



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

CONTENTS

NAPLAN 2008	1
NAPLAN Data Service	2
VCAA Assessment Online	3
VELS and Employability Skills	4
Assessment Maps	4
Indigenous Languages	5
Framework update	6
INDEX: April 2007 to April 2008	7
Distribution: 27 March 2008 to 21 May 2008	7

NAPLAN 2008

Marking the NAPLAN Writing Test

As this issue goes to press, marking of the NAPLAN 2008 Writing Test for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 is close to completion.

In Victoria, approximately 250 000 student writing tests were marked online by a team of 340 markers. Marking was done either in a VCAA marking centre or in the marker's home. VCAA markers participated in a series of training workshops prior to commencing marking. To ensure consistency of marking, the content and format of these workshops was the same across Australia.

Students were asked to write a narrative based on a common story idea. The same story idea was given to Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students. In 2008, the story idea was 'Found'.

Students were given five minutes at the start of the test to plan their story, 30 minutes to write their story and five minutes at the end of the test to edit.

The marking criteria, which were developed and agreed to at a national level, are different to those which were used in the AIM marking process. Student writing was assessed against ten criteria.

1. Audience – The writer's capacity to orient, engage and affect the reader. In marking 'Audience' the markers assessed the students' awareness of their audience and addressed the following questions.

Has the student responded to the task by writing a story?

Can the story be followed? (Score range 0–6)

- 2. Text structure** – The organisation of narrative features; including orientation, complication and resolution into an appropriate and effective text structure. An orientation can focus the reader on a setting, an action or characters. (Score range 0–4)
- 3. Ideas** – The creation, selection and crafting of ideas for a narrative. In some scripts the ideas are the events in the story. (Score range 0–5)
- 4. Character and Setting** – The portrayal and development of character and/or the development of a sense of place, time and atmosphere. (Score range 0–4)
- 5. Vocabulary** – The range and precision of language choices. This criterion looks at the effectiveness of choices of words and word groups. Effective language includes nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs including technical words. (Score range 0–5)
- 6. Cohesion** – The control of multiple threads and relationships across the whole text, achieved through the use of referring words, substitutions, word associations and text connectives. (Score range 0–4)
- 7. Paragraphs** – The segmenting of text into paragraphs that assists a reader to negotiate the narrative. A paragraph break can be; an indentation of a new line, space between the paragraph blocks, student annotations or available space on the previous line left unused and context shows a paragraph is intended. (Score range 0–2)

continued: PAGE 2

from: PAGE 1

- 8. Sentence structure** – The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences. (Score range 0–6)
- 9. Punctuation** – The use of correct and appropriate punctuation to aid reading of the text. (Score range 0–5)
- 10. Spelling** – The accuracy of spelling and the difficulty of spelling the words used. (Score range 0–6)

As markers were able to work from home as well as at VCAA marking centres during the marking process, it was possible to constantly keep in touch and monitor the marking and moderate the processes across the country.

The VCAA thanks all of our markers for their dedicated efforts to ensure that Victorian students received the results they were due.

NAPLAN Data Service

In 2004, the VCAA introduced an online Data Service for all Victorian schools to report Achievement Improvement Monitor (AIM) State-wide testing results. With the introduction of National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in 2008, the VCAA will modify the Data Service to accommodate the reporting of the national tests, while continuing to provide schools with access to past AIM data.

Report order

In most cases report formats will be similar to those used in the AIM Data Service. However, the reports will be reordered to allow schools to first access a global view of state and school data, then delve deeper down to reports which will provide individual student achievement and item level information.

National reports and statistics

The Data Service will report state, school and student data against a ten-band national achievement scale. The distribution of national results statistics will be included, where applicable, after national statistics have been officially released.

Estimated VELS equivalent reports and statistics

The VCAA will undertake an equating study to facilitate the provision of estimated VELS equivalent scores for NAPLAN test outcomes. The Data Service will report these estimated VELS equivalent scores where applicable.

Trend Data

There will be some differences in both the construct and the content of the NAPLAN results compared to the AIM tests. No direct comparison to past AIM data will be provided, as the differences in the tests will mean such comparisons are unlikely to provide meaningful or reliable information. A trend data report will be introduced in 2009, allowing school data comparisons back to 2008. Similarly, matched cohort comparison reports showing group or individual student growth between testing years will be available in 2010.

New reports

Two new reports will be included in 2008. The first will be an Item Analysis Report, which will provide response data at an item level. The second will be a Student Participation Report, which will provide schools with the opportunity to confirm student exemptions, withdrawals and absences.

Important dates for NAPLAN 2009

NAPLAN 2009 will be conducted from 12–14 May.

The sequence and time allocation for tests is expected to be the same as in 2008.

That is:

12 May Language Conventions and Writing

13 May Reading

14 May Numeracy (with Years 7 and 9 completing a non-calculator test and calculator allowed test)

The VCAA will notify schools as soon as possible if any changes are made to these arrangements.

Security measures and audit visits to schools for NAPLAN Testing

As in 2007, the VCAA continues to visit schools to check security arrangements for test materials and to observe the conduct of the tests in schools.

The VCAA has visited a sample of 15 schools recently to audit security arrangements and to undertake an observation of the administrative procedures of the NAPLAN tests. The main focus of the audit visits was to:

- check security arrangements for the test materials at the school
- review relevant documentation, such as the Security Log
- provide advice on the conduct of the tests.

Schools were notified prior to the visits taking place.

During the testing period, 13–15 May, 37 observers attended 126 test sessions in schools. In all cases, the NAPLAN tests were conducted according to the instructions set out in the *Test Administration Guide*. Test Supervisors, NAPLAN coordinators and principals are to be congratulated on their professional approach to their roles in the delivery of the first national tests in Victoria.

The VCAA wishes to thank those principals who kindly welcomed personnel into their schools to monitor the testing conditions and administrative procedures for the NAPLAN 2008.

VCAA Assessment Online

On Demand Testing

Development of Progress Tests

The VCAA is developing a series of Progress Tests that will assist teachers in monitoring their students' development against the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). Twelve Progress Tests are scheduled for release in Term Three, 2008. There will be six Reading and six Mathematics (Number) Progress Tests across the Year Levels 3–8.

As well as being available online, the Progress Tests will be available later as downloadable pdfs for schools that wish to administer them as hardcopies. Online Progress Tests are marked by the On Demand system with a report being generated for each student who sits the test. A marking Rubric and VELS translation table will be supplied with the Progress Test pdfs. Schools will be notified by memorandum when the Progress Tests are available on line.

The VCAA On Demand Testing system is provided free to both Victorian Government and non-government schools, via the Internet. To access the Progress Tests when they are released you will need to be a registered user of the On Demand system. Schools can register for On Demand Testing at: <https://registration.vcaa.vic.edu.au/school/eoilogin.asp>

Alternatively, schools can contact the VCAA Administrative Support Unit (details below).

On Demand professional development

The VCAA is planning professional development workshops to be conducted in metropolitan locations in August 2008. These workshops will provide an overview of the Progress Tests. These workshops are aimed at Assessment and Reporting Coordinators, Curriculum Coordinators, interested teachers and Regional staff. Further information regarding the content of the workshops and how to register will be made available to schools in Term 3.

Contacts

Any queries regarding registration for On Demand testing and professional development should be directed to the VCAA Administrative Support Unit on 1800 827 721 or (03) 9651 4482. Please leave a message on our Voice Mail service if we are unable to answer your call immediately. Alternatively fax enquiries to (03) 9651 4551 or email to vcaa.ondemand.support@edumail.vic.gov.au

VELS and Employability Skills

In 2002, the Department of Education, Science and Training, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia published an Employability Skills Framework in recognition of the changing nature of work and skills required by enterprises to ensure long-term economic growth.

Employability skills are in effect, generic skills that have a broader application and are as important to effective participation in the community as they are to effective participation in paid employment. These skills have been identified as:

- Communication
- Problem solving
- Team work
- Learning
- Self-management
- Planning and organising
- Technology
- Initiative and enterprise.

VELS and Employability Skills chart

Particular facets of the employability skills are appropriate for students to develop in a school context and there is a close relationship between these and the VELS at Level 6 in the Interdisciplinary and Physical, Personal and Social learning strands.

A chart has been developed to illustrate this relationship, an excerpt of which is provided on page 5. The full chart is available on the VELS website at <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/support/crosscurricular/employability.html>

Sample units

A number of sample units have been developed which illustrate Level 6 standards and related employability skills. Three units have been published on the VELS website at: <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/support/level6/index.html> and others will be added progressively.

In the Geography unit, *Channel Deepening*, students learn about different points of view of various stakeholders/interest groups involved in the controversial issue of the deepening of shipping channels in Port Phillip Bay. As well as Geography, the unit includes elements of Level 6 standards in Interpersonal Development and Thinking Processes along with the employability skills of teamwork and problem solving.

In the Science unit, *The Ins and Outs of Waste*, students learn about the scope and effect of resource use that supports their lifestyle and the implications of associated waste generation and disposal. They investigate a Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) and assessment of a product, identifying and analysing the inputs (resources) and outputs (wastes) at each stage of a product's life. As well as Science, the unit includes elements of Level 6 standards in Personal Learning and Thinking Processes along with the employability skills of planning and organising and problem solving.

continued: PAGE 8

Assessment Maps

Eleven LOTE annotated students work samples have been published on the website for both Pathway 1 and Pathway 2. These illustrate the Roman alphabetical language category focusing on French and include English translations of stimulus material and student responses to the tasks. The work samples are available in the Assessment and Reporting section of the VELS website at: <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/maps/index.html>

In conjunction with La Trobe University, National Institute of Deaf Studies, the VCAA has been working on the development of an AUSLAN Assessment Map and the publication of associated samples of student work. The work samples will be in visual form. Annotations are currently in English but it is planned to also produce these in visual form. The work samples have now been annotated and are currently undergoing quality assurance prior to publication at the end of Term 2. The VCAA would like to thank the students and teachers from the following schools for their support and contribution to the project: Forest Hill Secondary College, The Victorian College of the Deaf, Banksia Secondary College and Grovedale West Primary School.

For further information about this project contact Maggie Bishop on (03) 9651 4335 or email: bishop.maggie.p@edumail.vic.gov.au

VELS and Employability Skills Chart

Strand	Domain	Dimension	Standard	Employability Skill
Physical, Personal and Social Learning	Interpersonal Development	Building social relationships Working in teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe how local and global values and beliefs determine their own and others' social relationships work collaboratively, negotiate roles and delegate tasks to complete complex tasks in teams describe how they respect and build on the ideas and opinions of team members clearly articulate or record their reflections on the effectiveness of learning in a team 	Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is aware of the different views and perspectives of others is supportive of others in a group adapts to and contributes to group processes
Interdisciplinary Learning	Thinking Processes	Reasoning, processing and inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> employ appropriate methodologies for creating and verifying knowledge in different disciplines complete activities focusing on problem solving and decision making which involve a wide range and complexity of variables and solutions 	Problem solving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> takes a creative and practical approach to problems, showing initiative and enterprise in selecting methodologies for solving problems
		Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> apply selectively a range of creative thinking strategies take calculated risks when defining tasks and generating solutions experiment with innovative possibilities within the parameters of a task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies problems and applies a range of problem solving strategies
		Reflection, evaluation and metacognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explain conscious changes that may occur in their own and others' thinking and analyse alternative perspectives and perceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reflects and reasons logically and critically about problems

Indigenous Languages

The Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages has been engaged to manage a statewide consultation on the development of standards for Indigenous languages with Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups, the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. and other Aboriginal communities during June and July.

Ms Karen Milward, a Yorta Yorta woman with extensive experience in both the public sector and consultancy, will conduct the consultation. Karen recently attended the 2020 summit and is a strong advocate for developing culturally appropriate solutions to the issues confronting Indigenous people.

By the end of 2008 the VCAA aims to have developed a set of generic standards for Indigenous Languages based on the existing LOTE standards.

For more information on this project contact Maree Dellora, Manager, LOTE on (03) 9651 4620 or email: dellora.maree.r@edumail.vic.gov.au

Framework update

What's happening

On 5 February 2008, the Premier and Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development announced a package worth a total of \$8.1 million over four years to assist children's transition from childcare and kindergarten to school, including the development of the Victorian Early Learning and Development Framework 0-8.

As part of the Council of Australian Governments National Reform Agenda, all Australian Governments have agreed to explore ways to give children the best possible start in life. This includes the development of a National Early Years Learning Framework covering the years from birth to five and transition to school.

The Victorian Framework is linked closely to the National Framework and work is underway.

The work so far

A research report has been completed by RMIT that includes a literature search, analysis and evaluation of early learning and curriculum documents and practices in Australia and relevant international jurisdictions.

Monash University has been engaged to develop an initial Discussion Paper which includes principles, the philosophy of learning and development and the parameters of the framework. The Monash Consortium involves a number of academics from Australia and New Zealand who will work with jurisdictions to develop this work. A draft Discussion Paper will be available by mid May 2008.

A supplementary paper will support the connection with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards.

Governance structure and advisory groups

A governance structure for the Victorian Framework that includes a Steering Committee, specialist advisory groups

and a Project Team has been established. At the first Steering Committee Meeting on 5 May the Advisory Groups for the Victorian Framework were endorsed. Terms of reference for the groups are currently being developed and it is proposed to finalise membership and convene meetings of the advisory groups in June 2008. Three specialist advisory groups will be formed. These groups include:

- The Office for Children Early Childhood Development (OCECD) consultative group of key stakeholders with a specialist reference group nominated from this group.
- A Learning and Development Group with representatives from Victorian universities that deliver early childhood and primary degrees, and representatives from the TAFE sector that deliver child care qualifications.
- A Practitioner Advisory Group with membership representative of early childhood education and care workers, early childhood teachers and primary early years teachers from a range of settings and locations both rural and metropolitan.

Communication to the Early Childhood Education and Care and Schools Sector

A consultation period to consider the development of a framework is scheduled between mid June and mid July 2008.

A Symposium for the Victorian Early Learning and Development Framework is currently being planned for early July 2008.

Details will be posted on the Office for Children website at the end of May 2008.

For further information, please contact Carmel Phillips, Manager, Early Learning and Development on (03) 9651 4375 or email: phillips.carmel.j@edumail.vic.gov.au

April 2007 to April 2008

The detailed contents for this issue are on the front cover. This index records items in all issues from April 2007 to April 2008. Index items are given an issue number and page number only.

A

- AIM
 - Data Reports 30–9
 - Professional development 31–7–9
 - Important dates 2006
 - State-wide testing program 29–14
 - Markers required
 - Year 9 2007 28–7–8
 - National Assessment Program 28–10
 - Preprinted student details 29–11
 - Teacher Assessed Writing Tasks 29–11–13
 - Test exemptions 28–9
 - Verification of AIM student registration data 28–7
 - Year 9
 - 2007 timetable 28–10
 - Years 3, 5 and 7 AIM reporting pack delivery 31–7
 - Testing 2007 29–10
 - Test package delivery 29–10, 28–9
- Approaches to Design, Creativity and Technology 31–5, 11

C

- CEO's column 34–1, 33–1, 32–1, 8, 30–1, 29–1, 16, 28–1
- Classical languages Standards 32–6, 31–2

M

- Mathematics domain support 31–3–4

N

- National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy 2008
 - 34–1–4, 33–5, 32–6 commences in 2008 30–9
 - Student pre-enrolment 33–6
 - Test administration website 33–6
- National Writing Test 33–6, 32–6, 31–6

O

- On Demand testing 31–10, 29–11, 28–9
- VCAA Assessment online 30–10

T

- Teaching Indigenous perspectives 29–7–9

V

- Victorian Essential Learning Standards
 - Advice for teachers 28–4–5
 - Approaches to teaching Civics and Citizenship 29–4–6
 - Asia in the VELs 33–3
 - Assessment maps 34–4
 - Classical Languages standards 32–6
 - Consultation on VELs website and resources 30–8
 - Design Awareness in Schools 34–6
 - Domain support materials 32–3–5
 - Early Learning and Development Framework 0–8 34–5
 - Employability Skills Years 9–10 34–6, 33–4
 - Incorporating CAS technology into the VELs 29–6
 - Indigenous Languages Standards 34–5

- Mapping Advance to 33–8
- Modifications to the VELs website 34–8
- National statements of Learning and 33–2
- Now on the website 31–2
- Questions about school implementation 28–6
- Sample Programs Projects 32–2, 5, 31–2
- Sexuality education and 33–2
- Support material
 - publication of 30–2–7, 12
- Sustainability perspectives in 29–2–3
- Values Education and 28–2–3

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Victorian Essential Learning Standards

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

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy

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

Publications

Year 3 and 5 NAPLAN Test Administration guide 2008

Year 7 and 9 NAPLAN Test Administration guide 2008

Information for parents

NAPLAN Parent Pamphlet (English and Languages other than English)

from: PAGE 4

In the History unit, *Australians – Yesterday and today*, students compare and contrast the experiences of two immigrant families or individuals to Australia in the post-World War II period and in present times. As part of a team, they frame research questions to explore the context for particular migrant stories and make links to historical

circumstances in their home country and in Australia. As well as History, the unit includes elements of Level 6 standards in Interpersonal Development and Communication along with the employability skills of teamwork and written communication.



L to R: Robyn Douglass (VCAA P-10 Project Manager), Lynne Darkin (writer) and Lorraine Tran (VCAA Curriculum Manager IT) working together on a Design, Creativity and Technology unit of work for the Employability Skills Project.



L to R: Joanne Heide (Minaret College), Michael Cook (Ballarat High School) and Robin Panousieris (Balwyn High School) discuss student work samples as part of the Employability Skills Project.

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