



# Swinburne Senior Secondary College

## VCE Policy

### Purpose

The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) is a certificate that recognises the successful completion of secondary education. It is a qualification that is recognised around the world.

The VCE provides pathways to further study at university, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and to the world of work. The VCE is designed to be undertaken in Years 11 and 12 but can be started in Year 10 if students are academically ready. Year 10 and 11 students may be offered the opportunity to accelerate in selected VCE studies subject to their academic performance in years 9 and 10. Subject selection is a key success factor for a student to successfully complete their VCE.

### Guidelines

In order to be eligible for the VCE, at least 16 units must be satisfactorily completed including:

- three units from the English group, including a Unit 3 - 4 sequence. English units may be selected from Foundation English Units 1 and 2, English Units 1 to 4, English (EAL) Units 3 and 4, English Language Units 1 to 4, and Literature Units 1 to 4.
- at least three sequences of Units 3 and 4 studies other than English which may include any number of English sequences once the English requirement has been met.

**Note:** The Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) advises that for the calculation of the student's Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), satisfactory completion of both Units 3 and 4 of an English sequence is required.

Students are generally required to undertake the following:

- Year 11: 12 units (six studies)
- Year 12: 10 units (five studies)

The VCE year is divided into two semesters, with one unit spanning one semester. A typical VCE program at Swinburne Senior Secondary College is:

<b>Year 11</b>	
<b>Semester One</b>	<b>Semester Two</b>
English/Literature/English Language	English/Literature/English Language
Unit 1 Subject	Unit 2 Subject
Unit 1 Subject	Unit 2 Subject
Unit 1 Subject	Unit 2 Subject
Unit 1 Subject	Unit 2 Subject
Unit 1 Subject	Unit 2 Subject

<b>Year 12</b>	
<b>Semester One</b>	<b>Semester Two</b>
English/Literature/English Language	English/Literature/English Language
Unit 3 Subject	Unit 4 Subject
Unit 3 Subject	Unit 4 Subject
Unit 3 Subject	Unit 4 Subject
Unit 3 Subject	Unit 4 Subject

### **Implementation**

#### Satisfactory Completion of a Unit

To satisfactorily complete a unit in any study, students must demonstrate achievement of each of the outcomes for the unit as specified in the study design.

Achievement of an outcome means:

- the work meets the required standard as described in the outcomes;
- the work was submitted on time;
- the work is clearly the student's own;
- there has been no substantive breach of rules.

If all outcomes are achieved, the student is awarded S (Satisfactory) for the unit.

A student may not be granted satisfactory completion if:

- the work is not of the required standard as described in the outcomes;
- the student has failed to meet a school deadline or approved extension of time for the assessment task;
- the work cannot be authenticated;
- there has been a substantive breach of rules including school attendance rules.

The [VCAA VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook](#) states that all VCE units require a minimum of 50 hours of class time. A student needs to attend sufficient class time to complete work. Evidence of the completion of work will be in the form of a record of the work completed in class and for homework as well as the satisfactory completion of assessment tasks. Teachers will advise students about the work required to satisfy a unit at the beginning of each semester.

### VCE Assessment Principles

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning that at the senior secondary level:

- identifies opportunities for further learning
- describes student achievement
- articulates and maintains standards
- provides the basis for the award of a certificate.

As part of VCE studies, assessment activities enable:

- the demonstration of the achievement of an outcome or set of outcomes
- judgment and reporting of a level of achievement on a task or collection of tasks for School-assessed Coursework, School-assessed Tasks, Externally-assessed Tasks or examinations.

Monitoring the results of VCE assessment also provides feedback, which informs curriculum implementation, assessment design and curriculum review.

In each VCE study, teachers and schools determine the assessment tasks to be used at Units 1 and 2. In Units 3 and 4, specified assessment tasks are set.

At the Units 3 and 4 level of a VCE study, School-assessed Coursework, School-assessed Tasks, Externally-assessed Tasks and examinations provide assessment results that are used in the calculation of a student's study score.

The key principles underpinning all VCE assessment practice ensure that the assessment instruments enable judgments to be made about demonstration of the outcomes and levels of achievement fairly, in a balanced way and without adverse effects on the curriculum or for the education system.

Assessment should be acceptable to stakeholders – including students, schools, government and the community. The system for assessing the progress and achievement of students must be accessible, effective, equitable, reasonable and transparent.

### *VCE assessment should be valid and reasonable*

The curriculum content to be assessed must be explicitly described to teachers in each study design and related VCAA documents. Assessment instruments should not assess learning that is outside the scope of a study design.

Each assessment instrument (for example, examination, assignment, project, practical, oral, performance, portfolio or presentation) should give students clear instructions. It should be administered under conditions (degree of supervision, access to resources, notice and duration) that are substantially the same for all students undertaking that assessment.

Authentication and school moderation of assessment and the processes of external review and statistical moderation are to ensure that assessment results are fair and comparable across the student cohort for that study.

*VCE assessment should be equitable*

Assessment instruments should neither privilege nor disadvantage certain groups of students or exclude others on the basis of gender, culture, physical disability, socioeconomic status and geographical location.

Assessment instruments should be designed so that, under the same or similar conditions, they provide consistent information about student performance. This may be the case when, for example, alternatives are offered at the same time for assessment of an outcome (which could be based on a choice of context) or at a different time due to a student's absence.

*VCE assessment should be balanced*

The set of assessment instruments used in a VCE study should be designed to provide a range of opportunities for a student to demonstrate in different contexts and modes the knowledge, skills, understanding and capacities set out in the curriculum. This assessment should also provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate different levels of achievement specified by suitable criteria, descriptors, rubrics or marking schemes.

Judgment about student level of achievement should be based on the results from a variety of practical and theoretical situations and contexts relevant to a study. Students may be required to respond in written, oral, performance, product, folio, multimedia or other suitable modes as applicable to the distinctive nature of a study or group of related studies.

*VCE assessment should be efficient*

The study design will set out the minimum number of assessments for teachers and assessors to make a robust judgment about each student's progress and learning. Each assessment instrument must balance the demands of precision with those of efficiency. Assessment should not generate workload and/or stress that unduly diminishes the performance of students under fair and reasonable circumstances.

Graded Assessment

Students will demonstrate the level of their achievement of each of the outcomes in the units they are undertaking through their performance on the *School Assessed Coursework (SACs)* designated for that unit. These tasks will be completed mainly in the classroom, in class time.

At the beginning of each unit, students will be given a schedule of SAC dates.

In **Units 1 and 2** outcomes will be assessed and graded using the key knowledge and skills designated by the VCAA. In these Units, S or N results are reported to the VCAA. The college will provide students' marks and feedback appropriate to each assessment task and each outcome, including advice on where and how improvements can be made for further learning. Marks will be

reported on the end-of-semester reports. Marks are not reported to the VCAA and are not subject to moderation.

In **Units 3 and 4**, Coursework assessment or School Assessed Coursework (SAC) describes the most commonly used form of graded assessment used to measure each student's level of achievement based on the assessment tasks designated for the unit. This assessment will take place mainly in the classroom under teacher supervision over a specified period of class time. Coursework scores are forwarded to the VCAA and are subject to statistical moderation. Details of the moderation procedure may be found in the pamphlet Statistical Moderation of VCE Coursework which can be accessed on the VCAA website: [www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au)

Students will be given feedback appropriate to each assessment task and each criterion including advice on where and how improvements can be made for future learning.

School Assessed Tasks (SATs) are forms of assessment which are undertaken over a longer period of time. SATs occur in studies where students complete a product or folio: Art, Media, Studio Arts, Visual Communication and Design and Product Design and Technology. The scores for SATs are forwarded to the VCAA and are subject to review based on student performance on the General Achievement Test (GAT) which is held in June. The VCAA will inform students of their level of achievement on School Assessed Tasks. At the school level students will receive regular feedback throughout the duration of the task.

In some studies there are designated SACs that are not scored but are essential for determining S or N.

#### Attendance at assessment tasks

A student who is absent from an assessment task should contact the school on the day of the assessment task.

Students studying Units 3 and 4 must see the VCE Manager immediately on return to school with an explanation for the missed SAC. SAC grades may be withheld from the VCAA until a medical certificate or other official documentation such as a statutory declaration or report from a counsellor is supplied to cover the student's absence. The school may verify this documentation with the practitioner concerned.

Students studying Units 1 and 2 must see their Mentor immediately on return to the school with an explanation for the missed SAC in the form of a medical certificate or note from a parent. The Mentor will enter the reason for absence on Compass School Manager.

Students who do not satisfactorily complete all the criteria for an assessment task will have an opportunity to redeem this situation after consultation with their teacher. This redemption will not change the score for that assessment task but will qualify the student for an S for the outcome.

#### Completion of a replacement SAC

In order to satisfactorily complete outcomes, students undertaking Units 1 to 4 should immediately see their teachers on return to school to be informed of the date for their replacement

SACs. Students who haven't completed the missed SACs within two weeks will be referred to the VCE Manager.

#### Extension of time to complete SATs

Students who are unable to complete a SAT by the due date must apply to the VCE Manager prior to the due date for an extension of time and must provide a medical certificate or other documentation to support their application. Extensions of up to two weeks from the original date may be granted.

#### Authentication of Coursework and Assessment Tasks

In order to meet the requirements for satisfactory completion of a unit, students must submit work that is clearly their own and that has not been submitted for assessment in any other unit. Apart from the incorporation of appropriately referenced text and source material, no part of a student's work may be copied from any other person's work.

A student should not accept undue assistance from any other person in the preparation and submission of work. Any material referred to in student work should be attributed to its source.

Teachers will provide opportunities throughout the unit to check each student's work as students proceed through the completion of the assessment tasks. The onus of authenticity rests with the student. Students must show teachers work in progress to demonstrate the authenticity of the work.

If a teacher believes that a student has submitted work which is not his or her own, or that a student is in breach of other rules relating to school assessment set by the college, the teacher will investigate the matter and submit a written report to the VCE Manager, who will then conduct further enquiries as deemed necessary.

The VCE Manager will act in an advisory capacity to the Principal, who is responsible for determining what action is to be taken.

#### Computer Use

When students use a computer to produce a work requirement or assessment task it is the student's responsibility to ensure that:

- there is an alternative system available for use in case of computer or printer malfunction or unavailability
- hard copies of the work in progress are produced regularly to meet drafting and authentication requirements
- work is saved onto a back-up file. The back-up file should not be stored with the computer. It is imperative that all work is regularly backed up onto appropriate memory devices at school and at home
- computer errors and problems are NOT sufficient reason for an extension of time to be given to complete a piece of assessment.

#### Attendance and Appeals

Students are expected to cover all absences with written explanations from parents or with medical certificates.

Students who are persistently late for classes will have every three late arrivals recorded as an absence. This will affect their overall attendance.

#### Special Provision

Students who experience some form of *chronic or significant hardship* during the year due to medical, physical and/or other serious reasons can apply for **Special Provision**. The VCAA may, depending on the nature of the hardship, allow the school to provide one or more of the following forms of support: extra time for SACs, a separate room for completion of SACs, use of a computer or use of a reader and/or scribe. These forms of support may also apply to exams.

It is imperative that significant hardships are well documented. The appropriate documentation must specify the problem, severity, treatment if any, effect on study and dates involved. Medical practitioner's or psychologist's reports must be provided by the student to support their application. Students wishing to apply for Special Provision should see the VCE Manager at the beginning of the School Year.

Year 12 students completing their VCE who have experienced severe hardship due to personal, health, financial or other reasons, through the whole or part of the year should complete a *SEAS (Special Entry Access Schemes) Application Form* at the end of the year. This form is sent to VTAC and could assist with tertiary entrance. This form will be available from the school or on the VTAC website: [www.vtac.edu.au](http://www.vtac.edu.au).

#### **Resources**

For more information see:

[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au)

[www.vtac.edu.au](http://www.vtac.edu.au)

#### **Evaluation**

This policy is for review annually or as required.