



Principal Curriculum Coordinator PD Coordinator AIM Coordinator P-10 Teacher

P-10 Supplement

Information about Prep to Year 10 education in Victorian schools

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CEO's report

By now you will have received your AIM Data Reporting Package for 2004 which contains a publication entitled *Reporting Guide – Data* and individual reports for parents showing students' results from the AIM 2004 tests. The VCAA uses the student information provided by schools to report to parents on their child's performance. These data are also provided to the school to assist principals to analyse the effectiveness of their school programs and to identify an individual student's strengths and weaknesses. These details and results should be kept confidential to parents and the school.

This year the AIM Data Report containing your school's test results will be delivered to you online rather than on a CD-ROM. The style of the reports will be familiar to schools but the delivery system will differ

from that in the past. The VCAA has made the AIM 2004 data available on the Internet via the VCAA Data Service and Results website. The *Reporting Guide – Data* provides advice on how to access AIM results and reports online. The advantages of the new data delivery service include enhanced security, a 'cut and paste' function and Help support available online.

As in past years, principals and classroom teachers are invited to attend a professional development workshop where the contents of the AIM Data Report will be demonstrated and explained. Details of these workshops are provided within this issue of the P-10 Supplement.

Curriculum Reform

I am pleased to report that development of the *Framework of Essential Learning* has

progressed significantly following the consultation period. While I will provide a detailed overview of the new Framework in the November 2004 P-10 Supplement and in newsletters to be sent to schools in the coming weeks prior to the online publication in Term 4. However, I thought it would be useful to let you know how we are progressing.

The 'three pillars' approach of personal and social learning, discipline-based learning and cross-curriculum or interdisciplinary learning proposed in the consultation paper has now been refined. The essence of the new Framework is not just that these three components are required to prepare students for the future but that their interaction with each other is critical. It is the integrated focus on knowledge,

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On Demand Testing

Approximately 200 primary and secondary schools across Victoria are now able to access the VCAA new On Demand Testing tool. The initial 25 tests used in the pilot conducted during semester one this year are progressively being expanded. A total of 65 tests across a range of topics in English, Mathematics, Science, SOSE, and The Arts, is being made available to registered schools during October 2004.

Currently all of the tests available are linear in character, focus on CSF levels 3, 4 and 5, and are able to be printed out in hard copy. Tests completed on screen can be automatically marked by the computer which will also generate individual and class reports.

In response to teacher feedback, the latest tests include a range of:

- grammar and punctuation topic tests in English
- history topics such as Gold and Immigration
- geography tests on the Environment, Volcanoes and Mapping

- science tests suitable for use in the Middle Years
- tests in The Arts over CSF levels 2 to 5
- mathematics topic tests useful as pre- and post-topic evaluation tools.

All schools will receive further information early in the 2005 school year. In the interim, schools interested in joining the On Demand Testing program during Term 4 2004 are invited to contact the P-10 Assessment Unit for an information package containing a User Manual and information about registration.

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2004 AIM Reporting via the web

This year schools will receive their AIM Data Report via the Internet. Results from the AIM tests have been released on to a secure website. To access this website from an Internet browser schools are directed to the VCAA website at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au

To access the website you will need your unique User ID and password. Each school has been sent a unique User ID which was contained in the covering letter of the AIM Reporting Package. The password has been sent in a separate letter. Principals and teachers can view a generic set of reports from Victoria College by going to the AIM Data Service website and entering the User ID VICCOLLEGE and password 'demo'.

AIM 2004 Professional Development Workshops

Philip Holmes-Smith has been contracted by the VCAA to deliver professional development workshops around Victoria. Philip is an experienced educational psychometrician/statistician, researcher and program evaluator with extensive experience in the field of assessment.

The workshops are designed for a team of personnel from each

school, including the principal, AIM coordinators, teachers of Years 3, 5 and 7 and others in curriculum management positions.

The purpose of these workshops is to:

- assist principals and teachers to become familiar with the pathways to access the AIM Data Reports online
- ensure that participants understand the results of the

Statewide assessment program data analysis.

Workshops will be held at 60 different locations covering all regions of Victoria and will be of three hours duration to accommodate 1500 participants.

Details of venues, dates and times are published on the VCAA website at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/rep10/aim

Year 7 AIM Online Computer Testing

AIM Online will be used by the VCAA, as part of its AIM Statewide assessment program in Victoria, to deliver AIM tests to schools in 2005. Secondary schools can choose to complete the Year 7 AIM Statewide tests either on computers or as pencil and paper tests.

AIM Online was developed as a decentralised system, hosting tests and assessment items on the VCAA Assessment Online Central Server. The tests are downloaded to dedicated VCAA Assessment Online servers at the school and are accessed by students via the school's Local Area Network (LAN). Once the tests are completed, the students' responses are uploaded to the VCAA Assessment Online Central Server for marking and reporting.

Benefits

Students undertake a series of assessment tasks which are supervised by teachers. These assessment tasks are completed on a computer either in regular classrooms or in computer laboratories at the school.

The computer assessments consist of three separate tests:

- a 60-question Adaptive Test in English
- a 60-question Adaptive Test in Mathematics and
- an Essay Writing Task.

Schools are required to schedule up to one hour for each of the tests. The assessments can be completed over a three week period in August of each year. Students are not required to sit all the tests on a particular date or even on the same day. Schools have the flexibility to schedule the tests to fit in with the availability of computer resources and class timetabling.

In the event of a computer crash or power failure, the VCAA Assessment Online system has the capability of saving and recovering student's work during a test. Students can log back into the tests immediately and return

to the question they were working on. Students are also able to re-sit a new test at a later date if required.

AIM Online security is role-based, allowing access to assessment material and results only to those with appropriate access authority. Students cannot access the assessment items or results other than by undertaking the tasks. As an added security measure, the marking mechanisms are isolated from the assessments themselves and are password protected.

Participation in 2005

Registrations of Interest

Schools are invited to register their school's interest in participating in the Year 7 AIM Online Statewide tests in 2005. To do this, download and complete the Expression of Interest (EOI) form and fax it back to the VCAA on (03) 9651 4612 by 30 March 2005. The form is available on the VCAA website at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/schooladmin/forms/aim/aim.html

Schools which participated in 2004 will automatically be considered for participating in the AIM Online program in 2005, unless otherwise notified in writing.

The VCAA may not be able to accept all schools applying for the program in 2005. Successful applicants will be notified in April 2005.

Technical Requirements

Government schools

Government schools have the VCAA Assessment Online system CASES/CASES21 Server deployed and pre-configured on them. Schools are required to ensure that the VCAA Assessment Online software is upgraded to the most current version on the CASES server. All Government schools now have the capability to access the VCAA Assessment Online system hosted on the CASES server from the Curriculum network at the school.

Non-Government schools

Non-Government schools require a server that at least meets the specifications stated below. It is highly recommended that the server is dedicated to the VCAA Assessment Online functionality only and is not hosted on file sharing servers. The EOI form includes details on the school's technical infrastructure for the VCAA to gauge the suitability and capability to run the system in the school.

The AIM Online tests can be accessed from classrooms and computer labs providing they have network access to the VCAA Assessment Online school server at the school, which may be hosted on the CASES/CASES21 server or an equivalent server.

VCAA Assessment Online Server Hardware

- 2000MHz processing capacity
- 512MB DDR-SDRAM
- 20GB dual SCSI hard drives with hardware mirroring
- 10/100 Mbps network capacity
- recommended 20GB tape backup
- uninterrupted power supply (UPS).

The school server needs to be able to access the VCAA Assessment Online Central Server site via VICONE or the Internet.

Software

- Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Standard Edition
- Microsoft SQL Server 2000 Standard Edition, Service Pack 3
- Microsoft Internet Information Services (IIS) 6.0
- An up-to-date version of Anti-Virus software

VCAA Assessment Online Client Workstations

- Microsoft Windows 98, ME 2000 and XP. (Not supported by Apple MAC, or other non-Microsoft MS Windows Operating Systems)
- Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE) 5.5 and above
- ActiveX Controls and Plug-ins enabled
- Macromedia Flash Plug-in

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skills and behaviours in the process of personal and social growth, in the disciplines and across the curriculum that develops deep understanding in learners and which can be transferred to new and different circumstances.

This integrated nature of the Framework, with its three equally privileged and interrelated components, means that it is being explicitly designed as a whole school planning document and can only be implemented through a whole school response. An implementation support program will be developed by the VCAA in partnership with the Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT), the Catholic Education Offices and independent schools to assist schools with strategies for developing curriculum programs appropriate for local needs.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many teachers who have contributed to the development of the Framework over the last few months by participating in VCAA reference groups. Throughout the writing stages, these expert practitioners have provided valuable feedback on material in a range of curriculum areas.

During November and early December, in partnership with DE&T regional offices and the OLT we will conduct a number of regional seminars for principals and curriculum leaders across all school sectors. The seminars will introduce the online format of the new Framework, provide details of its structure and nature of the curriculum areas and give participants opportunities to consider implications for implementation of the Framework in their schools. Details of venues and a program will be sent to schools in October and will also be available online at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/crp/index.html

I commend these seminars to you.

AIM Statewide Tests

Summary of participation in 2004

Pencil and Paper Tests

The number of students who undertook the AIM tests using Pencil and Paper medium:

Year 3 Students 61 000
Year 5 Students 62 500
Year 7 Students 54 100

The number of schools participating in the AIM tests using Pencil and Paper medium:

Government Schools

Year 3 1277
Year 5 1275
Year 7 281

Catholic Schools

Year 3 387
Year 5 392
Year 7 88

Independent Schools

Year 3 184
Year 5 185
Year 7 159

AIM Online Tests

The number of students participating in the AIM Online tests:

Year 3 1227
Year 5 1282
Year 7 9700

The number of schools participating in the AIM Online tests:

Year 3 34
Year 5 35
Year 7 69

Note: 1600 Year 7 students participated in both pencil and paper and online tests.

The AIM HelpDesk is available from 8.30 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday. After 5.00 pm a message service operates. Help can also be accessed via email.

Freecall: **1800 648 637** OR Email: vcaa.aim.help@edumail.vic.gov.au

Important Dates 2005: Dates for Future AIM Tests

	Pencil and Paper Tests Years 3, 5 and 7	AIM Online Tests Year 7	Teacher Assessed Tasks Years 3 and 5 only
2005	Mathematics 2 August English 3 August	Mathematics and English 1-19 August Writing 1-5 August	18-29 July
2006	Mathematics 1 August English 2 August	Mathematics and English 31 July - 18 August Writing 31 July - 4 August	17-28 July

This P-10 Supplement is an adjunct of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) Bulletin. The VCAA BULLETIN is a monthly publication (excluding January) carrying information and administrative advice about the Victorian Certificate of Education and the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning.

For subscriptions to the VCAA BULLETIN go to: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/corporateservices/forms/index.html

The VCAA BULLETIN and Supplements are also available online at: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au

Victorian schools only may photocopy this publication for use by teachers and students.

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