Procedures for Assessment in VCE Studies

2016
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Procedures for Assessment in VCE Studies

Introduction

This publication contains information and advice about the administration of assessment in the VCE, in particular for Units 3 and 4. It is designed as a companion document for the Study Design and Assessment Handbook published for each VCE study. The contents of this publication are extracted from the current VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook, which remains the primary authoritative source for all current information about the VCE and VCAL, and is published annually.

Further and regular information on all matters related to the administration of the VCE, VCAL and VET is published in the VCAA Bulletin.

School-based Assessment

The following Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) administrative policies and procedures apply to assessment for satisfactory completion of VCE units.

There are three forms of School-based Assessment for Units 3 and 4 – School-assessed Coursework, School-assessed Tasks and an Externally assessed Task for two specific studies.

Satisfactory completion of VCE units

The VCE is awarded on the basis of satisfactory completion of a sufficient number of units. The decision about satisfactory completion of a unit is distinct from the assessment of levels of achievement.

For satisfactory completion of a VCE unit, a student must demonstrate achievement of the set of outcomes for the unit as specified in the study design. The decision about satisfactory completion of outcomes is based on the teacher’s assessment of the student’s overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit. For VCE Units 3 and 4, evidence of achievement is collected by the teacher through a range of tasks which include School-assessed Coursework and/or School-assessed Tasks or an Externally assessed Task, that are designated for the study and examinations.

To achieve an outcome the student must:

- produce work that demonstrates achievement of the outcomes
- submit work on time
- submit work that is clearly his/her own
- observe the VCAA and school rules.

If a teacher judges that all outcomes are achieved, the student satisfactorily completes the unit.

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 requirements set out in the study design and rules set out by the VCAA and the school.

Teachers must develop courses that include appropriate learning activities to enable students to demonstrate achievement of outcomes.

Schools must develop courses that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of the outcomes specified in the study design. The school should determine the assessment
program at the beginning of the year. Schools must provide students with clear written details of both the VCAA rules (see below) and the school’s rules and procedures at the beginning of the school year.

The school must specify the work that a student must do to satisfactorily complete a unit and the conditions under which the work is to be done. The school must inform each student in writing of:

- all work he/she needs to do to achieve S for the unit
- all work he/she needs to do for Graded Assessment
- class attendance requirements
- what resources are permitted
- how to submit work
- timelines and deadlines for completing work
- procedures for obtaining an extension of time
- internal school appeal procedures.

A student may still be eligible for the award of the VCE if he/she has not been assessed for levels of achievement in a study and has not sat examinations but has submitted School-based Assessments for satisfactory completion of units. In this case, the teacher has judged that the student has achieved the outcomes for a study based on the evidence provided by the student, without assessing for levels of achievement. Where there is no assessment of levels of achievement for any study, a student will not have a study score calculated.

Principals are responsible for administering the VCAA rules and instructions. They must ensure that teachers are using the currently accredited study design.

The VCAA rules for School-based Assessment

The VCAA sets down rules which a student must observe when preparing work for assessment by the school.

They are:

1. A student must ensure that all unacknowledged work submitted for assessment is genuinely his/her own.
2. A student must acknowledge all resources used, including:
   - text, websites and source material
   - the name/s and status of any person/s who provided assistance and the type of assistance provided.
3. A student must not receive undue assistance from another person in the preparation and submission of work.
4. **Acceptable** levels of assistance include:
   - the incorporation of ideas or material derived from other sources (for example, by reading, viewing or notetaking), but which has 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.
5. **Unacceptable** forms of assistance include:
   - use of, or copying, another person’s work or other resources without acknowledgment
   - corrections or improvements made or dictated by another person.
6. A student must not submit the same piece of work for assessment in more than one study, or more than once within a study.

7. A student must not circulate or publish written work that is being submitted for assessment in a study, in the year of enrolment.

8. A student must not knowingly assist another student in a breach of rules.

**Assessment task selection**

At Units 3 and 4 level the study design states whether any one or a combination of assessment tasks may be used for the assessment of an outcome for a unit.

Teachers should develop assessment programs for Units 3 and 4 that:

- include both formative assessments, for diagnostic or monitoring purposes, and summative assessments, for determining achievement that contributes to the final coursework score
- include a variety of assessment tasks and conditions
- provide an appropriate balance of short and extended tasks
- take into account the workload for students.

Where teachers provide a range of options for the same assessment task, as consistent with the study design, they should ensure that the options are of comparable scope and demand.

Practice examinations conducted during the year can give students experience and help them develop skills in this type of assessment; however, it is recommended that these are used as formative assessment. They can, however, provide useful information for students’ Indicative Grades for the external examination.

**Scheduling assessment tasks**

Teachers are advised to give students the dates for completion of assessment tasks in advance, taking into account the VCAA Important Administrative Dates which are published annually and are available on the VCAA website.

Schools should take into account the 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 an individual student or group of students has not been given appropriate time to undertake or complete School-based Assessment.

**Rescheduling assessment tasks for entire class**

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

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

**Rescheduling an assessment task for an individual student**

Extension of time for an individual student to complete a task should only be granted in special circumstances.
Schools are required to have 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 procedures including:

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

An extension of time may extend into the next semester, but not into the next school year.

**Redeeming outcomes: submitting further work**

If, in the judgment of the teacher, work submitted by a student for the assessment of an outcome does not meet the required standard for satisfactory completion, the teacher may consider work previously submitted by the student provided it meets the requirements.

A student may only submit further work or resubmit a School-assessed Coursework assessment, for reconsideration to redeem an ‘S’ for the outcome.

**The teacher may not allow a student to resubmit work to improve a score of an assessment for School-assessed Coursework.**

Students complete work for a unit during the semester in which the unit is undertaken. The school may decide to delay the decision about satisfactory completion to allow a student to complete or submit further work.

**Authentication**

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

Teachers should have in place strategies for ensuring that work submitted for assessment is the student’s own work. The teacher may consider it appropriate to ask the student to demonstrate his/her 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, then the matter should be dealt with as a breach of rules (see VCAA rules for School-based Assessment p. 2 and 3).

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

- Teachers should ensure that tasks are kept secure prior to administration, to avoid unauthorised release to students and compromising the assessment. They should not be sent by mail or electronically without due care.
- A significant amount of classroom 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 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 from one academic year to the next or between academic cycles to ensure that students are unable to use other student work from the previous year or academic cycle.
Procedures for Assessment in VCE Studies

- If there is more than one class of a particular study in the school, the VCAA expects the school to apply internal moderation and/or cross-marking procedures to ensure consistency of assessment 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 if students receive regular help from a family member.

For School-assessed Tasks, teachers must ensure that there is a sufficient range of topics within their class to enable them to distinguish individual student’s work and therefore to assist in the authentication process.

Teachers must monitor and record in the study specific School-assessed Tasks and the Externally assessed Task forms (on VASS) each student’s development of work, from planning and drafting through to completion. 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.

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 the student gaining the key knowledge and skills outside of class time.

Students should be advised just prior to beginning the task that some information or data may be collected outside the classroom.

Where aspects of School-assessed Coursework are completed outside 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 (on VASS).

Feedback to students – School-assessed Coursework

After work is submitted and marked, teachers should provide feedback to students. Appropriate feedback includes:

- advice on particular problem areas
- advice 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. Schools are strongly recommended to include the following advice in student VCE handbooks:

- about the ‘conditional’ nature of any School-assessed Coursework marks given to students
- that their total scores for School-assessed Coursework may change as a result of statistical moderation.
When providing the marks, teachers must advise students that their total School-assessed Coursework scores may change following statistical moderation.

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

Feedback to students – School-assessed Tasks

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

Attendance

All VCE units involve at least 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction over the duration of a semester. 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 attendance rules, and the school therefore wishes to assign a Not satisfactory (N) to the unit, the school must assign N for one or more outcomes and thus the unit.

A school policy and set of procedures to cover absence from 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 assessment tasks because of illness or other special circumstances, the school may, on application from the student, grant Special Provision for School-based Assessments. In this case the student should not be penalised for lack of attendance. The Special Provision granted 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.

Maintenance of school records

Procedures must be established to keep records and documentation of decisions relating to:

- unit completion and graded assessments (and initial School-based Assessments if appropriate)
- student appeals and resulting decisions
- applications and decisions relating to second language eligibility 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 the student and resulting decisions.

Retention of VCE School-based Assessments

- The decision about whether or not to return School-based Assessments to students rests with the school. The VCAA will usually not request to see copies of student work.
- However, as part of the School-based Assessment audit program the VCAA may request that a school submit copies of specific School-based Assessments completed by students. The VCAA will either nominate specific student work or ask the school to choose student work.
Advice on which studies will form part of the School-based Assessment audit program will be communicated to schools via email early in 2016. Schools involved in the Unit 3 School-based Assessment audit will be notified in late February/early March and schools involved in the Unit 4 School-based Assessment audit will be notified in July.

**Lost, stolen or damaged School-assessed Coursework**

If a teacher or student has lost a coursework assessment 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.

*Note:* This does not apply to work lost or damaged due to computer or printer malfunction or usability. Students’ responsibilities for proper management of computer material are published annually in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook.*

**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 *Lost/Stolen/Damaged School-assessed Tasks form,* enter an estimated score on VASS, and send the form to the VCAA.

The principal, acting on advice from the teacher and on the basis of records kept, will determine an initial assessment. The initial assessment may be adjusted as a result of the review process.

If the School-assessed Task is required for review, the *Study Record* form for that student must be annotated as Lost/Stolen/Damaged (LSD) by the school. This procedure does not apply to work lost or damaged due to computer misuse or malfunction.

**Quality Assurance**

**VCE School-based Assessment Audit for all Studies at VCE Units 3 and 4**

The VCAA is committed to improving the quality assurance for VCE school-based assessment. 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 VCE providers.

The VCE School-based Assessment Audit program incorporates a review of School-assessed Coursework, Externally assessed Tasks and School-assessed Tasks (SATs).

**Purpose**

The purpose of the School-based Assessment Audit is to ensure that School-based Assessment is conducted in line with VCAA principles of assessment and the requirements of the relevant study design, using appropriately designed tasks. School-based Assessment works well, but quality issues can arise; the audit process can help identify and address these issues. The audit is also a useful source of feedback for the VCAA about the way curriculum and assessment are being
implemented, especially when a VCE study design is revised. The outcomes of the audit assist in planning the VCAA’s assessment advice and professional development support for teachers.

All VCE providers are audited for at least one VCE study (maximum of four studies) and all VCE studies are subject to the annual School-based Assessment Audit. An increased number of VCE providers are audited for VCE studies in the first year of implementation of a revised study design.

Process

The School-based Assessment Audit is conducted in two stages for both Unit 3 and Unit 4. Audit submissions are reviewed by an Audit Panel comprised of the VCE State Reviewer and VCAA Curriculum Manager.

Notification

VCE providers are notified of their requirements for audit via VASS. VASS contains the list of studies being audited as well as the outcomes of each stage of the audit. VASS also notifies VCE providers when they have not submitted a response to the stage of the audit. Notification of audit requirements is in February for Unit 3 and June for Unit 4. Information pertaining to the audit is located on the following screen in VASS:

School Program – VCE – School-based Assessment Audit

Stages 1 and 3: Online Questionnaire

Stage 1 (Unit 3) and Stage 3 (Unit 4) consist of a study-specific online questionnaire completed by VCE providers and reviewed by the VCAA. The purpose of the online questionnaire is to collect information on the planned approach to assessment. Although assessment planning may not be complete at this early stage, the submission will still provide useful information about assessment practice.

For each online submission received, one of the following outcomes is delivered:

- Submission meets requirements and no further action is required. Positive feedback/recommendations for improvement may be included.
- Further evidence is required to ensure VCAA requirements are being met. VCE providers are contacted and further evidence is requested. Further evidence may be in the form of SAC tasks, information provided to students, details of assessment criteria or marking schemes, evidence of internal moderation practices, assessment timelines.
- Online submission requires immediate follow up with the Curriculum Manager. Teacher/s are required to contact the relevant VCAA Curriculum Manager at their earliest convenience. Reasons for the immediate follow up are included with the outcome.

Stages 2 and 4: Further Evidence

For Stage 2 (Unit 3) and Stage 4 (Unit 4) VCE providers may be required to submit further evidence based on the outcome of their online submission in either Stage 1 or 3. The further evidence requested may be on any aspect of the assessment, including assessment information provided to students, tasks, marking schemes or criteria, moderation processes and outcomes. Samples of student work will only be requested if serious concern is raised in the receipt of further evidence.

Schools should have a process for collecting and storing the required material for submission by the due date. Submission of any teacher-generated material must be done electronically. If the
VCAA has requested copies of student work, the school can photocopy the work and send it by post to the address specified, or scan and email.

For each further evidence submission received, one of the following outcomes is delivered:

- Further evidence submission meets requirements and no further action is required. Positive feedback/recommendations for improvement may be included.
- Further evidence submission does not meet VCAA requirements. Reasons for the further evidence not meeting requirements are included with the outcome.

Outcomes and non-compliance

Where a VCE provider does not meet VCAA requirements at the conclusion of an audit, support will be provided to the teacher/s to guide them through the assessment requirements of the relevant VCE study design. In addition, School-based assessment materials may be resubmitted to ensure recommendations have been actioned and VCAA requirements are being met. The VCE provider will be reaudited for the same study in the following audit cycle.

The VCAA will draw any serious evidence of non-compliance to the attention of the principal. In the event of serious irregularity, the Executive Committee of the VCAA will determine whether disciplinary action or other procedures will apply.

Advice and further information on the School-based Assessment Audit can be obtained from:

School-based Assessment Audit Unit
Tel: 03 9032 1735
Email: school.assessment.vcaa@edumail.vic.gov.au

If the 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.

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 will be published in the VCAA Bulletin and 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 study page on the VCAA website to accurately assess their students’ work.
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 exactly 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 only comparable 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 typical moderation group is the cohort of students enrolled with a specific registered training organisation (RTO) for the VCE VET program.

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. Because the external score is based on examinations done by all students across Victoria, it is a common standard against which schools’ assessments can be compared.

Each VCE study includes at least one external assessment and the VCAA will use the external assessment in each study as the basis for statistical moderation of schools’ assessments. In studies with two external assessments, scores from both will be used.

The VCE assessment program also includes the General Achievement Test (GAT). Rather than using examination scores alone, statistical moderation uses GAT and examination scores if they are a better match with school assessments throughout the state. In all such cases, the examination scores will always be the major influence.

Internal Comparability of School 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.
Small-group partnerships

Schools with moderation groups comprising fewer than five students, or schools that might expect such groups to occur as a result of circumstances arising during the year, are required to form partnerships with other schools of their own choosing, as early in the year as possible.

Schools with moderation groups that comprise five to nine students are encouraged to form partnerships, as students may withdraw during the year.

Formation of small-group partnerships

Schools with small groups must initiate the formation of the partnership and ensure that it operates effectively. If problems are encountered, contact Student Records and Results for advice.

It is preferable for a small group to combine with as large a group as possible, rather than combining with one or more other small groups. Partnerships involving more than three schools are not recommended unless necessary to achieve more than five students in the moderation group, because they are likely to present excessive organisational and workload difficulties for teachers and school administrators.

An important aspect of the successful implementation of the small-group partnership process is the level and consistency of interaction between schools. Schools may utilise any method of interaction that is appropriate. These include telephone, fax, post, email, face-to-face and video-conference meetings.

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 a school assessment. Schools have considerable experience in assessment, but the following suggestions will help schools to review their arrangements or establish new practices.

**Approach 1**
- Teachers meet to discuss assessment criteria, topics and the approaches used for the task.
- Teachers grade the work from their own classes.
- Teachers swap samples and carry out blind marking.
- If necessary, teachers mark further work or reassess their own class work.
- Difficult cases are further discussed before results are entered.

**Approach 2**
- Teachers combine and distribute the student work among themselves for assessment.
- The results are returned to the class teacher, who reassesses all the work or the work 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 pieces of work.
- Differences in results are discussed to gain a clearer and more consistent understanding of the application of the assessment criteria.
- When all teachers are confident they have a consistent understanding of the application of the assessment criteria, each teacher assesses their own class.
Determining initial School-based Assessments in partnership with another school

If the consultation is taking place between teachers in different schools, initial discussion may occur over the telephone, by email, or by using teleconference or telematics facilities, with any written material sent by facsimile.

In many cases there will be considerable time between the student completion date and the date for submission of results to the VCAA. Posting of material between schools will reduce time required for meetings.

If results of different schools are combined to increase the size of the assessment group, it is useful to swap some drafts of typical work early in the process of completing the School-assessed Task. 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 School-based Assessment

1. Participating teachers should discuss the requirements of the study design, the chosen assessment tasks for each outcome, the 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 no later than the expected date of completion of the first specific 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 work of its own students: It is expected that the schools with more than one teacher group for the study will apply their own procedures to achieve comparability of assessments within their school.

4. Each school selects student work for cross-marking. For small-group partnerships, this should include all of the work from the school with the small group, and at least an equivalent number from the partner schools. For other partnerships, teachers should agree on an appropriate number, preferably at least five pieces from each school. For each piece of work, 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 piece of work and a final score is agreed to by consensus. If the teachers cannot reach consensus, then 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 work 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.
Reporting student achievement

Units 1 and 2

Procedures for the assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision. Assessment of levels of achievement for these units will not be reported to the VCAA. Schools may choose to report levels of achievement using grades, descriptive statements or other indicators.

Units 3 and 4

The VCAA will supervise the assessment of all students undertaking Units 3 and 4. The student’s level of achievement will be determined by a combination of School-assessed Coursework, School-assessed Tasks, Externally assessed Tasks and/or examinations. The VCAA will report the student’s level of performance on each of three Graded Assessment components: as a grade from A+ to E or UG (ungraded). Individual study designs provide details of the assessment tasks relevant for each study. Study designs are available from the VCAA website.

Scored VCE VET programs have two graded assessments for each Unit 3 and 4 sequence.

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 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.

Indicative grades

Indicative grades for all VCE external assessments, apart from the Music Style and Composition Externally-assessed Tasks, are to be submitted prior to the relevant examination period. The primary purpose of these indicative grades is in the quality assurance procedures for marking the external assessments. They assist in identifying possible anomalous marking of individual scripts. Indicative grades will also be used in the calculation of the DES.

The indicative grade is the 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 the individual students in their classes.

The rank order and the 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.

Some strategies used by schools are:

- 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.

General Achievement Test (GAT)

All students enrolled in one or more VCE Unit 3-4 sequences or VCE VET scored Unit 3-4 sequences, including VCAL students are required to sit the General Achievement Test (GAT).

The GAT is an essential part of the VCE assessment procedure. Although GAT results do not count directly towards VCE results, they do play an important role in checking that School-based Assessments and external assessment have been accurately assessed.

The VCAA will use students' GAT scores in:

- statistical moderation of School-based Assessments
- checking the accuracy of student scores in external assessment
- the calculation of a Derived Exam Score (DES)