**Annelise Balsamo –** Hello and welcome to this on-demand video about the VCE English examination for 2024. This on-demand video will explore section C of the new examination that maps to analysing argument, which is unit four, outcome two. My name's Annelise Balsamo and I'm the English curriculum manager at the VCAA and I'm joined today by Helen Billett, who is the chief assessor for English for 2023. I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we record this on-demand video. It's the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation and I wish to pay my respects to elders past and present and to acknowledge the ongoing living cultures on the lands on which we live and work.

This presentation will explore the curriculum, the key knowledge and skills that map directly to section C of the exam, which is analysing argument. We look a little bit at internal assessment and its purpose and role, what's going to happen with external assessment and the examination, including the expected qualities. In terms of the curriculum itself, want to make really clear that the curriculum has been written for a broad engagement with analysing argument in a classroom setting.

So, at points and of course, much of what you do in the classroom will be examinable. It's really important to know that it's a much broader examination and a much broader experience for students in the classroom in terms of this key knowledge and skills. As you can see if this key knowledge, there are examples here that you could utilise to explore an examinable task like the use of contentions, supporting arguments, sequence and structure, supporting evidence, that sort of thing, but you can also see that there are other things that won't be examinable, like the features of print and audio and visual texts that are used by authors to position an intended audience. We're not going to examine the audio and visual text in the examination, but we also know that students engage with this kind of media and actually absorb most of their understanding of the media through these forms, these modes. So, we think it's really important that those aspects, that engaging with what students are doing as they're doing it in situ is really important part of the study design. You can see here that we also have really valued the elements that allow students to engage with civil and in cohesive discourse.

So, the conventions of a discussion and debate like active listening is also really valued here. We've also got other key knowledge and key skills that would allow students to explore the understanding of argument beyond the secondary classroom and into their post-secondary lives, including respectful disagreement and respectful debate. And these are key things that we would like those classroom experiences they have in this particular area of study to be valued and to be highlighted. There are of course explicit skills for assessment and I've highlighted them in the previous slide, but you can see them again here.

We've been really explicit about the kinds of things a student needs to demonstrate for them to show knowledge in doing their formal assessments that is both internal and external and you can see here that we've really unpacked that for you in the study design. These, of course, are still transferable skills. Students can still use these in a post-secondary experience, but they're also designed to really guide students and teachers to the core parts of what it is that a student can really demonstrate when they're asked in formal assessment to show their knowledge of a particular area of study. Equally, and I've made this point before, but I really want to make it really clear, while some skills are not directly examinable, they do inform the deep enriched knowledge that is examinable.

So, when a student is engaging with things like the conventions of protocols and discussions and debate, they are developing their capacity to both demonstrate their understanding of an argument and to analyse it. And these discussions, these engagements will inform the capacity to write rich analysis in more formal assessment. So it is that sense that we are building a larger picture beyond something like a formal assessment, including the examination to really educating and engaging our young people so that they become really confident and literate citizens in the external world and engage with their society in cohesive and supportive and enriched manner. I just want to talk a little bit about internal assessment at this point.

At unit four, there is of course mandated assessment and for a student to receive a satisfactory, they must demonstrate an understanding of the outcome statement, which you can see here. And if they're doing a score assessment, they need to then do this very particular form of assessment. For this particular area of study, they need to do an analytic response to argument in written form and they have to do two different types of text. So, they've got to engage with a written persuasive text and they've got to engage with an audio or audio visual persuasive text and that has to have appeared in the media since September of the previous year and they need to do a point of view oral presentation. I would ask teachers to have a look at the study design carefully. We've opened up what is possible to do for an oral presentation now beyond the formal individual presentation to a classroom audience. Students are now able to do digital presentations.

So have a look at what's possible for your classrooms. Students are awarded 40 marks for the analytical response and 20 for the point of view oral presentation. And I do want to make it really clear that internal assessment does have a different purpose to that of external assessment. So, while external assessment exams are a snapshot, internal assessment can be cohort specific. You can design tasks that are broad and diverse in conditions that meet the needs of your students and allow them to demonstrate their understanding in the best possible way. It also offers you the opportunity to give them deep feedback and that can be done both teacher to student, but also between students and shared with peers.

And most importantly, these internal assessments can be celebrated with your students in really important and powerful ways.

**Helen Billett** - Let's look at what will happen in the exam for a moment or two. So, what we are looking at here is a draught of the exam specifications and what you see will be very familiar. Students are required to analyse the use of argument and language of an unseen persuasive text, and there will be visuals, images, or perhaps graphics that they will need to do. Students will not be required to evaluate the relative merits or success of argument. It's just an analysis as indeed the previous study. What the task is not, I've popped up an image there from a paper from a couple of years ago, which was the advertorial if you remember, and then there was the response from a customer. There won't be a second text anymore. In the past study design, students were required to compare two texts in their SAC and there was no requirement to compare them in the exam and there was a degree of confusion. In the new study design, there's no requirement to compare the two texts that you do in the SAC and there won't be the opportunity to compare them in the exam because there will not be two texts.

So, this is also a past exam paper and you'll see that it's a single text with embedded images and that's what's going to happen in the future in the exam with this one. You'll be aware what I haven't shown in either of those last two slides with a background information and that's where students find out the context and the audience. They're always made clear in that background information. What's not made clear is the purpose and students need to determine the purpose by looking with an intelligent eye at the background and by carefully reading the material that's presented there. So, this is a draught of the assessment criteria for section C and it's all going to look very familiar. Our command terms are demonstrates, analyses and uses and that's no surprise. The first one talks about understanding the contention, the arguments, and the point of view that the writer has.

The second one is about the student's capacity to analyse language and visuals and the way in which arguments can be amplified or developed through language and you'll notice that focus is very much on an intended audience. And so, this is perhaps going to have to be more of a focus for your teaching than it has been in the past and I'll show you that when I'm showing you the difference between the EQs in a moment. Students need to be able to use evidence to support their analysis and as you know that it's very important if students are quoting in this section of the exam that they're explaining why that quotation was important to the persuasion rather than just embedding a quote in their writing. And obviously students need to have fluent expression. So, what I'm looking at here is a comparison of the expected qualities in 2023 and in 2024, this is a draught document and I'm comparing what was said for the EQ level six.

So, in 2023 at EQ six, descriptor one was that students showed an adequate understanding of the arguments presented and the points of view. Now it says a clear understanding of the contention, the arguments presented and the point of view expressed. Now we are all aware that sometimes the contention is not necessarily the intention of the piece and at EQ six, it's simply the contention that students need to be able to get. In descriptor two, you'll notice that in 2023, it just talked about language being used to persuade, but the caveat has come in 2024 of to persuade the intended audience. So, I would suggest that looking at the way that writing differs as it targets specific audiences and sometimes there might be multiple audiences as for example there was on the VCAA 2023 paper.

Students are going to need to be demonstrating that knowledge and in descriptor three, it's changed from competent expression from using language with clarity. If we go to the very top level, and I'm sorry, part of this slide seems to have cut off, the EQ for the nine and 10 level, It's gone from showing a perspective understanding of arguments and the point of view it says expressed and it's become this, that the students have to understand the contention and the development of the argument. That is understand the way the argument was constructed in the text as well as the point of view expressed. And for descriptor two, it's gone from demonstrate sophisticated insight into the ways written and visual language is used to persuade. It's become the ways in which written and spoken language and visuals complement the arguments and are used to persuade the intended audience.

So, the connection between argument and the language that is used to present the argument is a focus that students are going to need to have at that very highest level. In 2023, the descriptor for language was used fluently and effectively, and it's become sophisticated and precise. Now obviously there's expected qualities for every level and I would encourage you to look at these closely and think about the implications that they have for your students and the sorts of feedback that you give to students and the way that you prepare students for the exam. But I would stress as Annelise has done the exam is one element of the course and preparing students for life is very important and the sorts of skills that you will be using that send them out into the world as very competent understanders of language and the way that people try to position each other with argument is going to prepare them well for the exam as well, thank you.

**Annelise Balsamo** - If you have any questions about the study design or the examination, you're really welcome to contact me at any time. This slide shows my contact details. Sometimes it's easy to get me on email, but you are welcome to try my mobile. Please, if I don't pick up, leave a message, I will return your call. Thank you for listening to this video.

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