**Cheating in the 2017 End of Year  
VCE Examinations**

To ensure the fairness and integrity of VCE examinations, the VCAA has established clear and consistent rules which it rigorously enforces in conjunction with schools.

The VCAA’s VCE examination rules and processes for investigating breaches largely deter and prevent cheating. Any students caught breaking the rules are appropriately penalised.

In 2017, 85,108 students sat at least one end of year VCE examination and there were 86 alleged breaches of examination rules in end of year VCE examinations, all of which were investigated by VCAA. This was 18 more VCE exam rule investigations than were undertaken in 2016, a result of the increased capacity for the detection of cheating.

The alleged breaches most commonly related to copying (45.3% of total matters), possession of unauthorised material (13.9% of total matters) and failure to cease writing (19.8% of total matters).

**Breaches**

In 2017, there were 85,108 students who sat at least one end of year VCE exam.

Some 51,845 students were eligible to complete their VCE and there were 108 studies with a written exam.

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) investigated 86 alleged breaches of the examination rules in the 2017 end of year VCE examinations.

The comparable figures in previous years are shown in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Number of investigations** |
| 2011 | 51 |
| 2012 | 78 |
| 2013 | 54 |
| 2014 | 38 |
| 2015 | 65 |
| 2016 | 68 |

The types of alleged breaches that were reported in 2017 are shown in the table below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Reported incident type** | **Number** | **Percentage** |
| Attempted to cheat by copying (including alleged allowing copying) | 39 | 45.3 |
| Did not cease writing when time elapsed | 17 | 19.8 |
| Unauthorised material (including notes or writing on hand) in examination | 12 | 13.9 |
| Began writing or using calculator before instructed | 8 | 9.3 |
| Mobile phone in examination | 5 | 5.8 |
| Communicated with other student | 3 | 3.5 |
| Distracted other students/caused disturbance | 1 | 1.2 |
| Other | 1 | 1.2 |
| **Total reported incidents** | **86** | **100** |

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| **Mobile phones**  Figures for alleged incidents involving mobile phones in previous years are shown in the table below.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Year** | **VCE Examination Incidents involving a mobile phone** | | 2012 | 27 | | 2013 | 15 | | 2014 | 9 | | 2015 | 18 | | 2016 | 19 |   The VCE examination rules forbid the possession of mobile phones in examinations. Historically, mobile phones have been a major category in breaches of exam rules.  However, 2017 saw a significant decrease in the number of incidents involving mobile phone possession, with only 5 reported incidents. |

**Penalties**

Nine students received significant penalties from VCAA Review Committees following hearings. These penalties ranged from a reduction of one exam grade but no change in the study score, to the reduction of four exam grades, resulting in a reduction of eight marks in the study score.

* Four students were penalised for bringing notes into the exam. One student’s exam grades were reduced by four grades, another student’s exam grades were reduced by three grades, and two students had their exam grades reduced by one grade.
* Three students were found to have taken unfair advantage by copying multiple choice answers from another student. The students had their exam grades reduced by four, three and two exam grades respectively. One student was penalised for being in possession of a mobile phone and using the phone to gain an unfair advantage in two exams. The student’s exam grade was reduced by three grades in one exam. There was no exam grade reduction in the other exam.
* One student was penalised for repeatedly disobeying the exam supervisor’s instructions to cease writing. Their exam grade was reduced by one grade.