow the student to access the internet during the examination. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • only use the approved computer and reader software as required during their external assessment. Any use of other programs, files or data constitutes a breach of VCAA rules and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary procedures • not access the internet during the external assessment • not use word predictive software or functions during the external assessment • only use the electronic dictionary in examinations where a dictionary is allowed. |

If the use of a reader or electronic reader is approved, extra working time at a rate of 10 minutes per hour of writing time will be approved.

Scribes

The function of a scribe is to record, on the appropriate response material, the verbal responses and directions made by the student in the process of answering the question/s.

A person appointed as a scribe should have:

- a facility for English and familiarity with the VCE study being examined
- clear and legible handwriting
- patience and sensitivity to the student's requirements
- an understanding of the need to maintain confidentiality.

The appointed scribe may work with the student in any practice examinations.

On behalf of the student the scribe will:

- complete all written details associated with the examination on the response materials, such as the VCAA student number, study title, the numbers of all questions and/or tasks answered and the number of answer books used
- record the student's responses, as dictated by the student
- re-read the student responses for editing purposes, if requested by the student.

These tasks are to be completed within the total approved writing time. If the use of a scribe is approved, a separate room will also be approved and extra working time at a rate of ten minutes per hour of writing time will be approved.

The supervisor, in addition to the scribe, must be present in the examination room and monitor all interactions between the scribe and the student.

Before the commencement of the external assessment, the student should advise the scribe how they propose to answer the examination questions. Fifteen minutes before the end of the examination, the supervisor must announce to both the student and the scribe the time remaining. At the conclusion of the external assessment, the supervisor must inform both the student and the scribe that writing should cease.

| | |
|--|---|
| Scribes can: | Scribes cannot: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask the student to repeat a word or sentence • ask the student to spell difficult or obscure words • punctuate and use capital letters without the specific direction of the student • operate a calculator at the student's direction • re-read a paragraph that has been written, to enable the student to regain their place in their work • plot or draw graphs with the specific direction of the student. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpret the question/s for the student • advise the student in any way • make comments on the student's work • alter the student's work or write words that the student has not dictated • re-write a student's written work (that is, a student cannot write out their examination answers and then have the scribe re-write them) • type for the student (unless specific VCAA approval has been granted) • draw (if the student cannot draw, contact Special Provision). |
| Students can: | Students cannot: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dictate their answers exactly as they wish them to be written down • advise the scribe when to start a new paragraph, when to put something in brackets or inverted commas, and when to underline something • regularly read over what the scribe has written. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask to have a question interpreted. |

Electronic scribes

If a student is approved the use of scribing software, they must be supervised in a separate room.

| Supervisors must: | Students must: |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> allow a student the use of a computer with assistive technology if the VCAA has approved such provision for their external assessment monitor that the student has access to the approved scribing software only not allow the student to use word predictive software or functions not allow students to access dictionary functions in examinations where a dictionary is not allowed not allow the student to access the internet during the examination. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> only use the approved computer and scribing software as required during their external assessment. Any use of other programs, files or data constitutes a breach of VCAA rules and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary procedures not access the internet during the external assessment not use word predictive software or functions during the external assessment only use the electronic dictionary in examinations where a dictionary is allowed. |

If the use of a scribe or electronic scribe is approved, extra working time at a rate of ten minutes per hour of writing time will be approved.

Clarifiers

The function of a clarifier is to clarify words contained within examination/test questions. The appointed clarifier may work with the student during any practice examinations.

Clarification can occur during reading and writing time.

| For students with a language disorder, clarification is restricted to | For students who are deaf or hard of hearing, clarification is restricted to |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> definition of one or more words in a question. However, the clarifier must not define any words or terms that are 'study specific' or subject-related provision of alternative words to those words in the question. Again, the clarifier must not offer alternatives for 'study specific' words or terms. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> definition of one or more words in a question. However the clarifier must not define any words or terms that are 'study specific' or subject-related provision of alternative words to those words in the question. Again, the clarifier must not offer alternatives for 'study specific' words or terms breaking complex sentences down into more manageable parts. |

The student and the clarifier are permitted to write the clarification on the examination question/task book.

Discussion about answers, or prompting, must not occur.

Strict conditions apply for the use of a clarifier in any VCE external assessment. If a student is granted permission by the VCAA to use a clarifier, their school must ensure a copy of the clarifier instruction document (available on VASS) relevant to the impairment/disorder is given to the supervisor and the clarifier. It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the instructions are followed.

The supervisor, in addition to the clarifier, must be present in the examination room and monitor all interactions between the clarifier and the student.

If the use of a clarifier is approved, extra working time at a rate of ten minutes per hour of writing time will be approved.

Auslan interpreters

A person appointed as an interpreter should:

- be fluent in both English and Auslan
- have a familiarity with the subject matter being examined
- have patience and sensitivity to the student's requirements
- remain impartial and objective and respect confidentiality.

The role of the interpreter is to facilitate communication between the student and the supervisor, or between the supervisor, the student, and the reader, scribe and/or clarifier. The interpreter must sign everything that is spoken and voice everything that is signed so that the student is able to participate fully and equally in the test/examination.

Interpreters cannot add or omit information or modify the original message. Interpreters cannot assist the student with their work, including advising or prompting for answers.

Alternative format examination papers

Alternative format examination papers and materials can include enlarged print, electronic text and Braille.

Students with vision impairment may be eligible to apply for an exemption from the GAT because Braille and some other alternative format papers are unavailable for that external assessment.

Alternative examination venues

Only in exceptional circumstances will the VCAA approve for a student to sit an external assessment at an alternative venue, for example, at home or in hospital. Such circumstances would include cases of infectious disease or serious physical or psychological incapacity.

All applications must be supported with a specific medical recommendation. Schools should contact VCAA Special Provision for advice before seeking this arrangement.

3.7 Special Provision categories, evidence requirements and appropriate provisions

Students are eligible for Special Examination Arrangements if it can be demonstrated that their capacity to access a VCE external assessment is impaired due to one or more of the following.

Mental health conditions

Definition

The VCAA has adopted the following operational definition of a mental health condition for the purpose of assessing Special Examination Arrangements applications:

A mental health condition is a disorder or illness that affects a student's thought processes, judgement, perception of reality, or emotional and social wellbeing. The symptoms significantly impact on a student's cognitive functioning. The current presenting symptoms must be supported by evidence from a range of sources including a student's history, school observations and appropriate health professionals.

Evidence requirements

An application for Special Examination Arrangements for a mental health condition must be substantiated with evidence from the primary treating health professional working within a relevant area of mental health, who has made a comprehensive assessment of the student, seen the student recently for their condition, and is not related to them.

The professional evidence must be completed in the year of the application and be signed and dated by the treating professional, and contain the following details:

- clinical assessments, diagnosis (if available), date of diagnosis
- consultation history, presenting symptoms
- treatment period and plan (if available)
- description of severity; the impact of the student's mental health condition on learning and assessment
- the school-based evidence – detailing the history of special provisions approved by the school over the period of the condition.

The VCAA reserves the right to request additional evidence, if necessary.

Appropriate provisions

The overwhelming consensus among professionals who work with students with mental health conditions is that in most circumstances rest breaks are considered the most appropriate provision to manage symptoms that significantly impact on cognitive functioning.

Mental health conditions impact directly on mood, thinking and behaviour and, in an examination environment, may impact on a student's ability to concentrate.

Rest breaks provide students with an opportunity to use taught techniques to manage their thoughts, emotions and feelings.

An application for the use of a separate room will only be considered where strongly supported by appropriate professional and school-based evidence.

| Condition | Possible difficulties under test conditions | Possible arrangements |
|--|---|---|
| Anxiety disorders | Concentration difficulties, anxiety preventing performance in group situations | Rest breaks, permission to take medication, separate room |
| Attention-deficit and disruptive behaviour disorders | Concentration and difficulty with impulse control | Rest breaks, permission to take medication, separate room |
| Eating disorder (Anorexia nervosa, Bulimia nervosa) | Fatigue, concentration difficulties, need to accommodate eating plans | Rest breaks, permission to take medication, separate room |
| Depression | Concentration difficulties, difficulties remembering and making decisions, fatigue and tiredness | Rest breaks |
| Bipolar disorder | Fatigue, restlessness, irritability, disorganised behaviour, difficulty with memory and concentration | Rest breaks, separate room, extra working time |
| Schizophrenia | Memory loss, mental confusion, slowness in activity, fatigue | Rest breaks, extra working time, separate room |
| Obsessive Compulsive Disorder | Recurrent unwanted thoughts and/or repetitive behaviours | Rest breaks |

Requests for extra working time

Requests for extra working time must be accompanied by compelling evidence from the treating health professional and the school that demonstrates significant impact on a student's executive functioning and a decline in academic performance. The evidence may include:

- the results of any psychological testing previously administered, such as Conners 3, Behaviour Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF – prior to 2018 or BRIEF2), NEPSY II: A Developmental Neuropsychological Assessment, second edition
- a health professional statement outlining the symptoms and why extra writing time is required
- school-based evidence that demonstrates a decline in the student's performance as a result of the condition. This may include the student's work before and after the onset of the mental health condition
- school observations and history of other provisions (namely rest breaks) being trialled unsuccessfully.

Schools are encouraged to contact VCAA Special Provision to discuss specific student cases before applying for extra working time.

Health impairment or physical disability

Evidence requirements

An application for Special Examination Arrangements based on either health impairment or a physical disability must be substantiated with evidence from an appropriate health professional who has treated the student for the condition.

Professional evidence must be completed in the year of the application, be signed and dated by the treating professional, and contain the following details:

- a diagnosis
- the date of diagnosis
- a brief history
- comments on the how the illness or condition would impact on the student's day-to-day functioning in the classroom and learning
- comments on the likely effect of the illness or condition on the student's capacity to complete VCE external assessments
- the school-based evidence – detailing the history of special provisions approved by the school over the period of the condition.

The VCAA reserves the right to request additional evidence, if deemed necessary.

Appropriate provisions

Please note the following:

- An application for the use of a separate room will only be considered where strongly supported by appropriate professional evidence.
- If the application is for extra working time, a scribe or the use of computer and/or assistive technology, students will be required to complete the required essays as outlined in Written Expression – requests for extra working time, computer or scribe and/or assistive technology.

| Condition | Possible difficulties under test conditions | Possible arrangements |
|---|--|--|
| Autism spectrum disorder | Concentration difficulties | Rest breaks, separate room, permission to leave examination room under supervision |
| Back injury/chronic pain | Pain and/or discomfort due to injury, problems with prolonged sitting | Rest breaks, permission to take medication, permission to stand and stretch |
| Crohn's disease | Pain and/or discomfort | Rest breaks, permission to leave room under supervision |
| Chronic fatigue syndrome (for example, post-viral fatigue syndrome), myalgic encephalomyelitis, glandular fever | Tiredness/inability to concentrate due to illness | Rest breaks, permission to take medication |
| Diabetes | Need to check blood sugar levels | Permission to take food and/or drink into the examination, permission to take medication, permission to leave examination room under supervision, rest breaks |
| Epilepsy | May suffer from epileptic seizure during examinations | Permission to take medication, separate room |
| Hand/wrist/arm/shoulder injury | Difficulty writing due to pain or discomfort in the hand and/or arm, excessive fatigue in the hand | Rest breaks, extra working time, a computer or a scribe |
| Acquired brain injuries | Mental processing difficulty or slowness | Rest breaks, permission to take medication |
| Pregnancy or early infant care | In hospital for birth, breastfeeding | Rest breaks, feeding breaks, separate room, hospital supervision |
| Muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, etc. | Muscle weakness, restrictive use of limbs, communication difficulties | Permission to stand and/or stretch, permission to take medication, separate room, extra working time, computer, assistive technology, use of an scribe/aide, alternative examination paper |

Specific learning disorders

Definition

The VCAA has adopted the following operational definition of a specific learning disorder for the purpose of assessing Special Examination Arrangements applications.

A specific learning disorder is a neurodevelopmental disorder with a biological origin. Students with this disorder possess specific cognitive processing deficits that cause difficulties with learning and using academic skills and manifest in persistent problems with one or more of the following:

- inaccurate or slow and effortful word reading
- understanding the meaning of what is read
- spelling
- written expression
- mastering number sense, number facts or calculations
- mathematical reasoning.

The affected academic skills are substantially and quantifiably below those expected for the student's grade and/or cause significant interference with academic performance. The learning difficulties are not

better accounted for by intellectual disabilities, hearing or vision disorders, motor impairment, mental health disorders or external factors such as environmental disadvantage, chronic absenteeism or lack of appropriate educational experience.

The diagnosis of a learning disorder must be based on the integration of comprehensive clinical evidence from a range of sources including a student's history (developmental, medical, family and educational) and appropriate diagnostic assessment results.

Schools are encouraged to contact VCAA Special Provisions to discuss individual applications.

Evidence requirements

The VCAA has assessed and approved the following tests for determining eligibility for Special Examination Arrangements.

Cognitive Assessment (IQ tests)

A cognitive assessment, administered no earlier than the student's last year of primary schooling (Year 6), is a mandatory requirement. The test must be administered by a registered psychologist. The VCAA will accept any of the following cognitive assessments for determining eligibility for Special Examination Arrangements:

- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) V or IV
- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS) IV
- Woodcock Johnson (WJ) IV or III
- Stanford Binet V or IV (if test administered in 2017 or earlier).

A copy of the cognitive assessment report administered by an appropriately qualified professional registered by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) is required. The report should include subtest scaled scores, along with an interpretation of assessment results.

Impairment in reading – requests for extra working time, reader and/or assistive technology

The VCAA has adopted the following criteria to determine the suitability of tests to measure reading ability. The test should be:

- silent-reading comprehension (this reflects the silent reading conditions of an examination)
- timed
- published with Australian norms.

The VCAA must be able to access the test and its normative data.

The purpose of such a reading test is to establish if a student's reading level is significantly below what is expected of an average Year 12 student.

The current prescribed reading test is the Progressive Achievement Test in Reading (PAT-R), published by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). The VCAA will accept results from Comprehension Booklet 10 (edition 4 or 5).

Evidence of a student's reading comprehension skills must be based on a test administered no earlier than the year the student commences the VCE or Term 4 of the year prior.

The results of the York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC) or other reading tests administered, if available, can be submitted by schools as additional evidence.

Impairment in written expression – requests for extra working time, use of computer, scribe and/or assistive technology

The VCAA completes an assessment of a student's level of written expression involving an analysis of several variables, including the following:

- thought and content
- structure and organisation
- expression and/or language
- handwriting
- productivity
- spelling
- punctuation.

Requests for extra working time require Essays One and Two with the completed Essay cover sheets as outlined in the following sections.

Requests for the use of a computer, assistive technology or a scribe require Essays One, Two and Three with the completed Essay cover sheets as outlined in the following sections.

Essay One

The topic for this essay is supplied by the VCAA and must be completed according to the following conditions:

- strictly five minutes' reading time and 30 minutes' writing time are to be provided
- no special provisions are to be used for this essay.

Essay Two

This essay should be a copy of a handwritten English or Literature essay from an assessment that the student has recently completed (within six months) at school. It must have been for either a School-based Assessment or a school examination, have had a writing time of at least one hour with Special Provision permitted.

Essay Two must have been marked with teacher comments and observations, and the teacher's grading should be indicated.

The essay topic, the time taken for this essay, the date of the assessment and details of any approved Special Provision used by the student should be recorded on the Essay Two Cover Sheet.

The essay must not be a short-answer response or have been written in another language. If the student is completing a Unit 3–4 sequence that does not involve extended responses or essays, the VCAA will accept an English examination or similar assessment from Term 4 of the year prior.

Essay Three (typed or using assistive technology or scribed)

The topic for this essay will be supplied by the VCAA and must be completed according to the following conditions:

- if typed or using assistive technology, strictly five minutes' reading time and 30 minutes' typing time should be provided
- if scribed, strictly five minutes' reading time and 35 minutes' scribing time should be provided
- apart from the computer and/or assistive technology or use of a scribe, no additional special provisions (for example, extra time) should be used for this essay.

Essay administration

Essay Cover Sheets have further details of the specific requirements for administering the essays.

Essays should be completed at school and supervised by school staff. The supervising teacher must remain with the student until the task is completed to observe the student and ensure that the time restrictions are observed.

All essays are to be completed under examination conditions (no assistance or prompting from the supervising teacher). The supervising teacher should complete all relevant information on the essay cover sheet, including if the essay and result is reflective of the student's normal working level.

Mathematics – requests for extra working time, use of computer and/or assistive technology

The following evidence is required in support of applications for Special Examination Arrangements for an impairment in mathematics or requests for extra writing time for mathematics examinations on the basis of a deficit in written expression:

- examples of mathematics assessments completed at school by the student – with and/or without special provisions, detailing any provisions utilised by the student and time taken
- study specific teacher observations of student difficulties during assessments and in class.

Appropriate provisions

| Impairment in Reading (includes Dyslexia) | Impairment in Written Expression | Impairment in Mathematics (includes Dyscalculia) |
|---|--|--|
| Extra working time Reader Use of assistive technology (e.g. text to voice software, electronic readers) | Extra working time Use of a computer Permission to use a scribe Use of assistive technology (e.g. voice to text software) | Extra working time Use of a computer Use of assistive technology |

A student may be approved extra working time on the basis of:

- an impairment in reading (10 minutes per hour)
- an impairment in written expression (10 minutes per hour) and/or
- an impairment in mathematics (10 minutes per hour).

The VCAA will consider requests for additional time in excess of 10 minutes per hour for any of the above impairments where it can be clearly demonstrated, through professional and/or school-based evidence, that there is a compelling need for the additional time.

Extra working time approved by the VCAA is to be used in addition to the 'scheduled writing time' of the VCE external assessment.

A student with a severe reading disability may be approved the use of a reader or electronic reader.

Language disorder

Definition

The VCAA has adopted the following operational definition of a language disorder for the purpose of assessing Special Examination Arrangements applications:

Language Disorder is a neurodevelopmental disorder impacting on a student's acquisition and use of language across a range of modalities (i.e. spoken, written, sign language). Difficulties are evident in one or more of the following:

- reduced vocabulary – the student struggles with understanding and expression of words
- limited sentence structure – the student struggles to formulate sentences that are both structurally sound and convey meaning
- impairments in discourse – the student struggles with providing adequate information, sequencing it appropriately and conveying intended meaning in connected speech.

The onset of difficulties is evident in a student's early language development. It is necessary to determine whether these difficulties cannot be better attributed to hearing or another sensory impairment, motor dysfunction and another medical or neurological condition. Equally it is important to consider whether the language difficulties are not better explained by intellectual disability or global developmental delay.

The difficulties identified would need to be substantially and quantifiably below those for the student's grade level and would cause significant interference with academic performance.

The diagnosis of a Language Disorder needs to have a solid basis in comprehensive clinical evidence from a range of sources including a student's history (developmental, medical, familial and educational) in addition to appropriate diagnostic assessment results.

Schools are encouraged to contact VCAA Special Provision to discuss individual cases, if necessary.

Evidence requirements

The following evidence is required to support all applications for Special Examination Arrangements for a student with a language disorder.

Cognitive Assessment (IQ tests) (mandatory requirement)

A cognitive assessment, administered no earlier than the student's last year of primary schooling, (Year 6), is a mandatory requirement. The test must be administered by a registered psychologist. The VCAA will accept any of the following cognitive assessments for determining eligibility for Special Examination Arrangements:

- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) V or IV
- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS) IV
- Woodcock Johnson (WJ) IV or III
- Stanford Binet V or IV (if test administered in 2017 or earlier).

A copy of the cognitive assessment report administered by an appropriately qualified professional registered by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) is required. The report should include subtest scaled scores, along with an interpretation of assessment results.

Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF) fifth-edition assessment (mandatory requirement) administered in either the year the student commences the VCE or in Term 4 of the year prior.

Progressive Achievement Test in Reading (edition 4 or 5) Test Booklet 10 (mandatory requirement); administered no earlier than the year the student commences the VCE or Term 4 of the year prior.

Requests for extra working time require:

- Essays One and Two with the completed Essay cover sheets

Requests for the use of a computer, a scribe or assistive technology require:

- Essays One, Two and Three with the completed Essay cover sheets

Requests for use of a clarifier require:

- Essays One and Two with the completed Essay cover sheets
- information outlining the history of the student's use of and need for a clarifier.

Appropriate provisions

| Language Disorder (possible provisions based on functional impact on the student) |
|---|
| Extra working time |
| Reader |
| Clarifier |
| Use of assistive technology (such as text to voice software, electronic reader) |

The VCAA will consider requests for additional time in excess of 10 minutes per hour for a student with a language disorder where it can be clearly demonstrated, through professional and/or school-based evidence, that there is a compelling need for the additional time.

Extra working time approved by the VCAA is to be used in addition to the 'scheduled writing time' of the VCE external assessment.

Motor coordination disorders

Definition

The VCAA has adopted the following operational definition of a motor coordination disorder for the purpose of assessing Special Examination Arrangements applications:

Students with a Motor Coordination Disorder possess specific motor skill deficits which can cause significant difficulties with slowness and/or inaccuracy of handwriting.

The diagnosis of a Motor Coordination Disorder must be supported by evidence from a range of sources including a student's history, school observations and appropriate diagnostic assessment results from a qualified individual.

The motor skills deficits are not better explained by intellectual disability, visual impairment or are attributable to a neurological condition affecting movement (e.g., cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, degenerative disorder – these conditions should be applied for under the Physical Disability category).

Evidence requirements

One of the below Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH) assessments administered no earlier than the student's final year of primary schooling (i.e. Grade 6).

- DASH 9–16 years, Pearson, 2007
- DASH 17 years, Pearson, 2010.

A copy of the motor coordination report administered by an appropriately qualified professional registered by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) must be attached.

Requests for additional working time require Essays One and Two with completed VCAA prescribed cover sheets.

Requests for the use of a computer, a scribe and/or assistive technology require Essays One, Two and Three with completed VCAA prescribed cover sheets.

While not mandatory, the VCAA will consider other motor coordination assessments, in addition to school observations, as supplementary evidence where there is a request for extra working time, use of a computer, scribe and/or assistive technology on the basis of handwriting difficulties. Examples include:

- The Handwriting Speed Test, Wallen, Bonney and Lennox, 2006
- The Beery Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual Motor Integration, sixth edition (Beery VMI), Pearson, 2010.

Appropriate provisions

| Motor Coordination Disorder (possible provisions based on functional impact on the student) |
|---|
| Rest breaks |
| Extra working time |
| Use of a computer |
| Permission to use a scribe |
| Use of assistive technology, such as voice-to-text software |

Deaf and hard of hearing

Evidence requirements

The VCAA requires the following evidence to support an application for Special Examination Arrangements for a student who is deaf or hard of hearing:

- a recent unaided audiogram and report from a qualified practitioner (for example, an ear, nose and throat specialist or audiologist) indicating a bilateral sensorineural hearing loss and/or conductive hearing loss that is moderate, severe or profound
- a support statement with comments and recommendations from a specialist teacher, along with confirmation of the student's enrolment in either the Visiting Teacher Service or a deaf facility or school.

If this evidence is not available, the VCAA may contact the student's school to request other educational and testing information.

Appropriate provisions

| Deaf and hard of hearing (possible provisions based on functional impact on the student) |
|--|
| Extra working time |
| Use of a clarifier |
| Microlink assistive technology |
| Access to audio-video stimulus (e.g. English as an Additional Language written examination Listening to texts section) |

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may be eligible for a clarifier to assist with their external assessments. A request for a clarifier for a student who is deaf or hard of hearing is unlikely to be approved if the student:

- does not regularly use a clarifier or
- is not enrolled with the Visiting Teacher Service or a deaf and hard of hearing facility or school.

It is the school's responsibility to plan appropriate seating arrangements in an external assessment so a student who is deaf or hard of hearing can clearly see the chief supervisor and follow any communications and messages during an external assessment. If specific technological devices, such as Microlink assistive technology, are required, these should be requested in the application.

Vision impairment

Evidence requirements

The VCAA requires the following evidence to support an application for Special Examination Arrangements for a student with vision impairment:

- evidence of a moderate or severe vision impairment from either an ophthalmologist or the Educational Vision Assessment Clinic (EVAC)
- a supporting statement with comments and recommendations from a specialist teacher, along with confirmation of the student's enrolment with the Visiting Teacher Service.

If this evidence is not available, the VCAA may contact the student's school to request other educational and testing information.

If an alternative format examination paper is required (for example, large print, Braille, electronic examination), a specific request with details of font type, font sizes, format and any other recommendations from specialists should be clearly outlined for each external assessment in the application.

Appropriate provisions

| Vision impairment (possible provisions based on functional impact on the student) |
|---|
| Alternative format examination |
| Extra working time |
| Rest breaks |
| Use of a computer |
| Permission to use a scribe |
| Permission to use a reader |
| Use of assistive technology |

4 Derived Examination Scores

Students who are ill or affected by other personal circumstances at the time of a VCE external assessment and whose result is unlikely to be a fair or accurate indication of their learning or achievement in the study may apply for a DES. If their application is approved, a Derived Examination Score (DES) will be calculated by the VCAA.

The purpose of a DES is to ensure that a student's final result for an external assessment reflects as accurately as possible the level of achievement that would be expected based on the learning and achievement the student has demonstrated in the study over the year.

A DES should not be used to compensate for learning or achievement that has not been possible because of long-term illness or other ongoing conditions that have been present over the year. If an illness or personal circumstance has been so severe that a student has not been coping with the demands of the VCE, Compassionate Late Withdrawal or Interrupted Studies status should be considered.

Students who experience the onset of an illness or the occurrence of an injury or personal trauma around an assessment period should discuss, with their VCE coordinator, a school application for Emergency Special Examination Arrangements, which may help them sit their VCE external assessments.

A DES is not available for the GAT, Music Style and Composition Externally-assessed Task or Extended Investigation Externally-assessed Task written report.

4.1 Eligibility for a DES

Students are eligible for a DES if they meet all of the following criteria:

- They have completed the course of study leading to the external assessment, and have a result for at least one other graded assessment in the same study.
- They experience the onset of an illness or the occurrence of an injury, personal trauma or serious intervening event in the period before or during a VCE external assessment, that has either prevented them from attending the external assessment or significantly affected their performance during the external assessment.
- They provide independent professional written evidence that demonstrates the illness, injury, personal trauma or serious intervening event has affected their performance in the external assessment or has prevented them from attending the external assessment.

A 'personal trauma' may include, but is not limited to, the death or serious illness or an accident involving a family member, or family break-up.

A 'serious intervening event' may include, but is not limited to, an accident on the way to or at an examination, attendance at a funeral of a family member or other person of close relationship, or the required attendance at a court proceeding. Students cannot submit an application on the basis of:

- unfamiliarity with the English language
- teacher absence or other teacher-related difficulties
- long-term or chronic condition or illness
- matters that could have been avoided by the student, for example misreading the examination timetable or instructions, or matters related to school discipline
- matters of the student's own choosing, such as involvement in social events, sporting or training activities, school events or volunteer work.

4.2 Evidence required for a DES application

The student must provide evidence that demonstrates one of the following:

- they were unable to perform on the external assessment at a level that accurately reflects their expected level of achievement in the study
- they were prevented from attending the external assessment.

Applications on the grounds of illness or injury must be substantiated with evidence from an independent health professional.

Applications on the grounds of personal trauma must be substantiated with evidence from one of the following:

- an independent health professional
- a social worker or member of the clergy.

Applications on the grounds of a serious intervening event must be substantiated with independent evidence from one of the following:

- an independent health professional
- a social worker or a member of the clergy
- a police officer, a solicitor or a funeral parlour operator.

In all circumstances, the person providing the evidence must have specific knowledge of the illness, injury, personal trauma or serious intervening event; must not be related to or have a close personal relationship with the student; and must have been professionally associated with the student's situation.

Evidence from school-based personnel must be supported by appropriate medical or professional evidence. The following conditions apply to each external assessment included in a DES application:

- If the student attended the external assessment, the person providing the evidence must have examined or treated the student or have been consulted by the student in a timely period before or after the external assessment. It is expected that a timely consultation would occur in the period from two days before the external assessment to one day after the external assessment.
- If the student did not attend the external assessment, the person providing the evidence must have examined or treated the student or have been consulted by the student in a timely period as close as possible to the day before the external assessment or on the same day as the external assessment. In the case of illness or injury, there must be a specific written recommendation from an independent health professional recommending non-attendance at the external assessment. In the case of a personal trauma or serious intervening event, there must be written evidence from an appropriate professional confirming the reason why the student was unable to attend an external assessment.

4.3 How to make an application

Students who believe that they are eligible for a DES should first seek advice from their school. The primary responsibility for submitting an application that meets all eligibility criteria rests with the student. The VCAA will determine the student's eligibility for a DES from the supporting evidence supplied by the student.

What the student must do

The application and the collection of supporting evidence is the responsibility of the student. The student must ensure that:

- they submit an application for each of the external assessments for which they are seeking a DES
- all required sections of the application are completed by them
- statements from the individuals providing the independent evidence are completed personally
- statements from other sources are completed as applicable
- the application is forwarded to the VCAA within seven days of the student's last external assessment in the relevant assessment period
- all the information provided is true and accurate
- they (or others known to them) have not completed or altered any information in the application
- their correct home address is registered with the school.

What the chief supervisor must do

The chief supervisor must complete Section B of the Individual Application for each written examination attended by the student.

What the VCE coordinator or appropriate school staff member must do

The VCE Coordinator and/or the relevant school staff member who communicated with the student immediately before and/or on the day of any external assessment for which they are seeking a DES must complete Section B of the Individual Application.

What the independent health professional must do

Independent health professionals must complete Section C1 of the Individual Application. The evidence given by the independent health professional is of paramount importance, and must be current and applicable to each external assessment for which an application is being made. If a student does not attend an external assessment, there must be a definitive statement from an independent health professional recommending non-attendance at that external assessment. Refer to '4.2 Evidence required for a DES application' for timeliness of consultations.

The independent health professional must provide contact details so that if the VCAA considers it necessary, it is able to seek additional information and/or evidence on the effect of the event or condition on the student's ability to perform.

What other appropriate professionals must do (if applicable)

Other appropriate professionals, such as social workers, clergy, police officers, solicitors or funeral parlour operators must complete the appropriate section of the Individual Application.

They must also provide contact details so that if the VCAA considers it necessary, it is able to seek additional information and/or evidence on the effect of the event or condition on the student's ability to perform.

What the principal or principal's delegate must do

Specifically, the principal should:

- determine whether the application has merit
- determine whether it was the student's intention to undertake the external assessment
- provide any additional information relating to the authenticity of the application (for example, confirm attendance or illness, or relationship to a deceased friend or family member). Schools may include a copy of a student's attendance record or an indication of the number of days absent
- include their endorsement, or otherwise, based on available information for each external assessment for which a DES is being sought
- ensure the VCE coordinator completes Section B of the Individual Application where necessary
- complete and submit Section D of the Individual Application.

Submitting the application

Students should complete and submit their section of the application. Their home school principal will consider the application and make a recommendation to the VCAA. If circumstances are of an exceptionally private and sensitive nature, students may apply directly to the VCAA. Students will still be required to provide evidence that meets the eligibility requirements. The VCAA reserves the right to contact the school when statements involving the school need to be verified.

Closing date for applications

The closing date for submitting a DES application for each VCE examination is listed at the end of each student's individual Student Examination/Assessment Timetable.

4.4 Attendance at VCE external assessments

Students are advised to attend every external assessment if at all possible. Students should not miss an external assessment merely because they do not feel able to do their best. The DES is designed for students who have completed the course leading to the external assessment, but have performed below expectations or cannot attend due to adverse circumstances. The VCAA does not expect a student to attend an external assessment against specific written medical advice.

If a student is ill, but able to attend the external assessment, they should inform their VCE coordinator and/or chief supervisor of their condition as soon as possible before or during the external assessment.

Non-attendance at external assessments

If a student cannot attend an external assessment, it is imperative that they notify their principal or VCE coordinator immediately. A student who does not attend an external assessment, and whose application is not approved, will receive 'NA' for the external assessment.

4.5 Assessing the application

All applications will be assessed by a panel, based on the evidence presented and any additional information obtained by the VCAA. A decision will be determined for each of the external assessments included in the application. The student and their school will both be notified of the outcome of the student's application via email, which is also recorded on VASS.

For each approved application for a specific external assessment, the VCAA will:

- calculate a range of possible DES scores, which will be calculated statistically from the student's other assessments, including moderated School-based Assessments, GAT scores, other examination scores if applicable, and indicative grades provided by the school
- record the DES as the final score if the highest possible DES score is greater than the achieved external assessment score
- use this final score to determine the grade for the external assessment
- use this final score to calculate the study score
- report the calculated study score on the student's Statement of Results
- report this study score to VTAC for the calculation of the Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR).

For each application for a specific external assessment that is not approved, the VCAA will provide reasons why the application was not successful.

If an application is not approved, the VCAA will allow the student the opportunity to submit a second application if it:

- provides additional evidence of the student's condition or circumstances relevant to the external assessment that materially adds to the evidence submitted with the original application
- is received at the VCAA no later than seven days from the date of the VCAA decision email.

4.6 Group applications

The principal of the home school may apply for a DES for a group of students for a particular external assessment or all external assessments for the student population. This group may be all students enrolled in a particular study at the school, or a class group, or any other group in which each member has been affected by a particular event.

Group applications are usually related to an event that has had a substantial effect on a student group (for example, the death of a fellow student or a teacher). If the event has affected a particular external assessment, the effect will be considered as restricted to that external assessment. The events occurring around one external assessment cannot necessarily be considered to have an effect on a student, or students, for another external assessment. Group applications would also be appropriate if there is an exceptional circumstance that affects a school community, such as a natural disaster or pandemic.

A group application does not preclude a student from submitting an individual application for a DES for each specified external assessment.

If group applications are made, the principal must identify the level of effect on each student, that is, how the incident affected the group and/or specific individuals within the group. It is strongly recommended that the school principal contacts VCAA Special Provision for advice prior to submitting a group DES application.

5 How is a DES calculated?

The calculation for the DES uses all other available scores for the student in the affected study and the indicative grade for any external assessments provided by the school and the GAT component scores. For each approved application for a specific external assessment, the VCAA will calculate a range of possible DES scores, which will be calculated statistically from the student's other assessments, including:

- moderated School-based Assessments
- GAT component scores
- other external assessment scores if applicable
- indicative grades provided by the school.

The contribution made by the graded assessments, the indicative grade and the GAT component scores is determined by analysis of the comparison of this data with the final score for external assessment for all students who have not applied for a DES. For all external assessment this analysis indicates that the two graded assessment scores provide the greatest contribution to all the predictors.

If a student is eligible for a DES and the highest of the predictors is greater than the achieved external assessment score, the highest predictor is chosen as the final score for the student in the relevant external assessment.

Index

A

Aboriginal students 56
 Accounting 100
 adult students 9
 Advanced Standing study 7
 Advice for Teachers 79
 Agricultural and Horticultural Studies 100
 Algorithmics 100
 Ancient History 101
 anomalous grades check 93–4
 Applied Computing 6
 Applied Computing Data Analytics 100
 Applied Computing Software Development 100
 Arabic 103
 Armenian 104
 Art 100
 assessing schools 36
 assessment
 external assessment 90–9
 GAT 106–9
 rules 70
 satisfactory completion of units 71–4
 School-based Assessment 75–89
 ATAR increment 7
 attendance rules 70
 Audit Committee (VCAA) 53
 audits 49–50
 Auslan 104
 Australian and Global Politics 5, 102
 Australian History 101
 Australian Tertiary Admission Rank 3, 7, 42

B

Baccalaureate, *see* International Baccalaureate, VCE (Baccalaureate)
 Biology 100
 Bosnian 104
 breaches of rules 95–6
 Bridging English as an Additional Language 3, 5, 20, 55
 Business (VCE VET) 105
 Business Management 100

C

Chemistry 100
 Chin Hakha 104
 Chinese First Language 6, 60, 103
 Chinese Language, Culture and Society 2, 6, 60, 104
 Chinese Second Language 6, 58, 60, 103
 Chinese Second Language Advanced 6, 58, 60, 103
 Chinese studies 60
 Classical Greek 103
 Classical Hebrew 103

Classical Studies 100
 Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Languages (CCAFL), *see* individual languages
 Community Services (VCE VET) 105
 Compassionate Late Withdrawal 68
 Composition, Music Style and 102
 Computing 6, 100
 Creative and Digital Media (VCE VET) 105
 Croatian 104

D

damaged work 80
 Dance (VCE) 100
 Dance (VCE VET) 105
 data accuracy 40–1
 data amendment 38–9
 Data Analytics 100
 data submission 35–6
 dates, *see* Important Administrative Dates
 deaf or hard of hearing 56–7
 death of a student 37
 Derived Examination Score (DES) 106–7, 147
 exemption from 107–8
 interrupted studies & 66
 Drama 100
 Dutch 104

E

Early Years–10 Curriculum and Assessment Committee (VCAA) 52
 Economics 101
 Engineering Studies (VCE VET) 105
 English 3, 101
 English as an Additional Language 3, 101
 exceptional circumstances & 56
 school-based arrangements for 57
 students from India 56
 students from Singapore 56
 students who are deaf or hard of hearing 56–7
 English group 3–5
 English Language 3, 101
 enrolment 54–70
 Aboriginal students 56
 assessment rules 70
 atypical 62–4
 Chinese Language, Culture and Society 60
 Compassionate Late Withdrawal 68
 consent for disclosure 54
 EAL status 55–6
 exchange students in VCAL 65
 fee-paying international students 68–9
 International Baccalaureate 34, 55, 61–2
 Interrupted Studies 66–7
 interstate transfers 63–5
 late VCAL enrolments 65–6
 overseas students 55
 overseas transfers 65
 past results 54

permissions 54
 student declaration 54
 Torres Strait Islander students 56
 transferring during Year 11 63–4
 transferring during Year 12 64–5
 transferring within Victoria 62–3
 VCAL 61
 VCE 55–61
 VCE Modern Languages 60–1
 VCE Second Language Studies 57–60
 VET 61
 withdrawal from study 68
 withdrawal from VCAL 68
 withdrawal from VCE 68
 Year 10 students 62
 enrolment data 51
 Environmental Science 101
 Equine Studies (VCE VET) 105
 equivalent studies 5–6
 examination centres 34, 90
 examinations
 audits 49–50
 observer visits 50
 Executive Committee (VCAA) 52
 Extended Investigation 101
 Extension study 7
 external assessment 90–9
 anomalous grades check 93–4
 Critical Thinking Test 90, 101
 Externally-assessed Tasks 95
 indicative grades for 93–4, 106
 marking of 93–4
 VCAA rules for 92, 95–6
 VCE examinations 90–4

F

fee-paying international students 68–9
 administration fee 69
 refunding fees 69
 fees 69
 Filipino 104
 final results, *see* results
 Food Studies 6, 101
 Foundation English 3
 Freedom of Information 47
 French 103
 Furnishing (VCE VET) 105
 Further Mathematics 94, 101

G

General Achievement Test 106–9
 Compassionate Late Withdrawal & 108
 Derived Examination Score (DES) & 106
 exemption from 107–8
 external assessment & 106
 Interrupted Studies & 108
 interstate arrangements 108

overseas arrangements 108
 purpose of 106
 results from 109, 112
 School-based Assessment & 106
 Special Examination Arrangements & 107
 Statement of Results 109
 VCAL & 108
 VCE VET & 108
 Geography 101
 German 103
 Global Politics 102
 graded assessment 117–18
 Greek 103

H

Health and Human Development 101
 Health (VCE VET) 105
 Hebrew 104
 Higher Education studies 6
 Hindi 104
 History 101
 Home Affairs, Department of 59
 Hospitality (Kitchen Operations) (VCE VET) 105
 Hospitality (VCE VET) 105
 Hungarian 104

I

IB, *see* International Baccalaureate
 Important Administrative Dates 36, 38, 41, 46, 61, 69, 77, 115
 India, students from 56
 indicative grades 93–4
 Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation 104
 Indonesian First Language 6, 103
 Indonesian Second Language 6, 58, 103
 Industry and Enterprise 101
 Information, Digital Media and Technology (VCE VET) 105
 inspecting audio recordings 121
 Inspecting scripts 121
 Integrated Technologies (VCE VET) 105
 International Baccalaureate 34, 55, 61–2, 117
 Interrupted Studies 66–7
 sample program structures 66
 interstate transfers 63–5
 Italian 103

J

Japanese First Language 6, 103
 Japanese Second Language 6, 58, 103

K

Karen 104
 Khmer 104
 Korean First Language 6, 103
 Korean Second Language 6, 58, 103

L

Laboratory Skills (VCE VET) 105
 Languages 6, 103–4, *see also* individual languages
 audit of 49–50
 CCAFL 104
 Latin 103
 Legal Studies 101
 Literature 3, 101
 Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) 23
 lost work 72

M

Macedonian 104
 Maltese 104
 Mathematics
 Further Mathematics 94, 101
 Mathematical Methods 7, 101
 Specialist Mathematics 7, 101
 Media 101
 Music
 Music Industry (Performance) (VCE VET) 105
 Music Industry (Sound Production) (VCE VET) 105
 Music Investigation 102, 104
 Music Performance 102, 104
 Music Style and Composition 93, 95, 102, 114

N

National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) 58
 NHT, *see* Northern Hemisphere Timetable
 non-English-speaking students 55
 Northern Hemisphere Timetable 1, 12–13

O

On Track 34, 54, 62
 Outdoor and Environmental Studies 102
 overseas students 55, 68
 overseas transfers 65

P

partnerships
 assistance for 45
 dissolving of 46
 documenting of 44
 exemption from 45
 forming of 33, 44
 reporting scores 45
 Persian 104
 Philosophy 102
 physical disability 139–40
 Physical Education 102
 Physics 102
 Polish 104
 Portuguese 104
 Post-Results and ATAR Service 121
 PRAS 121
 principals 34

privacy 51
 data security & 47
 Product Design and Technology 102
 providers 32–48
 accredited assessments 40
 accredited curriculum 40
 accuracy of data 37–8, 40–1
 communication from the VCAA 33
 data amendments 38–9
 data submission 35–6
 enrolment data 37–8
 Externally-assessed Tasks 38, 39
 failure to meet obligations to students 43–4
 late fees 38
 missing results 38
 missing scores 38
 obligations to students 39–40
 partnerships 33, 44–6
 principal endorsement 34
 privacy 47
 providing the VCAL 32
 providing the VCE 32
 records disposal 48
 records, maintenance of 46
 results data 37–38
 Results Service password 42
 School-based Assessment 39, 40, 42–3, 44–5
 single study providers 32
 Special Provision, administration of 43
 statistical moderation 44–5
 student data 42, 47
 student numbers 37, 42
 transgender students 41
 VASS 32, 34
 VCAL placements 40
 Psychology 102
 Punjabi 104

Q

qualifications, *see* individual qualifications
 quality assurance 49–50

R

records, *see* student records
 registered training organisations 32–3
 registration of students 54
 Religion and Society 102
 results 110–114
 certified copies 122
 confirmation of Grades 115
 data requests 122
 delivery of 120
 equivalent qualifications 122
 examination score review 122
 GAT results 119
 inspecting audio recordings 121
 inspecting scripts 121

- re-marking published results 122
 - replacement certificates 122
 - reporting graded assessments 118
 - reporting to schools 115–16
 - reporting to students 117–22
 - school access to 115
 - score aggregation 110
 - Statement of Marks 121
 - Statement of Results 117
 - Statement of Study Score 118, 121
 - study scores 110–11
 - VCAL certificate 119
 - VCAL completion of units 119
 - VCAL results 119
 - VCAL Statement of Results 119
 - VCE certificates 117
 - VCE completion of units 117
 - VCE External Assessment Results Service 116
 - VCE Results and ATAR Service 120
 - VET results 120
 - VET Statements of Results 120
 - results data accuracy 37
 - Results Service password 42
 - Review Committees (VCAA) 53
 - Revolutions 101
 - Romanian 104
 - RTOs, *see* registered training organisations
 - rules, *see* VCAA rules
 - Russian 104
- S**
- School-assessed Coursework 75, 79, *see also* School-based Assessment
 - authentication of 75–6
 - School-assessed Tasks 75, 76, 81, *see also* School-based Assessment
 - authentication of 75–6
 - School-based Assessment
 - assessment summary 100–5
 - audit of 50
 - authentication of 75–6
 - breaches of rules 83–4
 - determining initial assessments 77–8
 - integrity of 42
 - investigation of rules breaches 85
 - managing partnerships 44–5
 - partnerships & 78–9
 - rescheduling tasks 77
 - retention of 46
 - rules for authentication of 84
 - scheduling for 77
 - School-assessed Coursework 75, 79
 - School-assessed Tasks 75, 76, 81
 - School-based Assessment Audit 50, 83
 - score amendments 83
 - statistical moderation 44–5
 - student appeals related to 88
 - VCE VET programs 105
 - VCE VET School-assessed Coursework 83
 - schools 32–48
 - accredited assessments 40
 - accredited curriculum 40
 - accuracy of data 40–1
 - assessing schools 36
 - communication from the VCAA 33
 - data accuracy 40–1
 - data amendments 38–9
 - data security 35, 47
 - data submission 3536
 - death of a student 37
 - enrolment data 37–8
 - Externally-assessed Tasks 38, 39
 - failure to meet obligations to students 43–4
 - fee-paying international students 41
 - Freedom of Information requests 47
 - home schools 35
 - late fees 38
 - missing results 38
 - missing scores 38
 - obligations to students 39–40
 - obligations to the VCAA 33–9
 - partnerships 44–6
 - records, maintenance of 46
 - Results Service password 42
 - School-based Assessment 39, 40, 42–3, 44–5
 - single study providers 32
 - Special Provision 43
 - student data 42, 47
 - student numbers 37, 42
 - VASS 32, 34
 - VCAL placements 40
 - score aggregation 110–14
 - calculating VCE study scores 110
 - calculating VCE VET study scores 110
 - external assessments & 114
 - final grades 114
 - Interrupted Studies & 111
 - interstate credit & 111
 - statistical moderation 111–12
 - study scores 110
 - scored assessment 100–5, 106–9
 - second languages 6
 - Senior Secondary Curriculum and Assessment Committee (VCAA) 52
 - Serbian 104
 - Singapore, students from 56
 - Sinhala 104
 - Sociology 102
 - Software Development 100
 - Spanish 103
 - Special Examination Arrangements, *see* Special Provision
 - eligibility for 125
 - management of 124–5

- Specialist Mathematics 7, 101
 - Special Provision 123–52, *see also* Special Examination Arrangements
 - administration of 43
 - classroom learning & 125–8
 - eligibility for 123–4
 - management of students requiring 124–5
 - School-based Assessment & 125–7
 - types of 123
 - VCAL & 123–5
 - VCE & 123–5
 - Sport and Recreation (VCE VET) 105
 - Statement of Marks 121
 - Statement of Study Score 118, 121
 - statistical moderation 111–12
 - School-based Assessment 44–5
 - small-group partnerships & 45
 - transferring students 112–13
 - student data 51
 - student enrolment, *see* enrolment
 - Student Personal Details form 54
 - student records
 - access to 47, 51
 - alteration of student assessment 99
 - disposal of 48
 - Freedom of Information & 47
 - maintenance of 48
 - provision of 51
 - security of 47
 - storage of 47
 - student addresses 41
 - Studio Arts 102
 - Swedish 104
 - Systems Engineering 102
- T**
- Tamil 104
 - Texts and Traditions 102
 - Theatre Studies 102
 - Themed VCAL 21–2
 - Torres Strait Islander students 56
 - transferring from interstate 63–5
 - transferring from overseas 65
 - transgender students 41
 - Turkish 104
- V**
- VASS
 - submission of data 35–6
 - VASS users 34–5
 - VCAA rules
 - examinations 92
 - external assessments 95–6
 - rules breaches 95
 - School-based Assessment 88–9
 - VCAL, *see* Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning
 - VCE – Baccalaureate 7–8
 - VCE Data Service 115
 - VCE English group 3–5
 - VCE examinations
 - early starts 92
 - eligibility to undertake 90
 - examination periods 91–2
 - inspecting audio recordings 121
 - Inspecting scripts 121
 - late arrivals 92
 - student identification requirements for 92
 - three examinations in one day 91
 - timetable clashes 92
 - VCAA rules 92
 - VCE External Assessment Results Service 116
 - VCE Languages 49–50
 - VCE results 117–18
 - VCE Results and ATAR Service 120
 - VCE VET, *see* Vocational Education and Training
 - VCE VET School-assessed Coursework 83
 - VCE written examinations, *see* VCE examinations
 - VET Dance 105
 - VET units 29–30
 - Victorian Assessment Software System, *see* VASS
 - Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning 14–24
 - attendance 70
 - award levels 14–15
 - course requirements 18–19
 - credit from interstate studies 22
 - credit from the VCE 22
 - curriculum options 20–1
 - eligibility for award of 18–19
 - entry to 17
 - General Education 19
 - General Education certificates 19
 - pathways 15
 - program components 16–17
 - quality assurance 50
 - strands 16
 - student transfer 22
 - Themed VCAL 21–2
 - units 16–17
 - VCAL in the VCE 2
 - VCE credits in 19
 - Victorian Certificate of Education 1–13
 - adult students 9
 - ATAR increment 7
 - attendance 70
 - atypical programs 8
 - EAL status 55–6
 - eligibility for the award 2–4
 - English requirement 3–5
 - enrolment in 55–61
 - entry to 2–3
 - equivalent studies 5–6
 - Extension study 7
 - program components 1
 - recognition of Higher Education studies 6
 - recognition of VCE VET programs 6, 30

- repeating VCE units 8
- returning to study 9
- units 1, 8, 71–2
- VCE – Baccalaureate 7–8
- VCE Second Language studies 58–9
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 49–53
 - audits by 49–50
 - committees of 52–3
 - data protection 51
 - functions of 49
 - obligations to schools 49–50
 - obligations to students 51
 - powers of 49
 - privacy & 51
 - responsibilities of 49
 - student numbers 51
 - VCAL quality assurance 50
 - Victorian Student Number 51
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) 32
- Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) 41, 72, 118
- Vietnamese First Language 6, 103
- Vietnamese Second Language 6, 58, 103
- Visual Communication Design 104
- Vocational Education and Training 25–8
 - Block Credit Recognition in the VCE 27–8
 - certificate types 25
 - contribution to VCAL 30–1
 - contribution to VCE 29–30
 - credit towards VCAL 31
 - enrolment in 27, 28
 - GAT & 108
 - programs 25–28
 - reporting results 120
 - RTOs offering 32–3
 - satisfactory completion of VET programs 28
 - School-assessed Coursework 83
 - School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships 27
 - training completed before 2021 28
 - units 29–30
 - VCE VET documentation 31
 - VET in the VCE 2
- VRQA, *see* Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)
- VTAC, *see* Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC)

W

- written examination centres, *see* examination centres
- written examinations, *see* external assessment, VCE examinations

Y

- Yiddish 104