**Anna Fee -** This briefing will give you an overview of the assessment structures and requirements for the VCE Vocational Major and the Victorian Pathways Certificate. The VCE VM and VPC are both standards-based courses. Standards-based assessment requires students to meet a specific standard set out by a study and for teachers to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their attainment of that standard. Students are able to meet the required standard in a range of ways and to different degrees or levels. The standard students must meet in each study is described by the Outcome statement in the VCE VM and the Learning Goal in the VPC. In both cases, students must be provided with a range of opportunities to demonstrate the Outcome statement or Learning Goal.

Each study in the VCE VM specifies a range of appropriate activities students are required to undertake to demonstrate each outcome, and each curriculum design in the VPC outlines a range of suggested possible activities students may undertake to demonstrate each learning goal but leaves the teacher with more flexibility around what tasks students will complete. There are currently no levels of achievement in the VCE VM or VPC, so decisions about assessment relate only to students achieving an S for satisfactory or an N for not satisfactory in the outcomes they undertake.

You can see other videos on this briefing site or the VCE and VPC administrative handbooks for more information about how to make a decision for satisfactory completion and other requirements around assessment. The Pillars of Applied Learning underpin the curriculum and structure of the VCE VM and the VPC. They are vital to both the certificates and curriculum, but in this case, we are focused particularly on the fifth pillar, Assessment practises that promote success. This pillar encourages and supports teachers to use the right assessment methods to best support student success and to afford students multiple opportunities for success.

The assessment of whether a student has demonstrated the Outcome or Learning Goal must also meet the Assessment Principles outlined for the VCE VM and the VPC, which are described in more detail in other videos on this briefing site and in the VCE and VPC administrative handbooks. As stated earlier, assessment for the VCE VM and the VPC is school-based only. There are no levels of achievement reported for either certificate. To satisfactorily complete a unit, students must therefore demonstrate their achievement of the standards set out in the Outcomes or Learning Goals. The decision about satisfactory completion is based entirely on teacher judgement of the student's performance on a range of learning and assessment tasks.

There are no external assessments for the VCE VM or VPC, and so students enrolled in either certificate do not receive a study score. In 2024, the S and N results for Units 1 to 4 of both the VCE VM and VPC are due on the 18th of November. Because the VCE VM and VPC don't have external assessment or levels of achievement, this is the only key date for assessment. You can see the Important Administrative Dates for more information.

The VCE VM and VPC are based around applied learning, and so therefore the assessment in both certificates is also based around applied learning. This means that the assessment is flexible and designed to be able to be tailored to student needs. This means that the VCAA requirements, in this case, that students meet the standards set out in the Outcomes or Learning Goals, are put alongside the pillars of applied learning, in particular, pillar five, Assessment practises that promote success, to let teachers and educators think about assessment in terms of opportunities for evidence collection rather than as a single event. Students are encouraged to undertake their learning and assessment through the experiential learning cycle, where they act, reflect, question, plan, and repeat, and take agency over their own learning. In this context, teachers can think about assessment in terms of the chances, the opportunities they have to collect evidence that students have learned and have attained the standards required in the Outcome statement or Learning Goal.

Assessment in the VCE Vocational Major and VPC is designed to be flexible. Students do need to meet the Outcomes or Learning Goals, but they can meet them in a variety of ways. This leaves space for students to be extended when they're ready for a challenge and supported when they need more time, more support, or more access. You can see the VCE Vocational Major and Victorian Pathway Certificate Professional Learning page on the VCAA website for more specific support, professional learning, and examples about assessment and how it can be made as flexible as required.

As stated earlier, the VCE VM is a standards-based course, and the assessment in it is standard-based. The Outcome is the standard against which the students are assessed for an S or an N. To meet the standard, the student must develop capacity in or demonstrate the relevant Key Knowledge and Key Skills from the study design. This is an example of an outcome statement from the VCE Vocational Major, in this case, from Work-Related Skills Unit 1, Area of Study 1. The outcome states that on completion of the unit, the student should be able to identify and discuss likely employment growth areas using credible data and apply findings to develop strategies to improve future career prospects. This is the standard the student must meet in order to be given an S or satisfactory. The standard can be broken down into four main sections, when the student will need to achieve it, which is on completion of the unit. Now, this can be any time that the school and teacher determines that the unit must be completed by. The unit must be completed by the 18th of November in 2024 so that the S or N could be submitted, but other than that, the date of completion is a school-based decision.

What skills and knowledge the students should demonstrate to meet the standard, they need to be able to identify and discuss likely employment growth areas, they need to demonstrate that through using credible data and applying their findings to develop strategies to improve future career prospects, and finally, there's a level to which the standard must be demonstrated. These levels are based on Bloom's Taxonomy, and in this case, the level is Apply. The student must be able to apply that knowledge to develop strategies to improve future career prospects. VCE VM assessment requires that students undertake at least one task from a short list provided for each Outcome in the study designs for each study. These common tasks are broad and can be completed in a range of ways.

So, for example, in this WRS assessment table, the two tasks that students can select from are a record of data analysis and a research task. There is no requirement about how these are completed. These tasks also do not have to be the cumulative or summative or most heavily weighted assessment task that students complete. They must just be included in the student's assessment suite at some point. The rest of the list contains some suggested tasks for assessment. These are not required. Just like the VCE VM, the VPC has standards-based assessment. The Learning Goal is the standard against which the students are assessed for an S or an N, and to meet the standard, the student must develop capacity in or demonstrate the relevant Learning Goal and Applications.

This is an example of a learning goal in the VPC, in this case, Personal Development Skills Learning Goal 1, which requires students, on completion of the module, to be able to develop and demonstrate an understanding of self through positive, active reflection, use a range of teamwork, communication, time management, and problem-solving skills, and understand and apply the skills required for setting and achieving personal goals. Just like in the VCE VM, this can be broken into four steps, the question of when the standard will be achieved, which, again, is on completion of the module, so that is a decision at school level. The student needs to demonstrate the following skills and knowledge, an understanding of self, use of a range of teamwork, communication, time management, and problem-solving skills, and an understanding of the skills required for setting and achieving personal goals. How the student should demonstrate this is outlined in the applications in more detail. And finally, the level to which the student must reach the standard is once again based on Bloom's. They need to develop and demonstrate, use and apply those skills. In the VPC, there is only a list of suggested assessment tasks in the assessment tables. Teachers can use these tasks or can use any others as appropriate for their students.

Some final reminders about assessment in the VCE VM and VPC. Assessment in these certificates should be conceived as a series of opportunities to collect evidence of student learning rather than one event which demonstrates a point in time for students' learning. Teachers should use a variety of assessment methods as best suits their students. This can include observation checklists, student performances, written work, recordings, visual representations, et cetera. Assessment tasks and conditions do not need to be the same for all students as we are not producing a level of achievement or a rank, only an S or an N. Applied learning is designed to be flexible, and therefore the collection of evidence should reflect this style of learning. Be flexible in the kind of assessments you allow your students to undertake, and centre students in that assessment.

For more information or support, please contact the Senior Secondary Certificate Reform team on the email on your screen.

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