VCE Physical Education   
Units 1 and 2 (2017–2024) Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

(Updated February 2020)

How much practical work should students be doing in Units 1 and 2?

VCE Physical Education should allow students to learn in, through and about movement. Practical activities should be used as learning tasks and not treated separately from theory classes. Practical work can be used to develop, reinforce or support the understanding of theoretical concepts throughout the unit, through student participation in a broad range of movement experiences.

Practical activities may include participation in physical activity, laboratory work, data collection, coaching, sports and games. Teachers must allocate enough time to ensure that the practical component of VCE Physical Education is adequately covered. Practical activities should underpin the integration of students’ understanding of theoretical concepts.

As a guide, 10 - 15 hours of class time should be devoted to student practical work in each Unit.

The word sociocultural appears throughout the study design, what does this mean?

The term ‘sociocultural’ is defined in the Advice for teachers, it means “relating to the interaction of social   
and cultural elements such as family, peers, community, gender, socio-economic status, cultural beliefs   
and traditions.”

In Units 1 and 2, students also look at demographic (age, gender, ethnicity, education, location, employment, income), environmental (physical, social and attitudinal), historical (policy trends, political influence) and geographic (climate, landforms) factors that may influence participation in physical activity. It is important to note that these factors may be classified in different categories. For example, the influence of peers can be considered as part of the social environment or a sociocultural factor.

What physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines should be used in Unit 2?

The study design does not specify which physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines should be used. As a general principle for students studying VCE Physical Education in Australia, the appropriate guidelines are those released by the Australian Government, [Department of Health](https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pubhlth-strateg-phys-act-guidelines).

For adults these are Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines and for children and young people the Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines

If the study of VCE Physical Education is undertaken in a different location, then the guidelines relevant to that country or region or the World Health Organization’s ‘Global recommendations on physical activity for health’ are suitable to be studied.

Teachers have flexibility to compare the Australian Guidelines to those of the World Health Organization’s recommendations or to guidelines of another country.

Do students need to know the physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines for all lifespan stages in Unit 2?

Teachers have flexibility to select the physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines for some or all lifespan stages. Ideally students should understand the guidelines for Young People (5–17 years) and   
Adults (18–64 years) as these stages would generally reflect the current and future physical activity and sedentary behaviour levels relevant to most students in a VCE class. If for assessment in Area of Study 1, students have selected other population groups such as young children (birth to 5 years) or older Australians (65 years +) then the relevant guidelines should be studied.

What is the Youth Physical Activity Promotion model, and do I have to use it   
in Unit 2?

Teachers may use the social-ecological model (SEM) and/or the Youth Physical Activity Promotion (YPAP) model. Models are used to provide a framework to understand the factors and behaviours that enable or act as barriers to physical activity participation.

The Youth Physical Activity Promotion (YPAP) model is a theoretical model that looks at the factors that influence the physical activity behaviour of children and youth. In the context of the YPAP model, ‘youth’ refers to all school-aged children (Foundation–12). More information is provided in the Advice for teachers   
on page 15.

Unit 2 lists inclinometry as a method of assessing physical activity and sedentary behaviour, what is inclinometry?

Inclinometers are instruments that measure posture and can distinguish between sitting, standing, and lying. Inclinometers are now being included in accelerometers and provide additional information that allows for better classification of sedentary time.

What is the difference between the personal physical activity plan and a training program?

* The activity plan in Unit 2, Area of Study 1 is intended to be aligned to meeting the physical activity/movement and/or sedentary behaviour guidelines for an individual or group. While students need to ensure that the frequency, intensity, time and type (F.I.T.T) of the activity is included, the goal   
  is not to improve fitness components but to meet the relevant guidelines.
* In development of the written plan, students should use the language of the guidelines, and the plan should reflect the guidelines used. For example, a plan for adults to meet the guidelines specific to them should show at least 150 minutes of ‘moderate intensity’ physical activity and two days of muscle strengthening activities a week.

Can students select any issue associated with physical activity or sport to investigate in Unit 2, Area of Study 2?

No - the topics selected should allow students to demonstrate all key knowledge and key skills. For example, some topics (such as advertising during sporting programs) were not included in the study design as they did not allow students to demonstrate the Key skill ‘participate in and reflect on physical activities that illustrate the participatory perspective of the selected issue’. Additionally, student must be able to collect data related to the issue.

Why has energy systems been removed from Unit 1?

Overlap with energy systems in Unit 3 has been removed. Energy systems have been specifically omitted from Unit 1. The rationale is that Units 1 and 2 are designed to be stand alone, and VCAA policy requires that Units 3 and 4 do not have any prerequisites. Approximately 21% of students enrolled in Unit 3 have not completed Units 1–2. These students were disadvantaged by the inclusion of energy systems in Unit 1.

In Unit 1, are students required to know the WADA and ASADA anti-doping codes?

The study design does not specifically refer to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) or the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA) codes in the key knowledge. There is no requirement for students to understand the specific detail of these codes. However, when discussing legal and illegal substances and methods to enhance performance of the musculoskeletal and cardiorespiratory system, teachers may wish to refer to the WADA and ASADA codes when exploring why a substance or method may be considered illegal. In discussing the ethical and sociocultural considerations teachers may wish to draw on concepts evident in the codes such as fairness, safety, health, role models and the spirit of sport.

Assessment

How should the core assessment task for Unit 1 be implemented?

The core assessment task for Outcomes 1 and 2 requires students to complete four practical activities across the two areas of study. This could be 2 practical activities for each Outcome or one practical for one Outcome and three for the other Outcome. Teachers may wish to break this task up into two or four small tasks or alternately after the completion of the four practical activities complete one task that brings together the data collected. Teachers may wish to give students specific questions to structure their written reports and to guide their analysis of how the musculoskeletal and cardiorespiratory systems work to produce movement.

The assessment in Unit 2, Area of Study 1 seems very flexible, is that the intent of the study design? How long does the physical activity plan have   
to be?

Yes, the assessment task allows flexibility for teachers to decide the focus of the task. The task can be a plan for an individual or group to increase their physical activity and/or reduce sedentary behaviour. Students must also demonstrate participation in the program designed to increase physical activity or reduce sedentary behaviour. For example, students might:

* measure their physical activity and/or sedentary behaviour. It may be that a student meets the physical activity guidelines but has extended periods of sedentary behaviour. Therefore, the plan the plan they design could reflect this by focusing on sedentary behaviour and recommend strategies to reduce sitting time at school and at home.
* develop a plan for children to reduce their time sitting in front of a computer screen or television
* develop a plan for an adult to increase their physical activity levels to meet the Australian Physical Activity Guidelines.

It should be noted that the plan is not a training program and must relate to increasing physical activity and/or reducing sedentary behaviour, as this is what the Outcome requires.

Teachers have discretion as to the length of the physical activity and/or sedentary behaviour plan.