

Outline of VCAL and VCE

VCAL

The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning is a highly engaging senior secondary qualification. It aims to provide the skills, knowledge and attributes to enable students to make informed choices about employment and educational pathways.

VCAL units at each level reflect the progression in the development of knowledge, skills and attributes. For example:

- At Foundation level, students learn under close supervision with high levels of direction. Knowledge and employability skills development is supported by a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills and preparatory learning.
- At Intermediate level, learning is reasonably autonomous in regard to planning and work activities but conducted under supervision. Knowledge and employability skills development leads to independent learning, confidence and a high level of transferable skills
- At the Senior level, learning is autonomous in regard to planning and work activities but conducted under supervision. Knowledge and employability skills development leads to a high level of interpersonal skills, independent action and achievement of tasks that require decision making and leadership.

To be awarded the VCAL, students must successfully complete a learning program that contains a minimum of ten credits. The VCAL program must include:

- curriculum components to the value of at least one credit, each of which can be justified against the purpose statement for each of the four VCAL curriculum strands
- a minimum of two VCAL units
- one credit for numeracy
- curriculum components to the value of six credits at the level of the VCAL award (or above), of which one must be for literacy and one must be for a VCAL Personal Development Skills unit. At the VCAL Intermediate and Senior levels, the learning program must also include accredited Vocational Education and Training (VET) curriculum components to the value of a minimum of one credit in the Industry Specific Skills Strand. One credit is awarded on successful completion of 90 nominal hours of accredited VET curriculum. The VCAL program may also contain curriculum components drawn from the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) units and Further Education (FE) accredited curriculum. One credit is awarded on successful completion of 90 nominal hours of accredited FE curriculum. VCAL curriculum strands Each VCAL award level contains four curriculum strands:
- Literacy and Numeracy Skills
- Industry Specific Skills
- Work Related Skills
- Personal Development Skills.

VCE

The **Victorian Certificate of Education** or **VCE** is one credential available to secondary school students who successfully complete year 11 and 12 in the Australian state of Victoria. The VCE is the predominant choice for students wishing to pursue tertiary education

A VCE program includes a number of different VCE studies (or subjects), with the majority consisting of four units that can be completed over the two years (a unit represents one semester or half a year of work). Units 1 and 2 are typically taken in Year 11, while Units 3 and 4 are usually completed in Year 12. Many schools

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provide the opportunity for students to study Units 1 and 2 of some VCE studies in Year 10 and Units 3 and 4 in Year 11.

While Units 3 and 4 must be taken as a sequence in a single year, Units 1 and 2 can be taken as single units that need not form a sequence and do not need to be continued into Units 3 and 4. Often students are advised to do the full four units of each study, acquiring foundational knowledge before progressing to Units 3 and 4. Likewise, students are encouraged to begin VET studies at Unit 1 and 2 level in Year 11 before continuing on at Unit 3 and 4 level in Year 12.

To graduate with the VCE, students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of 16 units, although 20 to 24 units is generally the norm. Regardless of how many units are completed, students must complete a minimum of three units from the English group in order to graduate. This includes:

- Foundation English (Units 1 and 2)
- English (Units 1 to 4)
- English as an Additional Language (Units 3 and 4)
- English Language (Units 1 to 4)
- Literature (Units 1 to 4).

At least one of the English units must be a Unit 3 or 4.

Students must also satisfactorily complete at least three other Unit 3 and 4 sequences. Any number of these sequences may be drawn from VET. Some, but not all, VCE VET units result in a study score that contributes to an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) for university entrance; other VET sequences contribute to the ATAR through an increment. There are also some restrictions on certain combinations of VCE and VET studies that may affect students' ATAR calculations. To gain an ATAR, students need to complete four Unit 3 and 4 sequences that must include a Unit 3 and 4 study from the English group.

There are more than 90 studies (or subjects) to choose from in the VCE, and there are choices within those studies as well. For example, within history, students can choose studies on revolutions, Australian history or Renaissance Italy. Students can also choose from more than 40 languages, from Arabic to French, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese and Spanish.

As well as the 90-plus VCE studies, there are 30 VCE VET programs. Students integrating vocational education into their senior school program progress towards a nationally recognised vocational qualification as they earn their senior certificate. Students can include up to 13 units of VET studies in their VCE program (out of the minimum 16 units required to satisfactorily complete the VCE). It is even possible to undertake a part-time apprenticeship or traineeship within the VCE