



VCAA Bulletin P-10

Regulations and information about curriculum and assessment for Prep to Year 10

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CEO's report

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards website has recently been reviewed using two complementary processes. Discussions were held with representative groups of teachers across sectors and locations to find out which resources they most valued, what they didn't like and what else they would like. At the same time an external advisor analysed the usage rates and provided expert judgment on the layout, design and navigation of the website. The report contained very useful comparisons with other high value sites (see page 8).

At the level of our provision of services to schools, this is a relatively low level example of the now fashionable term 'evidence-based' decision making. When you think of the opposite it is curious to consider when decision making, including high level policy making, would not be evidence based. This trend is gathering momentum across the whole field of policy making. It has been highlighted recently in medicine where one might think it would have almost universal application.

The most problematic aspect is that in education, as with all people-based activities, including medicine, it is often not possible to approach a 'gold-standard' evidence base. We can't hold all other variables constant while we test the effect of a proposed intervention.

Other things are never equal and they are constantly changing. Nonetheless, to continue the medical comparison, epidemiology may be of more relevance than 'double-blind' clinical trials. We can

and need to look at an increasing array of evidence to inform our decision making. It is this that is at the heart of the increasing demand for quality data upon which we can base our decision making.

This of course does not diminish the need for judgment. Most data are open to a range of interpretations so that values, principles and experience all continue to play a major role in decision making. It is more the case that relevant, high-quality data will enhance the process rather than turn it into a deterministic one.

Current examples where evidence is both necessary and contested abound. Countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development peer into the entrails of the data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS) international student assessments. You will no doubt have noticed that different commentators draw different conclusions from the same data. The conclusion we draw from this is the need to delve into the data, be clear about assumptions and test conclusions comprehensively, not that too much data makes it all too confusing.

John Firth
CEO, VCAA



Teaching and learning support for the domains

Materials to support teachers in their understanding and application of each of the domains are now available on the VELS website at <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/support/index.html>

The material differs for each domain. In some cases, it includes information about the nature of the domain and the key concepts or skills students need to develop; in others, it draws on approaches to teaching and learning which can be adapted to suit preferred pedagogies or available resources. In addition to the material to support teaching and learning, each domain page includes links to other domain-specific resources on the VELS website and useful resources on other sites.

Featured in this Bulletin are excerpts from the information for The Arts (pages 4–5), Information and Communications Technology (ICT) (page 3) and History (pages 6–7). An excerpt from the Thinking Processes information was published in the April 2007 VCAA Bulletin P–10 Issue 28, and another from Civics and Citizenship in the June 2007 VCAA Bulletin P–10 Issue 29. Some of the content included for the following domains is outlined below: Economics, English, Geography, Health and Physical Education, Interpersonal Development, LOTE, Mathematics and Personal Learning.

Economics

- examples of units of work, for example a unit based on the **Earn and Learn** program (see Rob Vingerhoets, *Earn and Learn*, Dellasta Publishing, Melbourne) for primary students could set up a ‘mini-society’ in the classroom which explores commerce, banking, earning and income, budgeting and so on employing knowledge, skills and behaviours related to the Economics, Mathematics, and Civics and Citizenship domains

English

- the theoretical underpinnings of learning about language
- the range of texts covered in English programs
- suggested criteria for text selection
- strategies for reading, writing and spelling
- ways of monitoring student growth and achievement

Geography

- an explanation of the terminology used in preparing programs in Geography from Prep to Year 10
- a guide to introducing the spatial concepts of location, scale, distance, distribution, region, spatial change over time, movement, spatial association and spatial interaction
- information on mapping conventions, graphing conventions, fieldwork
- useful resources

Health and Physical Education

- definitions and examples to help clarify the terms used in the Health and Physical Education standards for each level

Interpersonal Development

- contextual information for the domain and the factors influencing development of interpersonal skills

- lists of key knowledge, skills and dispositions that students need to develop in relation to emotional skills, values, communication skills, positive relationships and team development

LOTE

- starting points to understand the VELS
- using existing resources and teaching expertise
- sample topics with cross-curricular links
- teaching and learning approaches
- links to professional teaching associations and organisations which provide support materials

Mathematics

- several sample learning activities related to the standards for the Structure and Working mathematically dimensions of the Mathematics VELS, and other dimensions as applicable (three activities at Levels 1 and 2, three activities at Levels 3 and 4 and four activities at Levels 5 and 6)
- comprehensive advice and possible approaches to incorporating CAS technology in programs at Years 9 and 10.

This advice and related material will also support teachers with respect to preparation for the use of CAS in VCE Mathematics, in particular Mathematical Methods (CAS) Units 1 and 2.

Personal learning

- contextual information for the domain and the knowledge and skills students need to develop a sense of themselves as learners and manage their own learning
- key questions that students need to be mindful of to become effective learners focusing on awareness, motivation, planning, monitoring, focus, self evaluation and building resilience.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

The following is an excerpt from the ICT advice. The ICT advice focuses on a brief overview of ICT and offers approaches teachers can use to assist students to develop ICT knowledge, skills and behaviours.

The ICT domain focuses on providing students with the knowledge and skills to:

- change how they learn
- enrich their learning environment.

This learning transformation takes place when students use ICT tools for building their knowledge and understandings; it occurs when students are able to focus on the tasks to be accomplished rather than on the technology they are using to do their work. Ultimately ICT should be transparent; it becomes a secondary tool to the primary focus of enhancing learning in all areas.

Students who demonstrate the ICT standards have the capacity to be:

- creative knowledge workers, rather than just consumers of information.
- self-directed lifetime learners, actively seeking and refreshing knowledge
- efficient information processors who can acquire, input, validate, manipulate, store, communicate, retrieve and dispose of data and information
- effective problem-solvers who create new solutions to real problems
- collaborators, using ICT to communicate, coordinate and compromise with known and unknown audiences, locally and globally
- responsible users of information, exercising ethical and critical judgments about the sources and usage of information, and ensuring the integrity of data and information produced.

At each level in the VELs, the ICT standards state the specific knowledge and skills that should be demonstrated by students in order to fulfil the capacities described above.

There is a range of ways in which ICT can support the acquisition and/or application of skills and knowledge appropriate to other domains. Table 1 provides some examples of how ICT applications can be used in different learning settings to support the creative thinking skills of making connections, generating ideas, altering perspectives and applying imagination.

Table 1

Creative thinking skill	ICT application
Making connections	<p>The flexibility, speed and capacities of ICT can support the drafting, filtering, reorganising, refining and systematic assessment of ideas, content and concepts. Tools with these capacities are often referred to as visualising thinking tools. These serve a variety of purposes, such as representing abstract information in a concrete form, depicting relationships between facts and concepts, and relating new information to prior knowledge. Connections can be shown through lines, symbols, colours, images.</p> <p>While these tools are classified in a variety of ways by different educational writers, essentially they fall into three categories: graphic organisers, simulations and dynamic models and controlled models.</p> <p>Flexible tools such as spreadsheets and databases allow students to establish rules to find connections between sets of data.</p>
Generating ideas	<p>Sound and moving images, created by multimedia and web authoring software, engage most students; they can stimulate new ideas, and students can create sound and moving images to represent new ideas. Electronic graphic organisers, created in Microsoft Word, such as forced combinations, the five whys and fishbone diagrams are also useful tools for extending ideas.</p>
Altering perspectives	<p>Multimedia software, through hyperlinking and reorientation, allows students to construct alternative perspectives on a topic. Modelling software, such as Microworlds, supports the representation of varying sets of data. The capacity of all text and image processing software to reformat information depending on genre or audience characteristics provides flexibility in reconceptualising ideas.</p>
Applying imagination	<p>Students can experiment with imaginative ideas by using software such as Clay animation, which enables students to realise their ideas in forms that are concrete as well as animated. Visit the Technology School of the Future for further information at <www.tsof.edu.au/resources/animation/clay/> as well as Animateclay at <www.animateclay.com/>.</p> <p>Gaming software such as GameMaker allows students to construct games that represent alternative actions, values and viewpoints. Girls are particularly attracted to adventure and values-based games.</p>

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The Arts

The Arts material page provides advice about approaches for using Art, Dance, Drama, Media, Music and Visual communication to implement standards for The Arts.

Presented in table format, the advice covers each aspect of the standards describing:

- learning activities
- potential links with other domains
- approaches to assessment.

The advice draws on diverse approaches to teaching and learning and can be adapted to suit preferred pedagogies or available resources.

Specialist and generalist teachers can use the advice individually or in teams for planning and auditing. This might involve:

- comparing the scope of learning activities outlined for a level with a current program
- documenting pedagogies that could be used to teach suggested content and planning ways of using a range of approaches appropriate for different learning styles across a unit or semester
- designing extended project outlines from the examples. These projects might focus on a particular concept; involve a thematic approach or intensive skill development. Students, with guidance appropriate to their level, could be encouraged to develop some aspects of the project requirements to meet their own learning needs
- creating a flow-chart showing how different aspects of the standards are linked in a learning program
- for levels 3–6, identifying how a learning program creates links between the *Creating and making* and *Exploring and responding* dimensions

Reading the tables

Each table includes:

- *Standard/s for the Level.* The Arts standard/s for the level appear in the left hand column of each table.
- *Ideas for classroom activities* relating to each aspect of the standards, for example

The Arts (Music), Level 1 (excerpt)

At Level 1, students make and share performing and visual Arts works that communicate observations, personal ideas, feelings and experiences.	When using Music to implement this standard, teachers could develop learning programs that provide opportunities for students to make music works based on experiences and ideas from within and outside the classroom that develop awareness about the role of sounds and music in the environment, as well as everyday life and connections between music and emotion. For example, students create a musical narration of a story using percussion instruments or a rainstorm ‘soundscape’ using body percussion ...
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The Arts (Art), Level 6 (excerpt)

Within and across areas of specialisation, students create arts works devised from a range of abstract ideas and/or stimuli, demonstrating development of a personal style.	When using Art to implement this standard, teachers could develop learning programs that provide opportunities for students to Develop a personal style, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selecting and refining chosen themes, forms, colour schemes, characters, cultural and personal symbols • trial these ideas and manipulate them through variation in size, use of art elements and the application of different mediums and techniques • work in varying styles like abstraction, stylisation, realism, surrealism and post modernism ...
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Teachers can:

- adapt these examples by using stimulus material or repertoire suitable for their students
- extend and combine the examples, perhaps creating activities that draw on aspects of the *Creating and making* standard and the *Exploring and responding* standard.

Possibilities for assessment *of, for* and *as* learning are included, and, like the learning examples, can be adapted or extended to meet the needs of students. Two examples for Drama Level 3 and Visual Communication Level 5 follow.

The Arts (Drama), Level 3 (excerpt)

<p>Student progress towards level 3, <i>Creating and making</i>, might be assessed through tasks that involve students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating in and presenting dramatic play, process drama and/or role-play drawing on knowledge of drama; for example, characters, relationships and story • using ideas from performing arts (such as theatre, TV, video/DVD, film) to inform their drama works • demonstrating understanding of role of audience member through being an audience, providing feedback to the performers about their perception of specific aspects of the performance and their response to the performance • refining their drama work in response to teacher or peer feedback and self-evaluation in relation to their use of expressive skills such as voice and movement and their use of dramatic elements.

The Arts (Visual communication), Level 5 (excerpt)

Student progress towards level 5, Exploring and responding, might be assessed through tasks that involve students:

- annotating their own visual communications to show ways the work delivers visual messages
- using appropriate language to describe other visual communicators' use of specific design elements and design principles
- comparing ways that designers from different times and places have used design elements and design principles to present visual messages
- identifying and describing influences on their own visual communications
- discussing impact of different ways of presenting similar visual messages ...

The following examples include references to learning focus statements or standards in other domains and might be used for planning team teaching or collaborative learning activities. The examples allow teachers to build on knowledge and skills students bring to class or to create learning activities involving more than one domain.

The example below illustrates how learning activities in The Arts (Media) can enhance student understanding of a key concept in Science.

The Arts (Media) and Science, Level 3 (excerpt)

Science: (learning focus) ... *students begin to design and conduct experiments ... they describe safety requirements and procedures associated ...*

For example, in an Arts media class students explore how digital photographs are made by conducting appropriate experiments with media equipment.

Science: (standards) **knowledge and understanding.**

... students identify the structural features of living things, including plants and animals ...

For example, in a media class, students use plants and parts of plants as their subject matter for digital photography. They may use time lapse photography as a media text representation of the growth of seeds to plants.

The following two examples, Level 2 Dance and Interpersonal Development and Level 5 Music and Communication demonstrate the way Arts learning programs can incorporate the domains of Communication and Interpersonal Development to enhance student learning.

The Arts (Dance) and Interpersonal Development, Level 2 (excerpt)

Interpersonal Development (standard)

Students work in teams in assigned roles, stay on task and complete structured activities within set timeframes. They share resources fairly. With teacher support, they describe their contribution to the activities of the team; for example, in a dance class, students could:

- take on the role of teaching movements they have devised for a specific part of a dance to other group members
- within a set timeframe, work with others in a group to solve a specific dance problem such as retelling aspects of a familiar narrative, story, song or poem
- as a class, make decisions about the best allocation of available space when beginning a small group dance-making activity
- describe movements they have devised when introducing the performance of a small group dance to the class.

The Arts (Music) and Communication, Level 5 (excerpt)

Communication (standard, Listening, viewing and responding)

[Students] use specialised language and symbols as appropriate to the contexts in which they are working.

For example, in a music class, students assess the effectiveness of different types of music notation as forms of communication. Students are involved in performing, reading, writing and creating music using a selected music notation system at an age-appropriate level. Students use and assess other systems of music notation such as rhythmic stick notation, relative pitch names (tonic sol-fa and scale degrees), graphic notation, Curwen hand signs, non-Western notation and ancient forms of musical notation noting advantages and disadvantages of different systems for different purposes. They use this knowledge when deciding on the notation system to record music ideas for an original work or to create a score or chart.

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History

The following is an excerpt from the Humanities – History domain support material.

The History domain has two interrelated dimensions:

Historical knowledge and understanding focuses on particular concepts and contexts of history. Concepts include time, chronology, past and present, cause and effect as well as concepts relevant to particular periods of history such as ancient, medieval and revolution.

Historical reasoning and interpretation focuses on the nature of historical thinking including the development of research and inquiry skills, the use and interpretation of a variety of sources, the use of historical language and the communication of understanding.

History as a discipline

A disciplinary based approach to history includes:

- representing history as a form of inquiry built around sources, evidence and multiple interpretations of the past by participants, contemporaries and historians
- introducing learners to historical methods and procedures, focusing on interpretation and narrative to construct accounts of the past
- assisting learners to develop historical knowledge by focusing on the central concepts and ideas underpinning the discipline and the historian's work
- assisting learners to develop patterns of historical reasoning by asking questions, fostering debate, using evidence to support a position and communicating that position effectively
- assisting learners to form some understanding of the circumstances, thoughts, feelings and actions of people in the past, that is, a sense of historicity or 'feel' for the way people thought, felt and behaved in the past
- presenting historiography to the learner as an ongoing and frequently contentious debate about the past, rather than an agreed-upon product
- challenging learners to move beyond their own theories about the past, reconcile their own and others' histories, and think critically about the world around them

(Source: Making History: A Guide for the teaching and Learning of History in Australian Classrooms, Available: www.hyperhistory.org)

Using historical sources

A primary source is one that is directly linked with an event or series of events in the past.

A secondary source is one that is created at a later date and provides further commentary on the event or person. Historical sources can come in many forms and include artefacts, letters, artworks, films, photographs, extracts from speeches, newspaper articles, documentaries, official records, statistics, music, poetry, posters, advertising and stories as well as written textbooks.

At the primary level, teachers can begin to teach students about historical evidence through familiar contexts – home, schools and local area. For example, use of evidence such as family photographs, drawings and artefacts can be used to develop students' historical thinking by:

- creating a chronology (events in a personal or family timeline – continuity and change)
- explaining history through narrative (generational or family changes examined through, for example, photographs)
- using various forms of evidence (for example, a baby book and loss of first tooth as a major event – different forms of evidence)
- constructing stories from the past without having directly experienced them (for example, their parents' wedding – the use and value of evidence)
- looking at how sources might disagree (for example, student or parental memory versus photograph – conflicting evidence)
- examining how sources can be reliable or unreliable (comparing family memories of events with the sources – trustworthiness of evidence).

Questioning evidence

Students should be encouraged to ask a range of questions about primary and secondary sources.

Initial questioning of historical sources to establish identity and credentials might include the following:

- Is this a primary or secondary source?
- Who created the document?
- When was the document created?
- Where was the document originally created?
- Who was the original intended audience for the document?
- What was the original intended purpose of the document?
- What events at the time provide a background for this document?
- Whose point of view is represented?
- What other viewpoints might be needed?
- Organised discussion, framed around a taxonomical structure such as Bloom's, can be useful in the developing of concepts for younger students. Questions like these are useful in developing a student's historical literacy:
 - 'Describe what happened after ...' (knowledge)
 - 'Can you explain ...?' 'Can you give an example of ...?' (comprehension)
 - 'Do you know of another time when ...?' (application)
 - 'Can you explain why things changed/remained the same ...?' (analysis)
 - 'What would happen if ...?' (synthesis)
 - 'Do you believe ...?' (evaluation)

The research/inquiry process

Research and inquiry skills are essential for young historians. The inquiry process engages students in the issues of historical explanation. It also supports the development of higher order thinking skills, increases student involvement and ownership of learning and caters for mixed abilities and individual differences.

The basic elements of the inquiry approach are:

- choosing the topic (and questions, issues or problems)
- gathering information
- analysing information
- presenting findings.

Involvement in the inquiry process may be through a classroom activity that takes place in one lesson or occurs over several lessons. The level of scaffolding and teacher direction will depend on the ability level of the students and the difficulty of the task but by Year 10 students should be increasingly independent researchers.

Choosing the topic

A context for inquiry can be created by providing students with stimulus which might be in the form of a story, photographs, a segment from a documentary or a current event such as a newspaper story about refugees or Anzac Day.

Research questions could be generated through brainstorming, ‘Think, pair, share’ strategies, class discussion, viewing a documentary or reading stories.

Good research questions should be researchable and allow for a range of views and perspectives of appropriate depth and challenge.

Teachers need to ensure that students are provided with enough information to provide a context for research and that they understand key terms and concepts they will encounter.

Gathering information

Research methods will be determined by the questions, the extent of the task, the availability of resources and time.

In the primary years, teachers might select key resources for students to use and location of resources at both the primary and secondary years might be part of a cooperative exercise. Research methods might include: Internet searches, excursions to museums, listening to guest speakers, conducting interviews, viewing film and reading literature and specialist texts.

Student research might be accompanied by scaffolding such as data sheets for recording information against key questions and proformas which encourage the collection of correct bibliographic information.

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Sample programs

The VCAA is currently developing sample programs to assist schools to incorporate some of the newer domains in the VELs successfully into teaching and learning programs. The programs will focus on the domains of Personal Learning, Interpersonal Development, Thinking Processes and Information and Communications Technology.

The project aims to develop resources from a whole school perspective that support discipline/subject-based approaches or integrated approaches to school curriculum. The programs will be complemented by advice and support materials such as planning procedures including strategies, processes, timelines and sample units of work, practical teaching and learning strategies and assessment ideas.

The VCAA is interested in working with schools where programs have been implemented in these domains either at a whole school level or by a team of teachers for particular year levels or subjects. We are looking for schools that are undertaking a coordinated interwoven approach to incorporating these domains into curriculum programs and in doing so may have developed:

- plans for curriculum development and teacher professional learning
- management processes and structures
- teaching, learning and assessment strategies
- strategies for monitoring the effectiveness of implementation.

A form requesting expressions of interest to participate in the project has been sent to all schools. Schools can participate in two ways: by providing advice and materials that would support schools in the implementation of these domains, or by participating in a teacher reference group to review the materials and to provide feedback on them prior to publication.

If you haven't yet completed the form but you wish to participate in the project or find out more about it, please contact Peta Evans, Project Manager P-10 Curriculum, telephone (03) 9651 4405 or email: evans.peta.p@edumail.vic.gov.au

Consultations on VELs website and resources

During June and July, the VCAA reviewed the usability of the VELs website and the usefulness of the resources developed to support teachers in implementing VELs. Two approaches were used – an independent analysis and testing of the website in terms of its usability; and two groups of teachers invited to provide feedback on particular resources developed over the last two years and provide advice about the kind of support schools need to assist their further implementation of the VELs. The information obtained from both of these processes will assist the VCAA to refine the design and improve the usability of the website and improve the quality of the resources.

Website usability testing

Website user analysis

An analysis of website user statistics collected over a six-month period was conducted. The analysis detailed improvements that could be made to the website to improve usability and access to the resources.

The website usability testing involved 16 individuals, including parents, teachers and education consultants, being monitored as they navigated the site in response to 20 specific tasks over 45 minutes.

Key recommendations from the analysis and user testing include simplifying the language, consolidating background information, improving the links and navigation of the website, adding 'Glossary' to the top navigation bar of the website, refining the homepage and adding Quick Links to the homepage.

Teacher feedback on resources

Two meetings of secondary and primary teachers were held to evaluate and provide feedback on key resources. Curriculum leaders from government, Catholic and independent schools were involved, with representation from metropolitan and regional areas as well as from small schools and multi-campus schools. The meetings

highlighted the view that collegiate networking and forums for curriculum discussions are valuable and important in developing teacher pedagogy and ways in which schools can effectively bring about the implementation of VELs.

The curriculum leaders found the discussions illuminating and reassuring as to how their school was progressing in the curriculum development journey. Common ground was identified on issues for schools which will assist the VCAA on developing further resources.

Feedback from the groups supported the Website usability test results and indicated that the VELs website is used regularly for planning and assessment purposes. Feedback about the Sample Units, Assessment Maps and the Assessment Tasks (which are under development) was positive, with teachers commenting on their usefulness but requesting additional examples and for links to be explicit between assessment tasks and work samples.

Teachers value the resources and are seeking to further their understandings of teaching and learning through the website in their efforts to plan and deliver high quality curriculum. The groups provided a number of useful suggestions about future development of resources which the VCAA will take on board in planning the next stage of its work.

Work is underway to implement many of the suggestions from the groups to ensure quality resources are being provided to schools and that the website is user friendly. Modifications to the website will be made over the next few months such as sample units and multi-domain units with changes highlighted on the homepage.

Further discussions centred on the importance of interweaving the Physical Personal and Social Learning, Discipline-based Learning and the Interdisciplinary Learning strands into curriculum and teaching and learning practices. There were many suggestions as to how the VCAA could support schools in achieving this through such resources as multi-domain units and sample programs (see article on the sample programs project on page 7).

National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy to commence in 2008

The Victorian State Government has announced that from 2008, all Victorian Government, Catholic and Independent schools will be participating in the National Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Program.

The Program will involve students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 and it is anticipated that approximately 260 000 students and 2500 schools across Victoria will participate.

Testing will be conducted from **13–15 May 2008**.

The Program will replace the current AIM state-wide testing program and will be administered by the VCAA.

Following the conduct of the tests, individual student results will be reported to parents and schools and aggregated results will be reported at the national level.

More information about national testing will be provided to schools in early 2008.

AIM Data Reports

Year 9 2007

The AIM Data Service Reports can be used to supplement information in the parent reports. Teachers are advised to become familiar with the content of the reports so they can answer parents' questions about particular aspects of their children's results.

Confidentiality of results

The Parent Reports are confidential documents containing personal information about each student and how they compare to others within the school and across the state. When discussing AIM results with parents, teachers should indicate that the information about each child is confidential to the child's parents, the teacher and the school.

Distribution of Parent Reports

It is important that teachers are fully informed of the results of each student and of the results for their class as a whole, and that parents have the opportunity to discuss the results with the school. The results sent to the school provide detailed information about the achievement of each student. This information can be used to place the Parent Reports in a wider context that enables strategies and suggestions for learning improvement to be discussed with parents.

It is important that the Parent Reports are delivered

to parents in a timely manner as many were awaiting the Year 9 results at the beginning of Term 3. Given the need for confidentiality, the VCAA asks schools to consider a direct mail out of results to their parent body or to issue them directly to parents (e.g. through information nights or collection from the school by parents).

Any of these methods will mean that students will see their information only if parent/s wish them to.

Replacement of Parent Reports

The VCAA provides only one set of Parent Reports to the school for distribution. Should a parent request a replacement copy of a report, the school will be able to provide a copy of results from the AIM Data Service Student Profiles Report. Schools may photocopy the printed report sent to the school. Parent Reports which carry an incorrect name as a result of incorrect information provided by the school may be replaced on request to the VCAA.

Queries about Parent Reports

Parents who contact the VCAA with queries about their child's report will, in most circumstances, be referred to the school. If the school has queries about results for particular students, please contact the AIM Helpdesk on freecall 1800 648 637 or email: vcaa.aim.help@edumail.vic.gov.au

VCAA Assessment Online – On Demand Testing

Development of Progress Tests

The VCAA is developing a series of Progress Tests that will assist teachers to monitor their students' development against the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). To ensure the validity of these tests, the VCAA will be conducting a trial between 3 and 14 September 2007.

For the 2007 trial, Progress Tests have been developed for the two VELS Dimensions of English/Reading and Mathematics/Number. Please contact the Project Manager, Fran O'Mara, by email: <o'mara.frances.f@edumail.vic.gov.au> or by phone on (03) 9225 2369 to register your school's interest in participating in the Progress Tests trial.

Following analysis of the trial data, the first suite of Progress Tests will be released electronically via the VCAA Assessment Online system in late 2007. After the release of the Progress Tests, school users of the VCAA Assessment Online system will have access to the following Progress Tests Reports:

1. *Student Raw Score by Question Standard Level*
2. *Class Raw Score by Question Standard Level*
3. *Student Percentage Correct by Question Standard Level*
4. *Student Percentage Correct by Key Area*
5. *Student Skill Report*
6. *Class Skill Report*

Below is a preview of the *Student Percentage Correct by Question Standard Level* report:

User: schladmin		Date: 02/03/2006								
		Time: 3:54:37 PM								
Student Percentage Correct by Question Standard Level (Linear)										
Test Number:	1264									
Test Description:	English 3, Reading Year 3/4									
Maximum Score:	22									
Date From:	Any									
Date To:	02 Mar 2006									
(Year Level: All, Home Group: All, Gender: All, LDOTE: All, ATSI: All)										
Number of Students: 10										
Number of Test Results: 10										
Standard Level	2		3		4		Raw Score	Standard Score		
Student Name	Student ID	Test Date	Number of Questions	% Correct	Number of Questions	% Correct	Number of Questions	% Correct		
Berney - Rutble	Student23	27/02/2006 4:12:59 PM	4	75.0	15	26.7	3	0	7	4.0
Burt - Simpson	Student19	27/02/2006 4:14:52 PM	4	50.0	15	46.7	3	0	9	4.1
Elton - John	Student16	27/02/2006 4:13:54 PM	4	75.0	15	80.0	3	0	15	4.5
Fred - Flintstone	Student10	27/02/2006 4:15:43 PM	4	50.0	15	26.7	3	0	6	3.9
Julia - Roberts	Student15	27/02/2006 4:13:16 PM	4	50.0	15	26.7	3	33.3	7	4.0
Marge - Simpson	Student13	27/02/2006 4:13:43 PM	4	100.0	15	80.0	3	33.3	17	4.9
Mickey - Mouse	Student24	27/02/2006 4:12:50 PM	4	75.0	15	80.0	3	0	15	4.5
Santa - Claus	Student22	27/02/2006 4:12:36 PM	4	100.0	15	86.7	3	86.7	19	5.0
Tom - Cruise	Student20	27/02/2006 4:14:09 PM	4	75.0	15	73.3	3	33.3	15	4.5
Wander - Woman	Student11	27/02/2006 4:13:22 PM	4	75.0	15	73.3	3	0	14	4.4
Average							12.422	4.6		

VCAA Assessment Online – On Demand Testing is provided free to both Victorian Government and non-government schools via the Internet. If your school is not yet a user of On Demand Testing, you can register for access to On Demand Testing at: <https://registration.vcaa.vic.edu.au/school/eoilogin.asp>

You will need your VCAA five-digit school code to register electronically.

Alternatively, you can contact the On Demand Testing Helpdesk on:

Freecall 1800 623 681

Or email your school details to:

aim.support@edumail.vic.gov.au

June 2006 to June 2007

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Analysing information

Student researchers should be progressively introduced to a range of resources and critically question key sources.

In the primary years, students should develop skills of understanding sources, asking key questions about them and making judgments about the evidence. Questions such as: Who wrote this? When? Who was the audience? Whose point of view is this? will guide students in this process.

At the secondary years, students will progressively encounter a greater range and sophistication of sources and make judgments about the strengths and limitations of evidence, and evaluate sources for context, information, reliability, completeness, objectivity and bias.

Presenting findings

Presenting the findings requires a clear sense of who the audience is and the purpose of the research. Students will progressively learn the conventions associated with presentation including use of historical language and conventions covering bibliographies. The VELS history learning focus statements provide a range of examples of ways that students might present their understanding in history.

Introduction by John Firth

A much loved staff member of the VCAA, Sophie Soltys passed away recently at an untimely age. These tragic events which occur in the life of all organisations give each of us pause for thought. It is a salutary reminder that we are all dealing with fellow humans with all their frailties and strengths at the other end of the phone, email or letter.

The following appreciation was provided by her colleagues in the P-10 Assessment Unit.

Vale

Sophie (Sonia) Soltys

The VCAA was deeply saddened by the recent passing of Sophie Soltys. Sophie was known to many staff in schools as the very friendly lady who went out of her way to find the right answer to a question and greeted everyone with a cheery voice and happy disposition. Many teachers and principals over the years have expressed their appreciation of her efforts.

Sophie worked for the P-10 Assessment Unit for ten years and was a loyal and conscientious colleague and friend at all times. Rarely a week went by when she didn't provide cake for morning tea. Sophie was a very positive person and many of her colleagues will remember the kind words of encouragement she gave them.

Sophie had many things she was passionate about – the gym, her family, special friends, shopping, the Collingwood Football Club, cooking, and especially people. She always made time to stop and enquire how people were and was always interested in their lives.

Her colleagues will miss her deeply.



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