



# RETURN TO STUDY

**A GUIDE TO VCE AND VCAL**



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### A guide to VCE, VCAL and VET for adults

*The information in this publication will assist you if you are:*

- ◆ over 18 years of age and
- ◆ interested in returning to study at the senior secondary level (above Year 10).

*The options available to you include:*

- ◆ the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)
- ◆ the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL).

Both VCE and VCAL may include Vocational Education and Training (VET).

*Further study can be a pathway to:*

- ◆ tertiary study
- ◆ more satisfying work opportunities
- ◆ new careers
- ◆ personal enrichment.

## VCE

### The Victorian Certificate of Education

#### STUDENTS RETURNING TO STUDY – VCE

The VCE is a senior secondary certificate of education which contains a wide selection of general curriculum components (VCE studies) and programs from Vocational Education and Training qualifications (VCE VET).

#### Students who have some prior VCE units

If you have completed some VCE units and want to do more in order to satisfy the requirements for completion of the VCE you have the option of:

- ◆ completing the minimum requirements that apply to school students (16 units – including at least three from the English group, three Units 3 and 4 sequences in studies other than English) or
- ◆ enrolling as an adult and completing eight units.

#### Adult VCE

You must meet two criteria to be enrolled as an adult. You must:

- ◆ not have undertaken full-time secondary schooling for the full year preceding the first year of enrolment as an adult and
- ◆ be at least 18 years of age on 1 January in the year of enrolment.

#### Eligibility for the VCE

To satisfy requirements for the award of the VCE, students returning to study (adult students) must satisfactorily complete at least eight units including:

- ◆ two units from the English group at any level (i.e. from Units 1, 2, 3 or 4)



- ◆ three sequences of Units 3 and 4 in studies (or subjects) other than English.

For tertiary entrance the English units must be at the Units 3 and 4 level.

VCE VET programs can count towards satisfactory completion of the VCE at Units 1–4.

### **Students with credit for studies prior to VCE**

Students wishing to attain their VCE using HSC, TOP or T12 results must accumulate satisfactory results for eight VCE units, including two units from the English group, provided that all eight units are taken at Units 3 and 4 (Year 12) level.

### **Students who discontinued their VCE study during the preceding year**

It is not necessary to repeat Unit 3 of VCE studies (provided they were satisfactorily completed) but it is advisable to do so if you plan to take the end-of-year examinations. It is necessary to repeat Unit 3 of VCE studies to gain study scores.

### **Students who wish to repeat VCE units**

There is no limit to the number of VCE units you may study. Nor is there a penalty for repeating units. Repeating a study at the Units 3 and 4 level is a way of improving your study score and enhancing your chances of getting into a tertiary course.

### **Entry requirements**

While there are no formal entry requirements for studying the VCE as an adult, it is advisable to contact Adult Community Education (ACE) providers, a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institution or the Centre for Adult Education (CAE) about minimum educational requirements. For some studies, it may be advisable to complete Units 1 and 2 prior to enrolling in Units 3 and 4.

### **Completion of VCE**

The VCE does not have to be completed in one year by adult students. Units can be spread over a number of years but Units 3 and 4 of one subject must be completed in one calendar year to gain a study score.

### **Time involved**

Most VCE studies require attendance at a class of between three and four hours per week. This may be in one session or spread over two sessions per week. Students are also expected to study outside class.

### **ASSESSMENT IN THE VCE**

Graduation in the VCE depends on the satisfactory completion of the units that make up the VCE studies. The decision about satisfactory completion will be based on your ability to demonstrate the outcomes.

These outcomes are specified in the study design for each VCE study. They describe the knowledge and skills you should be able to demonstrate by the time you have completed a unit.

There are two types of graded assessment in the VCE – school-based assessment and examinations.

### **School assessment**

There are two kinds of school-based assessment. The first is called School-assessed Coursework in which students complete the assessment tasks specified in the study design. These tasks must be done mainly in class time and include essays, tests, reports and case studies.

A few studies in the visual arts and technology areas have the second type of assessment, which is a School-assessed Task. This task is the same for every student enrolled in the particular study and the specifications are set by the VCAA.



## External examinations

External examinations are set and marked by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Most are held in October/November, but a small number of studies also have examinations in June.

## Study scores

A student who satisfactorily completes Units 3 and 4 of a VCE subject and the graded assessment requirement is eligible for a study score. The study score is used if you apply for tertiary entrance.

## The General Achievement Test (GAT)

The GAT is an essential part of the VCE. It provides the basis of a quality assurance check on the marking of examinations. Any student who is enrolled in a VCE or scored VCE VET Units 3 and 4 sequence is expected to sit the GAT.

For more information on VCE:

[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/index.html](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/index.html)

# VCAL

## The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

### STUDENTS RETURNING TO STUDY – VCAL

VCAL is a hands-on senior secondary certificate of education which provides students with practical work-related experience as well as the opportunity to develop literacy and numeracy and personal skills.

The VCAL's flexibility enables students to undertake a program that suits their interests and learning needs. Accredited modules and units are selected from the following four compulsory strands:

- ◆ Literacy and Numeracy Skills
- ◆ Industry Specific Skills
- ◆ Work Related Skills
- ◆ Personal Development Skills.

## Entry requirements

The VCAL has three levels – Foundation, Intermediate and Senior. Students start and complete their VCAL at the level that matches their needs and abilities.

There are no entry requirements for the VCAL and students can take as long as needed to complete a certificate at any level.

## Time involved

Many students complete one VCAL level in one year. A VCAL certificate and statement of results will be issued to students who successfully complete a VCAL program at each of the levels.

## ASSESSMENT IN THE VCAL

The VCAL is made up of accredited courses/certificates, for example VCAL units, VCE units, VET units of competency or Further Education units. A VCAL program is assessed by teachers in accordance with assessment requirements for each part of the program.

For more information on VCAL:

[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vcal/index.html](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vcal/index.html)



## VET

### Vocational Education and Training

There are many nationally recognised vocational certificates that you can undertake as part of, and within, the VCE or VCAL. This enables you to complete both the VCE or VCAL and a vocational qualification at the same time.

#### VCE VET

The VCAA provides direct credit in the VCE for a specific set of vocational certificates, which are called VCE VET programs. These programs are included in the VCE with Units 1 and 2 and Units 3 and 4 levels of recognition.

VCE VET programs can be included in both the VCE and the VCAL.

VCE VET programs may be offered in schools, Adult Community Education (ACE) providers, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions or private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

VCE VET programs are available in a range of industry areas including business, hospitality, building and construction and interactive digital media.

For more information on VCE VET programs: [www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vet/index.html](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vet/index.html)

#### BLOCK CREDIT RECOGNITION

Other vocational certificates can also contribute towards satisfactory completion of the VCE. If you have completed training at Certificate II level or above in an area not covered in VCE VET programs, the VCAA may award you credit. This is called Block Credit Recognition. Certificate II training may contribute to the VCE at Units 1 and 2 level and training at Certificate III and above may contribute at Units 3 and 4 level.

Any nationally recognised VET can contribute to the VCAL.

For more information on Block Credit Recognition telephone (03) 9651 4300 or 1800 134 197.

#### WHAT IS AVAILABLE AFTER VCE OR VCAL?

##### VCE

On completion of the VCE, students may apply for tertiary study in Victoria through the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC). An Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)\* will be calculated by VTAC after scaling your VCE study scores. For more information: [www.vtac.edu.au](http://www.vtac.edu.au)

Adult VCE students should note that to be eligible for an ATAR the English units must be at the Units 3 and 4 level.

Students who repeat VCE units to improve their grades should note that if they apply for tertiary entrance through VTAC, the ATAR will be calculated using the highest study scores, regardless of which year they were achieved.

\* ATAR was previously known as ENTER



## VCE VET

Some VCE VET programs have scored assessment – these studies will be treated the same as scored VCE studies in the calculation of the ATAR. VCE VET programs that do not have scored assessment can contribute to the ATAR as increments.

For more information: [www.vtac.edu.au](http://www.vtac.edu.au)

## VCAL

Students who complete the VCAL are likely to be interested in going on to training at TAFE institutions, doing an apprenticeship or getting a job. For more information on TAFE courses:

[www.tafe.vic.gov.au/TAFECourses](http://www.tafe.vic.gov.au/TAFECourses)

Students who wish to enter the workforce after completion of the VCE or VCAL can contact Centrelink for information and advice about careers. For more information about entering the workforce:

[www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

## WHERE TO STUDY VCE AND VCAL

VCE and VCAL courses are available for people returning to study at a range of providers:

- ◆ Adult Community Education (ACE) providers  
[www.dpcd.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au)
- ◆ Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions  
[www.tafe.vic.gov.au/TAFECourses](http://www.tafe.vic.gov.au/TAFECourses)
- ◆ Centre for Adult Education (CAE)  
[www.cae.edu.au](http://www.cae.edu.au)

A full list of providers is available at: <http://schlprv.vcaa.vic.edu.au/schoolsstudiessearch>  
Select 'Adult' sector for ACE and TAFE providers.

## Study by correspondence

Adult students can study by distance education by enrolling at the Distance Education Centre Victoria (DECV).

For more information: [www.distance.vic.edu.au](http://www.distance.vic.edu.au)

The information in this booklet is available in languages other than English on the VCAA website:  
[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au)

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