**Sue Bell:** Hello and thank you for joining us this afternoon. My name is Sue Bell and I'm the Executive Director of Senior Secondary Certificate Reform.

I'd like to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the lands and waters throughout Victoria and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging. I'd also like to acknowledge any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people who may be joining us today.

And I'd like to thank Gabriel Kirley and Amber Richardson who are our Auslan interpreters today.

It's my great pleasure to welcome you to this webinar, and as you'll get a sense as we go along, we're excited. We'll provide an overview of the draft curriculum for the studies in the new VCE Vocational Specialisation stream.

This is the first of four webinars that have been organised and there are two for the Vocational Specialisation stream and two for the Foundation Pathways Certificate. Today's webinar will focus on the studies in the Vocational Specialisation stream and will be identical to the webinar scheduled for Tuesday the 31st. So you don't have to come to both. The Foundation Pathways Certificate webinars will be held on Tuesday the 24th of August and Friday the 3rd [of September].

So our new curriculum: it's ready for your feedback. we're incredibly excited. The new curriculum we've developed is now ready. It's based on the VCAL strands, which John Firth told us in his report should be the basis for the new curriculum. Because of its relevance to young people, those young people on the cusp of moving into the world of work, it's being developed by current teachers who are on our curriculum review panels led by our curriculum specialists in the program. Our sincere thanks to all involved as your work means our final product will be interesting and relevant for students and teachable.

We've taken the best of VCAL and supplemented it with the new material to ensure we're preparing students for the world of their future. There are four curriculum documents we're asking for your feedback on, and they each have four semesters of learning in them or units, to use the VCE terminology. I'd just like to take a moment to revisit the draft certificate design to put it in a context for you.

So the Vocational Specialisation stream. And thank you everyone who provided feedback on the draft design during consultation on Engage Victoria. We have a lot of responses. Your feedback is being considered and the certificate designs have been refined. We're now in the stages of preparing the accreditation applications for the VRQA. The draft certificate design for the Vocational Specialisation is planned on students undertaking somewhere between 16 and 22 units. These can include credit for Structured Workplace Learning Recognition. It's proposed to have a minimum completion requirement of 16 units, which must include three Literacy units, two Numeracy units, two Work Related Skills units, two Personal Development Skills units and two VET credits at Certificate II level or above. Eight of the 16 must be at Units 3 and 4 level.

So our consultation timeline is coming up and I hope you don't feel daunted at the prospect. If you do, please look after your yourself first, because we know the pressures that you're under at the moment. But many of you will be aware that the VCAA launched public consultation on the draft curriculum on Thursday last week. This included the four study designs, as I've mentioned previously, and I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage you to engage with the curriculum and participate in the process.

As educators, your feedback is extraordinarily valuable and will play a crucial role in ensuring the curriculum meets its primary objective: to deliver strengthened vocational and applied learning pathways for our most important stakeholders: our students. We understand the constraints on you at this time and the incredible difficulty we have with looking to the future. We appreciate whatever feedback you can give us.

The draft study designs can be accessed via the VCAA website this time, and there is also an online study-specific questionnaire for students to share their feedback. Consultation closes at midnight on Sunday, the 12th of September.

Following the consultation period, the study designs will be refined and submitted to the VRQA for accreditation. The final study designs will be published early in 2022.

Year 11 students will enrol in Units 1 and 2 of the Vocational Specialisation in 2023, and Year 12 students will enrol in units 3 and 4 in 2024. In 2023, only students who completed intermediate VCAL next year will move into the second year of the Vocational Specialisation, but they'll study the Senior VCAL curriculum in those units. That will apply for 2023 only.

Shortly I'll hand you over to our facilitators for today's webinar. We have our education leads – Dianna Chapman, Dawn Ross and Melanie Brooks, who will provide an overview of each of the study designs – and Kelly Jarvis, the Senior Secondary Certificate Reform Project Director, will answer questions at the end of the session. We invite you to ask questions using the Q&A function, and there'll be time for us to answer them.

Before I do, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge the tremendous work the project team have put in to get us to this important milestone. I'd also like to acknowledge the many educators and subject specialists that were part of our curriculum review panels and helped create the study designs that we present to you today. These designs have also relied on the contributions of you, our stakeholders, who have generously contributed your time and expertise in targeted consultation meetings held throughout the development of the documents.

So just a quick overview of what we have. Based on the recommendations of the Firth Review, the studies for the Vocational Specialisation stream are presented in a VCE study design format. For those of you who teach the VCE, the structure will be very familiar to you.

Each study design includes an introduction, a scope of study, rationale and names. Each study has four units and each unit involves at least 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction. Each unit includes a set of Areas of Study, Outcomes, Key Knowledge and Key Skills.

Units 1 and 2 provide a progression into Units 3 and 4. However, they aren't a prerequisite for Units 3 and 4.

To satisfactorily complete a unit, a student will need to demonstrate their achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's judgement of the student's overall performance, using a combination of set work and assessment tools related to the outcomes.

There's an Evidence for Assessment section in the study designs that provides examples of evidence that a student may use to demonstrate achievement of the outcomes. There are also suggested assessment tasks that may be used to facilitate a student's demonstration of achievement.

For Units 1 and 2, the assessment of levels of achievement will be a matter for school decision. These levels will not be reported to the VCAA.

For Units 3 and 4, the VCAA is working on a model of scaled or graded assessment and reporting – the possibility of such a model for those who choose to take part in it – and more information will be available later.

To support the implementation of the curriculum and assessment, the VCAA will provide a range of support and resources. The Advice for Teachers, which will be published at some stage not too far away, will provide teaching and learning advice for all of the Units 1 to 4 and assessment advice for Units 3 and 4. It will also include advice on how to develop a program, teaching and learning activities, sample approaches to developing assessment tasks, sample assessment rubrics and performance descriptors.

The VCAA will also run webinars and onsite workshops across Regional and Metropolitan Victoria. There will be an enhanced Quality Assurance program for the Vocational Specialisation studies. We really encourage you to engage with us and tell us about the support that you need.

I'd like to now hand over to our curriculum specialists to take you through each of the study designs. First is Dianna with Numeracy.

**Dianna Chapman:** Thanks Sue. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the Numeracy panel and the writers of this new curriculum for their amazing work in producing a relevant and dynamic study design.

It's important to note that in our everyday lives, numeracy skills are becoming more and more relevant. Our world is becoming more technical. So the use of numeracy skills, for example, the ability to interpret data, is becoming more significant and hugely sought after by employers. We need numeracy to solve problems and develop a sense of logic to be able to make sense of numbers, time, data, shapes, directions and finances for activities like cooking, invoicing, reading instructions, understanding payslips and even playing sport. Mathematical anxiety and poor numeracy skills are often seen as obstructions to employment, or is often where we find students develop a lack of confidence. This Numeracy curriculum is designed to be accessible and flexible and ensure students become numerate in that they can confidently and effectively use mathematics to meet the everyday demands of life.

So moving on to the structure of this study, there's four units. Each of the units has three outcomes, and there are eight Areas of Study for which the key skills and knowledge that apply are applied to all three of the Outcomes.

So the Areas of Study name and describe a range of different mathematical knowledge and skills that are expected to be used and applied across the three outcomes. There are eight Areas of Study. All eight Areas of Study are expected to be covered across two units, so once in Units 1 and 2 and then again in Units 3 and 4. We are really keen for your feedback in regards to where the eight Areas of Study is feasible in your setting. And we encourage you to provide this feedback in the study design survey.

Outcome 1 forms the framework in which to teach the skills and knowledge. So the numeracies are the themes in which you apply the knowledge and skills from the eight Areas of Study. So Outcome 1 sees students develop their numeracy knowledge and skills, and I'll explain more about the structure of Outcome 1 in a moment.

Outcome 2 is the problem-solving cycle. So on completion of this outcome, the students should be able to use the problem-solving cycle in formulating, acting on and using mathematics, evaluating and reflecting and communicating and reporting in an applied learning context, relevant to the key skills and knowledge reflected in the Areas of Study from Outcome 1.

Outcome 3 is a mathematical toolkit. So on completion of this outcome, students should be able to apply the appropriate mathematical tool to undertake the numeracy tasks required from Outcomes 1 and 2.

Now, I'll go and explain a little bit more about Outcome 1. So the structure of Outcome 1 has been designed to make the most of flexible learning environments. So it's the framework from which you teach the knowledge and skills. So the order in which you combine the Areas of Study and the numeracies is up to you. And these combinations can therefore be selected on the basis of the interests of your student cohort and also the needs of your student cohort.

There are eight Areas of Study to be covered across the two units. There are six numeracies to be covered across the two units as well. So you'll choose three numeracies per unit and all six numeracies will be covered across two units. So you can see there the different numeracies. The numeracies are the themes in which you apply the areas of study.

So if we move on again, you can see the example of how you might choose to map the Numeracy units. So for example, you can see there that Personal Numeracy is mapped to Data and Systems Areas of Study. So your students could look at collecting data, perhaps on how many hours they work each week at their part-time job and compare that from week to week, and then they could look at how to schedule their week to see how they can fit their shifts in around school or sport and the different timings that they have.

You can also see there that Finance has been mapped to Number and Change. So you could look at percentages for Number and interest rates for Change.

So it's just a couple of examples of how you could map out Outcome 1. So just keep in mind that each unit must include three of the six numeracies, and all six numeracies will be covered across two units and all eight Areas of Study must be covered across the two units as well.

So the Numeracy study sees a strong emphasis on flexibility in delivering the content with an applied learning approach.

So that's it for Numeracy, and we'll pass over now to Dawn who's going to talk to you about Literacy.

**Dawn Ross:** Thanks Dianna, thanks Anton. I too would also like to acknowledge and thank teachers that gave up their time to volunteer for the Literacy panel and developing the study design. I'm very, very excited to present it to you this afternoon.

The Literacy study design will allow students to develop their skills and confidence in written and oral communication through a curriculum that is flexible and engaging. Students will finish their senior secondary education with a clear understanding that language should be modified depending on the audience and the purpose and then moving into the next chapter of their lives, students will have the confidence to present their ideas to others wherever that setting might be.

Unit 1 focuses on a range of different texts and the content and the personal reasons mainly readers may have for engaging with these texts. And students will develop an understanding of how audience, purpose and context influence language choices. So this is sort of the scaffolding – the beginning of the scaffolding – for what's to come throughout the rest of the unit. Further developing the analytical skills developed in Outcome 1, the 'Understanding and creating digital texts' outcome will allow students to assess the reliability of information being presented in the digital world, as well as equipping students with the skills needed to safely engage with others online. The idea of fake news came across very strongly in our panel meetings and we hope we've captured the ability for students to work out what's fake and what isn't in that outcome.

In Unit 2, both outcomes ask students to engage in issues in the community and/or in the workplace, and they'll explore a range of issues and consider how that language is used to position an audience. Then moving into Outcome 2, they'll use their understanding of this persuasive language to present their own opinions, using evidence to support their point of view, presenting in a reasoned and thoughtful manner.

Unit 3 develops the skills and knowledge students need to become confident in understanding the more complex and specialised content that they're likely to encounter as they move into adulthood, such as contracts, safety reports and government documentation. Students will then be able to use this knowledge of this language to be able to create content that is specific to their own workplaces or their own vocational organisations.

And Unit 4 is a bit of a showcase unit. Unit 4 draws together the skills and knowledge developed over Units 1 to 3. Students are encouraged to integrate this unit with Personal Development Skills on Work Related Skills to create a showcase piece of work by completing of personal portfolio or a community project. However, the options 1 and 2 come in as students are not completing WRS or PDS, and they can develop a presentation on either an area of civic participation that is important to them, such as volunteering or cultural activities, or an everyday life event that is of interest to them, such as buying a car or investigating their further learning options.

And that's the Literacy Units 1 to 4, and I'll now pass over to Mel who'll present Personal Development Skills and Work Related Skills. Thank you.

**Melanie Brooks:** Thanks so much, Dawn. Again, I'd like to thank the PDS panel for their time. They drew on their considerable knowledge and teaching experience to develop this curriculum. I'd also like to thank Cornelia DeBrincat in the VCAA Applied Learning team for all her hard work on the study design.

During our stakeholder consultations, both students and teachers told us that they highly valued the Personal Development Skills strand, in particular, the ability for student groups to engage with the community on a wide variety of projects. We have worked really hard to retain that flexibility so that the students can demonstrate the acquisition of skills and knowledge through authentic and engaging learning opportunities. So with that in mind, the aims of this subject are for students to develop a sense of identity and self-worth; access, critique, synthesise and communicate reliable information; practise the rights and responsibilities of belonging to a community; recognise and describe the attributes of effective leaders; work independently as part of a team to understand and respond to community issues; develop, practise and participate in society as active, engaged and informed citizens.

So Unit 1 focuses on students' understanding of health and wellbeing, personal identity and self-worth and addresses social equity and diversity. It looks at students' personal behaviours and decision making and their individual roles in the wider community. It also looks at the role that social media plays in influencing health and wellbeing.

Unit 2 focuses on community: the benefits of community participation, the different types of community, the implications for social exclusion and how people work effectively together. Students investigate how communities can support individuals and groups.

In Year 12, Unit 3 explores the qualities and characteristics of leadership, and how leadership skills can be applied to achieve personal and community goals. Students also consider concepts of self-development, self-management, goal-setting and collaboration to achieve both individually and achieve as part of a team.

Unit 4 requires students to research and identify community issues, select an issue to address and formulate a plan for addressing the issue, then activate that plan. They are then asked to report on the execution of their plan. And I know a lot of PDS teachers will be excited about that particular unit.

Moving on to Work Related Skills. In addition to the amazing and enormous amount of work the PDS panel put into the study design, I'd also like to acknowledge the external organisations who spent a considerable amount of time helping to shape this study design. Ted Sussex and the team at the Young Workers Union, Melissa Turner and her colleagues at WorkSafe Victoria and Molly Whelan and Kelly Fawcett at the Foundation for Young Australians. Their input has been really invaluable.

Enrolment in VET will be compulsory in the Vocational Specialisation. And I'm sure you're all aware that a considerable number of nominal hours in all VET certificates is dedicated to physical occupational health and safety. Therefore, OH&S undertaken in Work Related Skills focuses primarily on mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. We have posted a specific question regarding that in the study design survey, and we'd really appreciate your feedback on it. In addition to this, specific Structured Workplace Learning Recognition units that are already available. The VCAA VET team are also working on a general SWLR unit that will be available for students who are engaging in work placement, but have not been able to obtain a placement in the VET area of their choice just yet, or who may be contemplating an alternative pathway. Completion of SWLR units will give students credit at the Unit 1 and 2 level.

The aim of the subject – the Work Related skills subject – is for students to: understand and apply concepts and terminology related to workplace; understand the complex and rapidly changing world of work and workplace environments; understand the relationship between skills; knowledge capabilities and attributes, and the achievement of pathway goals; develop effective communication skills to enable self-reflection and self-promotion; and practically apply their skills and knowledge.

Unit 1 asks students to think about and investigate potential employment pathways, investigate the pathway and employment prospects to inform the development of a career action plan. They're asked to seek appropriate advice and feedback on their plan.

In Unit 2, students are required to consider the distinction between essential employability skills, specialist and technical work skills to understand transferable skills and identify their personal skills and capabilities, and promote them through the development of a cover letter, a resume and through mock interviews.

Unit 3 covers healthy, collaborative and productive workplaces, workplace relationships, and investigate key areas relating to workplace relations, including pay conditions and dispute resolution. The unit also looks at how teamwork and effective communication contributes to a healthy collegiate workplace.

Unit 4 is all about developing an extensive professional portfolio. And, as Dawn said, it could be integrated with the Unit 4 Literacy strand. The portfolio will be used for further education and employment applications, and students will be required to present their portfolio in a formal panel style interview, and then be able to talk to the artefacts they have chosen to include in their portfolio. And I think this will be a fantastic unit for students who are moving from the world of school into the world of work or further education.

It also should be noted that the former Skills for Further Study and the former Portfolio Enhancement and Preparation units have been incorporated into this unit – elements of it have been incorporated into this unit – so that's also really exciting.

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