**Chris Clark** - My name is Chris Clark, and I'm the curriculum manager for Health PE at the VCAA. Thank you for taking the time to engage with the first in a series of videos to support teachers understand the recently revised VCE Outdoor and Environmental Study study design. It is important to note that this video and the remaining four of the What's New videos, one for each unit, are intended to be an introduction to the changes in the study. Further resources and professional development opportunities will also be available, namely support materials, webinars, and workshops, which will allow for a deeper dive into the revised study.

Looking at some of this most significant key changes, beginning with the experiential learning focus. It's important to reinforce that the intent of the VCE OES course is to allow students to learn experientially through outdoor experiences and in outdoor environments. Students who select this study do so largely because of their interest in engaging with and learning in outdoor environments. The revised study design has provided a suggested number of outdoor experience hours, namely 25 to 50 per unit, as a way of supporting teachers in developing programmes that enable experiential learning and garnering support at a school level to allow for this. It is important to note that in arriving at the suggested number of hours, the revision team did so, clearly acknowledging that this indicative number of hours would equate to an approximate number required to truly implement the current study design as intended. Therefore, the introduced figure in the revised study does not reflect an intended increase in outdoor experience time. The intent instead, of providing the figure is to support teachers and not flag an increased expectation on how much outdoor environment time should be completed.

Looking at Area Study 3 and its inclusion in the revised study, it is intended to complement the experiential learning focus, and I'll go into further detail about this shortly. As with other recently reviewed VCE studies, the introduction of cross-study specifications is designed to articulate the underpinning organising ideas of the study that are proposed for VCE OES and reflected across Units 1 to 4. New key knowledge related to Indigenous perspective has been included in the study design, specifically within Unit 1 Area Study 1, Unit 3 Area Study 2, and Unit 4 Area Study 2, in addition to existing and retained knowledge in Unit 2 Area Study 1 and Unit 3 Area Study 1. The monitoring process and the subsequent review revealed the general themes of the existing scope of the study design, particularly around outdoor environments and exploring discovering relationships with and sustaining outdoor environments are well-received and should be largely retained.

Refinements have occurred, particularly the inclusion, where appropriate, of contemporary ideas, and there's a good example in Unit 1 related to social media. I will introduce some amendments and changes to assessment shortly, which includes some adjustments to the types of assessments that can be selected and a change to the mark allocation within Unit 3 and Unit 4.

The foundations of a VCE study are built on the Scope of the study, Rationale, and Aims, and supported by the cross-study specifications. Therefore, having a good understanding and familiarity with pages one to eight in the study design is fundamental in planning a teaching and assessment programme. The information in the study is organised in a cascading structure. Therefore, it assumes that when you read the key skills, for example, in Unit 4, the teacher will understand the characteristics of the study, aims, and rationale. It assumes when you design an assessment task, that you're applying all that went before it into the development of assessment tasks, including the characteristics of the study, outcomes, key knowledge, key skills, and the requirements of the assessment tasks.

Looking specifically at some of the changes to the componentry at the front end of the study design, beginning with the scope. The scope of the study defines the boundaries of the subject material. Changes within the revised study design within the scope include the inclusion of terminology, near and far, to define appropriate outdoor environments for engagement with. The identification of critical inquiry as a key skill for development within the context of sustainability and connection to country. This provides an important line of sight with the F-10 HPE curriculum. The rationale identifies the academic value of a VCE study and creates connection with opportunities beyond the study, be it further study and/or industry employment. Key inclusions within the revised rationale include reaffirming the value of safe and sustainable participation in the outdoors, removal of reference to theory-based study, and replacement with the term experiential to reinforce the intended VCE OES experience for a student, including reference to Indigenous peoples and colonisation as an important context when considering the historical and contemporary modification, use, and preservation of outdoor environments.

The aims of the study outlines at a granular level what students can expect to achieve through the subject. If we take a look at the revised study set of aims and highlight some of the key standout features. An emphasis on theoretical knowledge and understanding gained through practical experience. The inclusion of cultural factors when considering the health of outdoor environments. Reinforcing safe and sustainable participation when developing practical skills and contextualising the locale of appropriate outdoor environments. There's been no change to the aim that challenges students to develop an understanding of the need to protect, conserve, and manage outdoor environments. There's been an inclusion of Indigenous Australian people's relationships with outdoor environments to support the increased importance of this knowledge throughout the study. And finally, a focus on policy with this aim intended to reflect the presence of this feature in key knowledge across the course.

As mentioned, the cross-study specifications is a refined set of underpinning themes, content, and skills that encapsulate the VCE OES Unit 1 to 4 study. They should form the backbone of the planning of teaching and learning programmes for teachers enacting the study. The cross-study specifications are broken into three subheadings: key concepts, outdoor experiences, and key practical skills. The key concepts include Indigenous Australians' knowledge, culture, and history; outdoor environments, including the type of outdoor environments that can be studied, human relationships with outdoor environments, and environmental citizenship and health of outdoor environments; and finally, sustainability. Looking at outdoor experiences.

The purpose of outdoor experiences contains information around the development of understandings of outdoor environments from various perspectives, including geological and human history over time, changes to human interactions with the outdoor environment, protocols and management of outdoor environments, and finally, strategies for sustainable use of outdoor environments. The time spent completing outdoor experiences. As mentioned before, there is a suggested number of hours, 25 to 50, not inclusive of travel and sleep, which includes information that highlights that outdoor experience and time spent in outdoor environments can include activities in class time, half or whole day experiences and also multi-day experiences, and also encompasses activities that are not just active experiences, but also more reflective or passive experiences. The study design also provides a link to the Department of Education Safety Guidelines for Adventure Activities, noting the scope within the study design also includes examples of activities that are not suitable within the study. Key practical skills should be developed across the study in Area Study 1 and 2 of each unit.

Students should continue to be provided opportunities to develop and demonstrate the key practical skills and apply key knowledge to a range of outdoor experiences across a variety of outdoor environments. In Area Study 3 within Unit 1 and Unit 2, a distinct set of key practical skills are defined, that students are to develop and demonstrate during outdoor experiences. In Unit 4, noting that Unit 4 Area Study 3 covers the breadth of Unit 3 and Unit 4 key knowledge. The stated key skills reflect the process of data collection and evaluation within selected outdoor environments that provide students the opportunity to use the selected environments to integrate knowledge from across Unit 3 and Unit 4. This is an exciting innovation within the study, given that we know the most meaningful and deep understanding of knowledge comes when students can make connections between concepts within different contexts.

Finally, it is important to reinforce that the introduction of Area Study 3 does not diminish the expectation that students are exposed to practical opportunities across a range of outdoor environments through the whole of a unit, including during Area Study 1 and Area Study 2. The outcome statements that outline what students are expected to demonstrate to achieve a satisfactory outcome clearly signpost the need for time spent in outdoor environments. Looking at some changes to assessment. The structure provides students exposure to an increased range of assessment task types. This includes the provision that task types cannot be selected more than once within a unit at Unit 3 and Unit 4. This supports the VCE assessment principle that variety of assessment is offered to students that provides them with varied ways of showing their knowledge. Structured questions has been removed as an assessment item in Unit 1 and 2, noting the flexibility schools have to offer this type of assessment in the way an internal school examination. At Unit 3 and 4, this option has been restricted to Unit 4. The use of a logbook, referred to in the current study design as a journal, remains an integral task for students to collect primary data, record observations, make reflections, and organise evidence collected during outdoor experiences. The revised study requires students to complete a logbook for satisfactory completion of each outcome, but this will not be assessed in a specific school-based assessment task, as is the case in the current study design. The logbook is required to be referred to when students are making connections to specific outdoor experiences completed and environments visited in assessment tasks across Units 1 to 4.

Finally, changes to weighting of assessment in Unit 3 and Unit 4 reflects the inclusion of the additional school-based assessment task for Unit 4 Area Study 3. This area study and subsequent assessment is completed throughout Unit 3 and Unit 4. However, the assessment item is listed within Unit 4 school-based assessment. It is important to note that this change does not place an added importance on content located within Unit 4 or suggests that Unit 4 is larger in size. It merely acknowledges the additional assessment task within Unit 4. Noting also that given the removal of the current journal task as an assessment item, there is no overall increase to assessment volume in the revised study.

Thank you for connecting with the first of our VCE OES videos, introducing the revised study. I would like to thank teachers who were engaged with both the process of developing and providing feedback that has shaped the revised study, and especially thank teachers who are engaging in professional learning such as this to support students in immersing themselves with the powerful learning opportunities this study provides. I encourage teachers to take the time to view each unit video, which breaks down amendments within each unit, and to also connect with further professional learning opportunities in the way of support materials, webinars, and workshops to enhance understanding of the revised study. If, at any time, you require further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me.

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