



VCAA Bulletin P-10

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

Principal Curriculum Coordinator PD Coordinator NAPLAN Coordinator P-10 Teachers

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CEO's column



The VCAA has begun work with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) to plan the Early Learning and Development Framework 0-8. We are, of course, keenly aware that this is new territory for us. We will be relying on the expertise of key stakeholders

in the early childhood sector to inform our work. The Board is excited at the prospect of taking up the challenge provided by the Premier to develop an integrated 0-8 framework within which we can acknowledge and support the crucial early learning that occurs before formal schooling.

We are at the very earliest part of our work with many more questions than answers at this stage. I will say categorically, however, that we have no intention of simply adapting models that we have developed for school age children for the early years. We will be approaching this work with an open mind, and a commitment to broad consultation and to undertake comprehensive analysis of the available national and international evidence.

The work will be the product of a genuine partnership with the DEECD's Office for Children and Early Childhood Development with shared responsibilities for working with our respective stakeholders. As a key element of the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) agenda, this project will lead directly into the whole area of enhanced national work. Together with the National Curriculum work, the VCAA is looking forward and planning for an exciting period of genuine national collaboration.

National Literacy and Numeracy testing

This year marks the commencement of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students across Australia. The NAPLAN replaces the AIM Assessment Program which commenced in 2000. The VCAA would like to take this opportunity to thank the many teachers across Victoria who contributed their time and expertise to AIM related activities, such as the marking of student writing, item construction and test review.

While the VCAA is not directly responsible for item writing or the construction of the national tests, we will continue to have an integral role in the review and selection of test items, and will continue to be responsible for both test implementation and the marking of Victorian test papers.

The major differences between the NAPLAN and AIM programs is that the tests are now held over three days instead of two days and that there are no Teacher Assessed Tasks for Years 3 and 5 students.

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The NAPLAN is a curriculum-based assessment program for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students, testing knowledge and skills in Literacy and Numeracy. The results of the tests will provide information for students, parents, teachers and principals about student achievement which can be used to support teaching and learning programs. As this is the first year of this important national initiative, it is vital that all Victorian students are given every opportunity to participate in the tests.

Test content

Students will undertake NAPLAN tests in Language Conventions, Writing, Reading and Numeracy.

- The Language Conventions test consists of spelling, grammar and punctuation questions.
- For the Writing test, students will be presented with a writing stimulus sheet for a piece of narrative writing, given some time for planning and then asked to respond in their test booklet. Please note that students should not

- be given extra writing paper as only the writing in their test booklets will be marked
- For the Reading test, students will be asked to answer questions related to texts from a reading magazine. The texts in the reading magazine will cover a range of imaginative, informative and argumentative text types.
- Numeracy tests will comprise questions from areas such as Number; Algebra, function and pattern; Space and Measurement, chance and data (Algebra questions are included in Year 9 tests only).
- Years 3 and 5 students will sit only one Numeracy test. The use of a calculator is NOT permitted in the Years 3 and 5 Numeracy tests.
- Years 7 and 9 students will undertake two numeracy tests, the second of which will permit the use of a calculator. Schools should ensure that all Years 7 and 9 students have either their own calculator, or a calculator with which they are familiar, to use during the test. Schools are advised to have a reserve of working calculators available for students to use should students forget to bring their own calculator, or should their own calculator fail during the test.

NAPLAN 2008 timetable

Year Level	Test session time	Tuesday 13 May	Wednesday 14 May	Thursday 15 May
Year 3	Before recess	Language Conventions 40 minutes	Reading 45 minutes	Numeracy 45 minutes
	Before lunch	Writing 40 minutes		
Year 5	Before recess	Language Conventions 40 minutes	Reading 50 minutes	Numeracy 50 minutes
	Before lunch	Writing 40 minutes		
Year 7	Before recess	Language Conventions 45 minutes	Reading 65 minutes	Numeracy (non-calculator) 40 minutes
	Before lunch	Writing 40 minutes		Numeracy (calculator allowed) 40 minutes
Year 9	Before recess	Language Conventions 45 minutes	Reading 65 minutes	Numeracy (non-calculator) 40 minutes
	Before lunch	Writing 40 minutes		Numeracy (calculator allowed) 40 minutes

Note:

It is required that students be given a break of at least 20 minutes between test sessions that are conducted on the same day. The test session times indicated in this table are the published test times – that is, the time allowed to complete the test, excluding administration time.

Exemptions

In certain circumstances, students may be granted an exemption from the NAPLAN 2008 tests. The principal may grant an exemption only to students:

- with intellectual disabilities.
- who have been learning English in Australia for less than one year.

Students who have a significant intellectual disability such that he/she cannot perform in an assessment situation can be exempted. This includes students who are unable to follow even the general instructions of the assessment. However, students cannot be excluded solely because of poor academic performance or disciplinary problems. Students who can be accommodated under special provisions should be assessed.

Students arriving from overseas less than one year before the test with a language background other than English can be exempted.

Students who do not participate in the NAPLAN 2008 tests due to reasons other than those listed above should NOT be registered as exempt.

The Record of Exemption form for each exempted student must be completed, signed by the principal and the parent or guardian, and returned to the VCAA with the test booklets after the tests. A copy of these forms should be kept by the school. The details of exempt students should also be recorded on the Student Participation forms.

The Record of Exemption form is available on the VCAA website at:

www.vcaa.vic.edu.au (Follow the AIM/NAPLAN link.)

It is also available in the following languages other than English:

Arabic, Bosnian, Chinese (Traditional), Tagalog, Persian, Serbian, Somali, Vietnamese, Spanish, Cambodian, Hindi, Sinhala, Turkish, Samoan.

Statement of Compliance

To ensure the security and integrity of the NAPLAN, principals have been asked to complete a Statement of Compliance on the NAPLAN Test Administration website: <www.naplanadmin.vic.edu.au>. Log-in details were provided to schools in January 2008.

The VCAA thanks those principals who have already completed this task and asks that principals who have not yet completed this do so as soon as possible. Principals should contact the NAPLAN Help Desk if they require assistance with accessing the NAPLAN Test Administration website.

Sample questions

The NAPLAN website contains useful information for schools and parents, including test samples. These can be accessed at: www.naplan.edu.au/

Previous AIM tests are still available on the VCAA website and may also be a useful resource for parents, teachers and students. The tests are all PDF files.

Catch-up tests

In the interest of maximising participation in the NAPLAN 2008, individual students who were absent on test days can complete 'catch-up' tests up until Friday 23 May.

Please note that Requests to Vary Test Dates for whole classes closed on 20 March and no further requests will be considered.

Delivery of test packages

Delivery of the NAPLAN test packages will begin on Wednesday 30 April 2008. Staff should be briefed about the pending arrival of the test packages. Please note that no test packages will be left at a school without a signature from a staff member.

Test packages will include test booklets for all NAPLAN tests (including spares), reading and writing stimulus materials, Test Administration Guides, pencils and parent information pamphlets which can be distributed to parents prior to the commencement of the NAPLAN tests.

If you do not receive your test package by Tuesday 6 May 2008, please contact the NAPLAN Help Desk immediately.

Schools should document the receipt, tracking, storage and distribution of the test materials in the Test Materials Security Log that will accompany test packages.

Secure materials will be packed separately in tamper evident bags within the test package. The Packing Slip should be used to check that the correct quantity of materials has been provided. The number of test booklets and stimulus materials included in the package is based on the pre-enrolment and census data provided for each year level. Extra copies of all materials are provided to allow for new enrolments.

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Request for additional materials

Test booklets and stimulus materials should be counted upon arrival at the school without opening the tamper evident packaging. If there are insufficient quantities of any materials, the principal should contact the nearest DEECD Regional Office or the Catholic Education Office as soon as possible. Alternatively, schools can complete the Request for Extra Materials form in the relevant Test Administration Guide and fax it to the VCAA on (03) 9225 2334 by Friday 9 May.

NAPLAN Help Desk

A telephone service operates to assist schools with queries about all aspects of the NAPLAN 2008.

This service operates from 8.30 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday. After 5.00 pm and on weekends or public holidays, a message service operates.

Phone: (03) 9225 2332

Freecall: 1800 648 637

Fax: (03) 9225 2334

Email: vcaa.naplan.help@edumail.vic.gov.au

Website: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

VELS Assessment Maps

In 2007, Assessment Maps were published in all domains to assist schools to assess student work using the VELS. They provide a range of annotated student work samples at the relevant standards and progression points to support teachers in making consistent on-balance judgments about student achievement.

Towards the end of November 2007 all Assessment Maps were reviewed by VCAA curriculum managers and a number of teacher reference groups. As a result of this review, minor modifications are currently being made to existing work samples. Modifications include minor editing, strengthening the annotations and clarifying the context.

Thirty-five LOTE work samples are currently undergoing quality assurance and will be published during Term 2. These include French samples at the progression points and samples of writing to illustrate three of the language categories: for Roman alphabetical languages – Italian, German and Indonesian; for non-Roman alphabetical languages – Greek and Arabic; for character languages – Japanese and Chinese. A project to generate work samples in Auslan has also commenced.

In response to feedback, new assessment tasks that will generate additional student work samples are being designed in consultation with teachers in the Arts, Communication, Design, Creativity and Technology, English, Health and Physical Education, Information and Communications Technology, Interpersonal Development, Mathematics, Personal Learning, Science and Thinking Processes. These focus on a multi domain approach and are designed to allow students to demonstrate achievement of and progress towards the standards.

Following a review process, teachers will implement them with students. Student work will be collected and assessed against the relevant standards. Samples will be selected to illustrate standards or progression points, annotated, and published online progressively in Terms 2 to 3.

For further information about this project, contact Maggie Bishop, Project Manager P-10 Curriculum by phone: (03) 9651 4335 or email: bishop.maggie.p@edumail.vic.gov.au

Indigenous Languages Standards

During 2008, the VCAA will develop a set of standards to support the teaching, learning and assessment of Indigenous Languages. This will provide a sixth category in the LOTE domain, following on from the standards for Classical Languages developed in 2007.

Although Victoria's Indigenous Languages would seem to fit into the VELs category of Roman alphabet languages they require a revival and reclamation teaching methodology as none are currently spoken as the primary means of communication by any community. The Gunai, Wergaia and Yorta Yorta languages are currently being taught in Victorian schools in a variety of ways through the Victorian College of Koorie Education, Victorian School of Languages via distance education using video conferencing in Horsham and Ballarat and through a community group in Echuca.

On advice from the VCAA Indigenous Languages Implementation Group, a state-wide community consultation with Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups, the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. and other Aboriginal communities will be conducted in Term 2.

In 2007, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) undertook a comprehensive Review on the Educational Outcomes for Koorie Students in Victoria. The outcomes of this have informed the development of Wannik (Learning Together – Journey to Our Future) which the Minister for Education, Hon. Bronwyn Pike launched on Friday 15 February 2008. Wannik, from the Gunai/Kurnai language meaning, 'Learning Together – Journey to Our Future' is the government's new Education Strategy for Koorie Students in Victoria. The overarching principle of the strategy is about delivering the best possible education to Victoria's Koorie students. The VCAA project to develop Indigenous standards for the LOTE domain will complement the systemic reforms being undertaken.

For further information about the project, contact Maree Dellora, Manager LOTE, by phone: (03) 9651 4620 or email: dellora.maree.r@edumail.vic.gov.au

Early Learning and Development Framework 0–8

On Tuesday 5 February 2008, the Premier and the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development announced a range of initiatives to improve integration between maternal and child health services, childcare, kindergartens and school education. As a key part of this work, the VCAA will work in partnership with the Department's Office for Children and Early Childhood Development (OCECD) and the Victorian Children's Council to develop a 0–8 Early Learning and Development Framework.

Extensive consultation will occur with early childhood educators, teachers, experts and parents. The intention is that the Framework will link to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and provide teachers with one set of advice and guidelines.

The Framework will include:

- consistent, practical and evidence-based approaches to support a child's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development
- clear and commonly agreed developmental outcomes for children
- a common philosophy on how children learn best
- developmental pathways that can be adapted according to the individual needs of children
- a common and systematic foundation for families and professionals to conduct high quality transition programs.

As preliminary research prior to developing the Framework, the VCAA has commissioned an analysis and evaluation of birth-to-age-eight learning and/or curriculum documents in Australian states and territories and international jurisdictions.

The Framework will be developed by July 2009, with trialing and evaluation to follow immediately and full implementation by the start of the 2010 school year.

Design Awareness in Schools

The Student Learning February 2006 DVD which was distributed to all Prep to Year 10 schools in Term 1 2006 included a stand-alone resource, *Design Awareness in Schools*. This resource has now been converted into a series of Microsoft PowerPoint presentations that teachers can download from the VELS website.

Design Awareness in Schools is designed to support all teachers to develop their own and their students' understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of design elements and principles and how these can be used across the curriculum. An awareness of design can stimulate creativity and innovation, and enhance the presentation of work that demonstrates students' understanding in all areas of learning.

Design Awareness in Schools is both a teacher reference and a classroom teaching tool. It can be used to stimulate classroom discussion and learning activities about design. For example, this resource can be used with students to:

- foster deep learning about the place of design in the world
- explore the notion of design
- demonstrate the design process
- enhance the presentation of ideas
- illustrate the application of design elements and principles
- explore careers in design.

The Microsoft PowerPoint presentations focus on:

- design
- design elements
- design principles
- design process
- design in ICT
- careers.

Some of the larger presentations have been divided into smaller files to facilitate downloading. Teachers will be able to download, modify and combine slides from the presentations to suit their specific purposes. These presentations are supported by Microsoft Word and PDF versions of a range of teaching and learning activities and a document which includes links to online resources.

The resource is available at <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/support/cdromdvd.html>

For further information about the resource, contact Lorraine Tran, Curriculum Manager, P-10 Design and Technology by phone: (03) 9651 4407 or email: lorraine.i@edumail.vic.gov.au

VELS and Employability Skills

In the February 2008 VCAA Bulletin P-10 Issue 33, schools were invited to express interest in working with the VCAA on a project to illustrate the relationship between Level 6 of the VELS and facets of the Employability Skills Framework developed by the Department of Education, Science and Training, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia.

In late February, seven teacher project teams commenced work on developing sample units in The Arts, Design, Creativity and Technology, Economics, English, Geography, History and Science. The units also incorporate elements of Level 6 standards in domains from the Interdisciplinary and Physical, Personal and Social Learning strands – Communication, Information and Communications Technology, Interpersonal Development, Personal Learning and Thinking Processes. Each element of the standard in these domains is linked to a facet of an employability skill appropriate to a school setting. The units include teaching and learning activities, a strong assessment component including tasks, criteria and rubrics and a range of suggested resources.

During April and May, the participating Years 9 and 10 teachers will implement the units in their schools and collect samples of student work. Following this school-based work, each project team will assess the work using the agreed criteria, and select and annotate samples that exemplify achievement of Level 6 standards and reflect related employability skills.

The units will be published on the VELS website in Term 2. The annotated work samples will be published in early Term 3 as part of the VELS assessment maps.

For further information about the project, contact Robyn Douglass, Project Manager P-10 Curriculum by phone: (03) 9651 4564 or email: douglass.robyn.f@edumail.vic.gov.au

February 2007 to February 2008

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Victorian Essential Learning Standards

<<http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au>>

National Statements of Learning in the VELs including updates to the Level and Domain booklets

Sexuality education and the VELs

Safety and sensitive issues in HPE

Asia in the VELs

The Advance program and the VELs

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy

<www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/naplan/index.html>

Forms

Principal's Responsibilities 2008

Record of Exemption form, NAPLAN Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 Testing 2008

(Also available in languages other than English)

Request for Extra Materials form, NAPLAN Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 Testing 2008

Student Withdrawal Form, NAPLAN Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 Testing 2008

Publications

Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN Principals' Guide

NAPLAN Administration

Instructions for Government and Catholic Schools

Instructions for Independent Schools

Information for parents

NAPLAN Parent Pamphlet

Modifications to VELS website

In 2007, the VCAA engaged an organisation to conduct an independent evaluation of the VELS website by conducting usability testing and analysing website usage statistics. At the same time, two focus groups of curriculum leaders were asked to review the support materials published for teachers on the website and suggest improvements.

In response to feedback and recommendations from both of these processes, the VCAA has commenced implementation of some changes that will refine the design and improve the user friendliness of the website and improve the quality of the resources.

These changes include:

- addition of a 'Quick Links' section to the homepage for easier access to the more frequently used pages
- restructuring of the main navigation bar to be more intuitive
- repositioning of the Search facility to become more prominent
- addition of a link to the glossary in the global navigation
- allowing direct access to downloads of documents from relevant pages
- insertion of the corresponding school years beside VELS levels in the left navigation menu.

Further modifications are in development such as the inclusion of a right navigation bar for related pages on the VELS website and links to other resources; expansion of drop-down menus in some cases so all sections of a resource can be seen at a glance; and consolidating or condensing related text. These modifications will be implemented progressively and highlighted in this Bulletin.

For feedback on these modifications or to provide further suggestions for improvement to the website, contact Vincent Pangemanan by phone: (03) 9651 4617 or email: pangemanan.vincent.b@edumail.vic.gov.au

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