**VCE Business Management 2017–2022**

School-based assessment report

This report is provided for the first year of implementation of this study and is based on the School-based Assessment Audit and VCAA statistical data.

All official communications regarding the *Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Business Management Study Design* are provided in the *VCAA Bulletin*. It is recommended that teachers subscribe to the *VCAA Bulletin* to receive updated information regarding the study. Schools are required to alert teachers to information in VCAA Bulletins, especially concerning assessment schedules. Important Administrative Dates and assessment schedules are published on the School administration page of the VCAA website.

Unit 3 – Managing a Business

GENERAL COMMENTS

This is the first School-based Assessment Audit undertaken with the reaccredited *VCE* *Business Management Study Design 2017–2022*. Given the reaccredited study design is significantly different from the preceding one, it is vital schools ensure that SAC tasks comply with and reflect the current study.

The first stage of the audit requires schools to complete a study specific audit questionnaire by providing information on the types of tasks set, assessment planning, timelines and the administration of assessment. Responses suggested that most schools audited were designing and using tasks that meet the requirements of the reaccredited study design. Almost all schools provided an assessment timetable to students to assist them in planning for assessment.

For each School-assessed Coursework task, students should be given a clear and accurate statement of:

* the outcome being assessed
* the task type
* the requirements and conditions of the task
* the contribution of the task to the final outcome score.

A significant proportion of schools indicated they were using commercially developed tasks drawn from a range of sources. Many schools indicated they were using SAC tasks provided by the subject association.

The audit question requesting a description of how each task had been adapted to ensure authentication was not always answered or the response was often incomplete. This resulted in several schools being required to submit further evidence in the form of SAC tasks and marking schemes used for Unit 3 assessment.

It is recommended that tasks purchased from a commercial provider be modified or adapted to reduce authentication issues. These tasks are readily available in the public domain, and therefore are accessible to students. It is especially problematic if students within a school are given tasks from the one publisher to assess all outcomes.

Tasks should be adapted by changing task words, the case studies or prompt material on which the questions are based.

There were several examples of teacher-designed tasks evident, most of which met the requirements of the outcomes. Teachers are reminded that the *VCE Business Management* *Advice for* *teachers* contains sample approaches to developing assessment tasks. This includes an example of structured questions for Unit 3, Outcome 1 and a case study example for Unit 4 Outcome 2. These will be of assistance to teachers who require guidance in the process of developing school based tasks.

Samples reviewed in the School-based Assessment Audit revealed that most teachers clearly set out a marking scheme used to assess tasks, which was largely consistent with VCAA performance descriptors as set out in the *Advice for teachers*. Many teachers adapted VCAA performance descriptors to provide mark allocations for specific questions. In some instances, teachers developed their own marking schemes, which were generally appropriate to the task. All schools audited indicated that SACs were completed under supervision, making authentication less problematic.

Overall, tasks addressed a wide range of key knowledge and required students to demonstrate relevant key skills. It would be a worthwhile exercise for teachers to examine tasks and ensure that higher order/more complex questions are included and weighted appropriately.

The *VCE Business Management Study Design* requires use of ‘contemporary business case studies from the past four years’ throughout several areas of study. Teachers must be mindful of this when planning and developing assessment tasks. Historical examples used in previous years must not be used if they fall outside the four year requirement.

Schools audited indicated use of a range of resources in developing tasks for Unit 3. These included the Assessment Handbook, *Advice for teachers*, textbooks, networks and those produced by the subject association.

Schools with more than one teacher teaching Business Management indicated marking consistency was achieved through use of a prepared answer sheet, discussion and cross-marking. These practices are important in order to ensure an accurate rank order is attained.

Schools should ensure that all requested materials are submitted for the audit. Materials potentially required for submission are listed in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*. If materials are not submitted as requested a judgment cannot be reached by the audit panel as to whether the school concerned has satisfied VCAA requirements for school-based assessment.

Specific information

Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework

Outcome 1

*On completion of this unit a student should be able to discuss the key characteristics of businesses and stakeholders, and analyse the relationship between corporate culture, management styles and management skills.*

Outcome 1 contributes 20 marks to Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework.

**Task type options**

* a case study
* structured questions
* an essay
* a report
* a media analysis.

Most schools audited chose to assess this outcome through a single assessment task. The most common form of assessment was a case study combined with structured questions.

Many schools focused on a case study about a social enterprise, a likely consequence of this being a new concept in the study design in 2017. Some tasks tended to concentrate predominantly on terms and concepts that were new in the reaccredited study design. While these are new for teachers, the entire course is new for students every year. Teachers should be mindful that an extensive coverage of key knowledge is required in the assessment tasks, as well as opportunity for students to demonstrate key skills.

Assessment

A variety of assessment methods were utilised for Outcome 1. While many schools used the marking schemes provided by the publishers of commercially produced tasks, a number of schools developed rubrics aligning VCAA assessment criteria with questions provided in the tasks. In these cases, weightings suggested in the *Advice for teachers* were applied.

Outcome 2

*On completion of this unit a student should be able to explain theories of motivation, apply them to a range of contexts, and analyse and evaluate strategies related to the management of employees.*

Outcome 2 contributes 40 marks to Unit 3 School-assessed coursework.

**Task type options**

* a case study
* structured questions
* an essay
* a report
* a media analysis.

Most schools audited opted to assess this outcome through use of case studies with structured questions. Many chose to split this into two tasks, often separating motivation from workplace relations. One school chose to use an essay to assess the workplace relations aspect of this outcome.

It was apparent that an example was used by one school relating to a workplace relations issue in an organisation other than a business. Teachers are reminded that the *VCE Business Management Study Design 2017–2022* focuses specifically on businesses and no other organisation types. This is a significant change and, as such, should be reflected in assessment tasks.

A wide range of key skills was utilised in assessment tasks, especially in regard to motivation theories and strategies.

Assessment

Similarly to Outcome 1, a variety of assessment methods were utilised for Outcome 2. Many schools used the marking schemes provided by the publishers of purchased tasks. A number of schools however developed rubrics that aligned VCAA assessment criteria with questions within tasks. In these cases, the weightings suggested in the *Advice for teachers* were applied.

Outcome 3

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse the relationship between business objectives and operations management, and propose and evaluate strategies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of business operations.

Outcome 3 contributes 40 marks to Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework.

**Task type options**

* a case study
* structured questions
* an essay
* a report
* a media analysis.

Most schools used case studies with structured questions for this task, however a number of schools opted for a report as an assessment type. The majority of the schools audited completed this as one task.

A number of schools used a site visit with business operations in action being viewed first hand by students as a basis for the SAC. There was less reliance on commercially published tasks. Tasks emanating from site visits tended to either take the form of a report or structured questions completed under test conditions in a subsequent lesson. This practice assists with ensuring authentication of student work. It was noted, however, that all site visits were to manufacturers of goods. The requirement to study both manufacturers and service providers in this area of study is clearly stated in the study design. Schools should consider this when developing assessment tasks for this outcome.

The operations strategies were addressed accurately in tasks sighted as part of the audit, and a range of relevant key skills were assessed appropriately.

Assessment

As in Outcomes 1 and 2, a variety of assessment methods were utilised for Outcome 3. A significant number of schools developed original assessment criteria aligning with that of the VCAA. Most reports were written immediately after a site visit. In these cases, weightings suggested in the *Advice for teachers* were applied.

Unit 4 – Transforming a Business

GENERAL COMMENTS

The first stage of the Unit 4 audit requires schools to complete a questionnaire providing information on task types, assessment planning, timelines and administration of assessment. Responses identified that the majority of schools audited designed and utilised tasks meeting the specifications of the study design.

The second stage required submission of further evidence. This was usually requested due to insufficient information having been provided in the audit questionnaire, meaning it was unclear whether appropriate practices had been followed. Evidence requested usually comprised copies of tasks used to assess outcomes, marking schemes and assessment timelines. In several cases an outline of processes followed to redeem an ‘S’ result was requested.

Several schools issued students with a subject association timeline for assessment which did not reflect the actual practice followed within the school. It is emphasised that students should be provided with an assessment timetable clearly stating the number of tasks for each outcome, plus a description of the nature and the date of each task. This is required in order to assist students when planning for assessment.

Both Areas of Study 1 and 2 in Unit 4 Business Management relate to transforming a business.

Unit 4 stipulates that a contemporary business case study from the past four years be applied to enable students to evaluate business practice against theory. It was evident that several schools had utilised commercially-produced tasks for assessment of Outcomes 1 and 2 in
Unit 4, several of these contained fictitious case studies. Teachers must ensure students are aware of the requirement to study a contemporary business case study, regardless of whether this example appears in their SAC tasks or not. In Outcome 1 students need to apply Lewin’s Force Field Analysis theory to contemporary case studies. In Outcome 2 students must use a contemporary business case study to evaluate business practice against theory, considering how corporate social responsibility can be incorporated into the change process.

Specific information

Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework

Outcome 1

*On completion of this unit the student should be able to explain the way business change may come about, use key performance indicators to analyse the performance of a business, discuss the driving and restraining forces for change and evaluate management strategies to position a business for the future.*

Outcome 1 contributes 50 marks to School-assessed Coursework for Unit 4.

**Task type options**

* a case study
* structured questions
* an essay
* a report
* a media analysis.

All schools audited indicated use of case studies with structured questions for this outcome. Most involved analysis of data presented as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), requiring students to interpret and evaluate, as specified in the key skills.

A small number of schools submitted tasks that did not add up to 50 marks. Evidence of conversion allowing final scores as provided to the VCAA to be out of 50 marks was not forthcoming. Teachers are reminded that this is a requirement.

Assessment

As in Unit 3, a variety of SAC types were utilised in Outcome 1, Unit 4. Several schools used the marking schemes provided by the publishers of commercial tasks. Some developed rubrics aligning VCAA assessment criteria with questions in the tasks. In these cases, the weightings suggested in the *Advice for teachers* were applied.

Outcome 2

*On completion of this unit the student should be able to evaluate the effectiveness of a variety of strategies used by managers to implement change and discuss the effect of change on the stakeholders of a business.*

Outcome 2 contributes 50 marks towards School-assessed Coursework for Unit 4.

**Task type options**

* a case study
* structured questions
* an essay
* a report
* a media analysis.

All schools required to submit SAC tasks utilised a combination of case studies and structured questions for assessment of this outcome.

There are four key knowledge points referring to ‘strategies’ in this area of study. Consequently, it is vital that any questions referring to strategies are clearly expressed and enable students to clearly identify which set of strategies are relevant to a response.

Some schools were yet to plan tasks for Outcome 2 at the time of the audit. In the first year of a reaccredited study design this is not uncommon, however in subsequent years it will be expected that the nature and timing of tasks will be planned well in advance and clearly communicated to students in a timely manner.

Assessment

A variety of assessment types were utilised for Outcome 2 in Unit 4. Many schools used the marking schemes provided by publishers of purchased tasks, a number of schools developed rubrics aligning VCAA assessment criteria with questions in the tasks. In these cases, the weightings suggested in the *Advice for teachers* were applied.