Timboon P12
Parent’s Guide -
Year 12
2016
## Contents

INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 4
SUPPORT TEAM .................................................................................................................. 4
TIMBOON P12 SCHOOL WEB PAGE .................................................................................... 4
SOME KEY DATES .............................................................................................................. 5
ATTENDANCE .................................................................................................................... 5
   ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS .................................................................................... 5
ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING ....................................................................................... 6
   SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF A VCE UNIT ......................................................... 6
   ASSESSMENT DATES ...................................................................................................... 6
   REPORTING ................................................................................................................... 6
   GENERAL ACHIEVEMENT TEST (GAT) ..................................................................... 6
   SCHOOL ASSESSMENT ................................................................................................. 6
SUPPORTING STUDENTS THROUGH YEAR 12 .................................................................. 7
ORGANISING YOUR PROGRAM ....................................................................................... 7
   Study Skills Tips ........................................................................................................... 7
SCHOOL SUPPORT ........................................................................................................... 7
   Career Action Pathway Discussions ........................................................................... 7
   Careers / Course Information ..................................................................................... 7
   Tutorials ........................................................................................................................ 7
   Special Provision .......................................................................................................... 8
VTAC SPECIAL ENTRY ACCESS SCHEMES (SEAS) FOR STUDENTS APPLYING FOR TERTIARY STUDIES ........................................................................................................ 8
SCHOLARSHIPS ............................................................................................................... 8
APPLYING FOR TERTIARY COURSES .............................................................................. 9
TIMBOON P12 LIBRARY .................................................................................................... 9
WELFARE SUPPORT resources ..................................................................................... 9
   www.youthcentral.com.au ............................................................................................. 9
   Common Symptoms Of Student Stress Are: ............................................................... 10
   Stress beaters .............................................................................................................. 10
Surviving VCE: some tips for students (and parents) ....................................................... 11
VCE: A PARENT’S GUIDE – THE OVERVIEW ................................................................ 11
ADVICE FROM EXPERTS ............................................................................................... 11
   Robyn Chelley .............................................................................................................. 11
   Dr. Michael Carr – Gregg .............................................................................................. 12
   Dr. Fred Orr .................................................................................................................. 13
THE MYSTERY OF VCE STUDY SCORES AND TERTIARY ENTRANCE RANKS .......... 14
WHAT IS A SAC GRADE? .................................................................................................. 14
WHAT IS AN ATAR? ....................................................................................................... 14
   How Is The ATAR Calculated? .................................................................................... 14
VCE STUDY SCORES AND SCALING ............................................................................ 14
HOW IS VCAL ACCREDITED? ......................................................................................... 15
PROCEDURES AND RULES .......................................................................................... 16
AUTHENTICATION OF WORK ......................................................................................... 16
COMPUTER USE ............................................................................................................ 16
BREACH OF RULES ....................................................................................................... 16
STUDENTS RIGHT OF APPEAL ...................................................................................... 16
SPECIAL PROVISION ..................................................................................................... 16
   Special Arrangements for Examinations .................................................................. 17
   Derived Examination Score ...................................................................................... 17
   Application for Special Provision ............................................................................. 17
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS .................................................................................. 18
INTRODUCTION
This booklet is designed to assist parents of year 12 students understand the requirements of Timboon P12 School and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) for students undertaking VCE studies. Students in year 12 have greater responsibility for their own learning and management of their course. It is important that they establish their priorities for the year and ensure that organising time for study; homework and research are high on their list if they want to do well.
It is recommended that Year 12 students devote a minimum of 40 hours a week to their studies. This includes approximately 20 hours of class time so an additional 20 hours of study time must be planned for and used effectively. Students, at times, will need to do more than this to complete all required tasks. This is their opportunity to optimise their chances of being a successful applicant for university, college or TAFE course, or for employment in the workforce.

SUPPORT TEAM
Principal: (acting) Mr Sean Fitzpatrick
Assistant Principal (acting) Ms Gabby Theologous
VCE Coordination Team:
   Julie Nicholson, Drew Deppeler (including VET, Careers)
VCAL coordination: Jamie Mackieson

2016 Year 12 Teachers

Biology Penny Heazlewood
Chemistry Nigel Mottram
English Ian Clarke
Food & Technology Judy Devlin
Health & Human Development Judy Devlin
Legal Studies Carolyne Wakefield
Mathematics : Further Mathematics Lynn McDonald
Mathematics: Methods Marc Graesser
Physics Marc Graesser
Product Design & Technology Ian Harris
Psychology Julie Nicholson
VCAL Literacy Jamie Mackieson
VCAL Numeracy / Foundation Maths Gabby Theologous
VET Music Drew Deppeler

TIMBOON P12 SCHOOL WEB PAGE

Please check the school website for information about year 12 events, dates, general information and advice as well as links to a range of relevant web resources for both parents and students.
SOME KEY DATES
Proposed Career Action Pathways Discussions: (dates subject to change)

1. February 22nd – February 26th
2. May 23rd – May 27th
3. August 8th – August 12th

Parent Teacher Student Interviews – March 2nd August 18th
General Achievement Test – June 8th
Parent Information Evening – June 22nd – The End of the Year Process (tbc)
VTAC applications open - 5th August
University Open Days - August
Last Day of Year 12 classes – October 21st
Performance and VCE Languages Oral Exams commence – October 10th (tbc)
End of Year Written Examinations October 28th – November 18th (timetable available in May)
Year 12 Formal – November 18th (tbc)
VCE/VCAL results available to students by SMS and Internet. Post Results and ATAR Service commences – December 12th (tbc)
Timboon P12 7 – 12 Awards Afternoon – December 16th (tbc)

ATTENDANCE
Students are expected to attend all timetabled classes and parents are asked to assist by not allowing students to stay home unless they are too sick to attend school. All medical or dental appointments should be made, whenever possible, out of school hours.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS
VCE units require 50 hours of class time in a semester and each VCAL unit involves the student completing 100 nominal hours.

As VCE Coursework and learning outcomes are being assessed throughout the year, absences need a legitimate reason, such as illness (requiring a medical certificate or other documentation) or family disruption (would need to be confirmed and discussed with Year Level coordinator). Non-essential appointments (such as haircuts and driving lessons) should be made out of school time.

To pass any VCE unit it is also necessary for students to attend 90% of classes, undertaking the coursework and demonstrating achievement of learning outcomes.

Where a student has completed the work but there has been a breach of attendance rules, the school may assign N for one or more outcomes and thus the unit.

All absences must be accompanied by a medical/parent note on the day of return to school

Note: students receiving any form of government assistance need to be aware that any unauthorized absences must be forwarded to Centrelink and payments may be affected

Work done in class is necessary to allow work to be authenticated. Long term illness or other special circumstances may result in the school granting the student special provision. If approved this would mean the attendance rules do not apply. Each student’s case will be assessed individually. Students must apply to the Year Level Coordinator for an application form.

Staying at home to do work is not an acceptable excuse for being absent. Students who are genuinely sick on the day a SAC is due/conducted, must contact their Year Level Coordinator, explaining the reason for their absence and the details of when they will return to school.

The Assessment Task/SAC will be re-scheduled for grading, only if a medical certificate covers the absence. A different topic may be set. Where no medical certificate is presented, the task may still be rescheduled but only be assessed for satisfactory completion and no grade will be awarded (an NA will be recorded against the task) SATs must be submitted by the due date, they cannot be accepted after the due date. Students with exceptional circumstances must contact the YLC as soon as possible.
ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF A VCE UNIT
In order to satisfactorily complete a VCE unit, students must receive an “S” for all Learning Outcomes. If a student receives an “N” for one or more of the Learning Outcomes due to:
• Failing to hand in work by the due date
• Extension deadlines not being met
• The work not being up to the standard required to achieve an “S”
• The work not being accepted based on authentication grounds, then the student will receive an “N” for the VCE Unit.

It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the requirements and assessment for each unit. If you have any doubts, check with your subject teacher or seek the advice of the Year Level Coordinator.

It is important to recognise that Extensions of Time are not routinely given during Units 3 and 4. Formal application must be made through the Year Level Coordinator.

ASSESSMENT DATES
Students will be given assessment dates at the beginning of each semester.
  o General Achievement Test : June 8th (tbc)
  o Performance and Oral examinations commence: October 3rd (tbc)
  o End of year examination period commences: October 26th (tbc)

REPORTING
Parent teacher interviews will be held during terms 1 and 3 and a detailed end of semester report at the end of term 2.

The Statements of Results from VCAA will include a summary of “S” and “N” results for units 1 - 4, the students’ school assessment grades (SAC’s and SATs), examination grades and their Study Scores for each Unit 3/4 studies undertaken. These will be available during the last week of Term 4. At this time students will also receive their Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) from the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC).

GENERAL ACHIEVEMENT TEST (GAT)
All students enrolled in one or more sequences of Units 3 and 4 must sit the General Achievement Test (GAT). A sentence will appear on the Statement of Results to indicate whether or not the student has obtained results in the GAT.

A confidential statement of GAT results will be sent to students. Numerical scores are reported for each of three components:
• Written communication
• Mathematics/Science/Technology
• Humanities/Arts/Social Science

Although GAT results do not count directly towards VCE results, they play an important role in checking that School-assessed Tasks, School-assessed Coursework and examinations have been accurately assessed, and in the calculation of Derived Examination Scores if required (see Special Provision).

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT
There are two kinds of graded school assessment in Units 3 and 4 – School Assessed Coursework and School Assessed Tasks.
SAC’s assess how students have performed the assessment task specified in the Study Design. These tasks must be done mainly in class time.
SAT’s involve tasks that are the same for every school following the specifications set by VCAA.
Schools are responsible for the initial assessment of SAC’s and SATs. Teachers may provide grades as part of the feedback to students. However, any assessments given are ‘conditional’. A student’s total score for SAC’s and SATs may change following statistical moderation.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS THROUGH YEAR 12

A successful journey through the final years of schooling is a team effort – students do not do this alone. At Timboon P12 School, we have a strong support team for both students and parents. Please feel free to contact us to discuss any concerns or queries you may have.

ORGANISING YOUR PROGRAM

Study Skills Tips
The key to being successful is ORGANISATION. Students must plan their time and how it is to be used. A wall planner in their bedroom (or place of study) to show them at a glance what needs to be completed during the year/unit is a good start. Using the School Diary to keep accurate information relating to assessment dates, completion of homework, excursions and other important school activities is also vital to having positive outcomes for the year.

Organisation of time means establishing regular working times on a weekly basis. Preparing a work timetable at the beginning of each week is useful. Set times, especially a starting time should be included. A reasonable amount of time should be allocated to each subject or unit. This of course will vary throughout the year and it will depend on School Assessed Coursework (SAC) dates, School Assessed Task (SAT) dates as well as the end of year examinations.

The timetable must be realistic. Few people can work effectively for long periods of time, so sensible breaks should be built into the timetable. It is essential to have a balance in your life, so allow for other commitments, such as family, sport and employment.

Here are some hints to help students plan:

- Know when School-assessed Tasks and School Assessed Coursework are due or being held and allow enough time to be fully prepared for them. To assist students with this, we publish a proposed SAC timetable early in the semester.
- Prepare for any tests by revising class work and research over several nights.
- Place more difficult work in the early part of your timetable so that you are not tackling it when you are tired.
- Avoid doing your most difficult subjects one after the other.
- Never procrastinate. Do not delay work just because it is not due yet.
- Be prepared to adjust your timetable according to your experience or special needs that arise.

If you have difficulty with planning and organisation, seek assistance from subject teachers, Year Level Coordinators or Youth Worker.

SCHOOL SUPPORT

Career Action Pathway Discussions
The VCE support team meets with all students in the first few weeks of term 1, to reflect on what they hope to achieve during 2016, possible pathways to 2017 and beyond, areas of strengths, concerns for the year ahead as well as supports and strategies to be implemented to facilitate a successful 2016. We meet with students midway through Term 2 to check in on their progress and discuss any concerns that may have arisen during the year. During August, we follow up again and provide assistance with the VTAC application process.

Careers / Course Information
Mr Drew Deppeler provides a range of information during Form Assemblies including: employment opportunities, information sessions, open days. Mr Deppeler also provides individual students career and course advice.

Tutorials
In addition to working in the classroom, many year 12 teachers offer additional tutorial sessions. These may be on a regular basis during the school week, special sessions in response to student needs, as well as additional sessions held during the school holidays (particularly in the lead up to the exams). Students are also encouraged to meet with teachers when they are having any problems.
Special Provision

This is an important area of support, when a student’s individual circumstances may impact on their ability to perform at their highest potential.

During the year if they have an ongoing illness / medical condition or a personal circumstance that affect their studies they may be eligible for Special Provision.

If students have an accident, sudden illness, or a major change in personal circumstances then we can also support them. We can even do this if it happens just prior to or during the exams.

It is the student’s responsibility to talk with a VCE coordinator to apply for Special Provision during the year or at exam times. Please contact us to discuss this if you feel your student needs this additional support.

VTAC SPECIAL ENTRY ACCESS SCHEMES (SEAS) FOR STUDENTS APPLYING FOR TERTIARY STUDIES

Access and Equity Schemes are implemented by some tertiary institutions and are targeted at applicants who have been unable to reach their full educational potential or who may have access to the courses of their choice restricted because of their life circumstances through their entire schooling. By providing additional information to different tertiary institutions applications to enter courses are looked at more closely, taking individual circumstances into account. Some of the categories include: difficulty family personal circumstances, disadvantaged financial background, applicants from rural and isolated areas.

There can special consideration for current Year 12 students who have experienced short-term disadvantage specifically in Years 11 and/or 12 which impacted on their Year 12 results (Australian Tertiary Entrance Rank) in categories such as: Difficult circumstances, Disadvantaged financial background, Disability or medical condition.

Application for SEAS is online and supplements the VTAC application process.

SCHOLARSHIPS

There are also a range of scholarships available to support students during tertiary studies. Some scholarships are awarded for many reasons: not just on the basis of academic merit or economic hardship.

To apply for scholarships at Victorian institutions apply is through the VTAC Scholarship process. Additional scholarship information is also provided on individual institutions websites, Centrelink websites and Education and Early Childhood Development websites.

Information about scholarships will be provided to students throughout the year, but it’s also a good idea to do some searching of different, Centrelink websites, Department of Early Childhood Development websites.

Students regularly receive information during forma assembly relating to Tertiary Courses, scholarships and VTAC application process.

APPLYING FOR TERTIARY COURSES

All information students require relating to Courses, Course selection as well as the application process is online. http://www.vtac.edu.au/

A print copy of the VTAC Guide is available sometime in August and can also be downloaded from the VTAC website. http://www.vtac.edu.au/publications/

We work with students individually to assist them with their VTAC and SEAS applications. Applications open in early August and close at the end of September.
VCE Students + Library = Best Friends

The library provides VCE students with a supervised quiet study area. During school terms the library is open to students from 8-30 am till 4-30 pm, Monday to Friday and always has a teacher in the library and on Saturday mornings from 10-00 am till 12 noon when it is staffed by Corangamite Library staff. All librarians working in the library are very experienced staff and are always willing to help students locate information and assist with a diverse range of inquiries.

This year the school has subscribed to a newspaper indexing service (Newscan). This is an online tool that students can access to obtain data from newspapers. Students have been shown how to access this site, username: Timboon password: Library.

Students have also been shown how to access newspapers online (Library Pressdisplay) through the Corangamite Library Service. This is a free site for members; they need to use their borrower number to log on. Both of these resources can be accessed from home. Other useful online sites include; The Computer School, Access Science and Britannica Online. I recommend that you visit the Corangamite Library website (http://www.corangamitelibrary.vic.gov.au) and check out the array of services available.

All students are encouraged to ask the staff for help, whether it be to find a book, help with presenting work, a tissue in time of need, reassurance and support and an orderly, supported place to study.

Timboon P12 Library Staff
Jenny Evans, Library Manager
Sue Plozza

WELFARE SUPPORT resources

www.youthcentral.com.au
Youth Central is the Victorian Government’s web-based initiative for young people aged 12-25. Youth Central offers a range of information and advice on issues like jobs, study, travel, money and events in your local area - wherever you live in Victoria - whilst offering opportunities for you to participate.

On this site you’ll find:
• Details about jobs and employment programs
• Information about studying and training opportunities
• Interview techniques, career profiles & resume templates
• Links to services and resources in your local area
• Competitions and downloads

www.vcehelp.com.au
This page will give you access to quality information and VCE resources that will help their VCE child complete their VCE with the minimum of door slamming, temper tantrums and tears.

www.engageeducation.org.au
Engage was launched in 2010 by young people passionate about creating equality in educational opportunities for Australian students. Since then, the organisation has worked to reduce the school related stress on secondary school aged students through a variety of programs and initiatives. As a non-profit organisation, Engage is able to provide services at low or no costs to students from a range of backgrounds. Our aim is to create quality educational programs and then provide them to students regardless of socio-economic or geographic boundaries.

All Engage programs are underpinned by our statement of purposes:

■ To lead young people in realising their full potential.
■ To develop and deliver highly effective education programs.
■ To create equality in educational opportunities.
Common Symptoms Of Student Stress Are:

- Irritability
- Bloodshot eyes
- Unkempt hair
- A cup of coffee or any caffeine-filled drinks to help pep a student up
- Depression
- Hostility (in severe cases)
- Confusion
- Disorganization
- Forgetfulness
- Poor judgment
- Anxiety
- Loss of concentration
- and Negative self-talk

Stress beaters

- The best way to beat student stress is to have a break. Sometimes, it pays to be away from it all even just for a few minutes. Also, a 15-minute walk and a good night’s sleep would do the trick.
- Eat a balanced diet and shun all unhealthy substances like alcohol, tobacco and even caffeine. Exercising is a good alternative to drinking a cup of coffee each morning. Endorphins are natural uppers which would help a student tackle any late-night reviews.
- Spend time to talk with someone about the stresses of student life. A close friend or family member would be a good person to spill all your dilemmas on.
- Take extra-curricular activities that are fun. Join sign language courses or chess clubs (if these are your favoured things to do). In addition to such activities, you could also do some volunteer work. This type of work relaxes the senses as you are able to help others.
- Learn to manage time by setting priorities and keeping a schedule. You could begin doing this by getting a daily planner.
- Learn to say no—sometimes student stress comes doing things that you are asked to do but you don’t want to do.
- Take charge of your stress by finding out all about the causes of stress. You can counter negative feelings by learning new skills or even some ways to deal with them.
Surviving VCE: some tips for students (and parents)

There is a wealth of tips and suggestions available: websites, print media, other parents, teachers, ex-students. Although much of this is directed at students, understanding what students can do for themselves can help parents support them in that process.

VCE: A PARENT'S GUIDE – THE OVERVIEW

- Guide, support and encourage your child.
- Don't nag.
- Don't tell them they will fail if they don't work harder.
- Encourage healthy eating, regular exercise and plenty of sleep.
- Take their efforts seriously.
- Create an effective work space in the house.
- Take a whole-family approach to supporting the student.
- Don't overload them with domestic chores.
- Let them know that you're there when they need you.
- Encourage them to believe in themselves.
- Remind them of their goals.
- Give them positive feedback whenever possible.
- Remember the VCE is about them, not you.
- Encourage them to take study breaks when necessary.
- Help them put the year in perspective.
- Keep an eye on their emotional health; look for changes in sleeping or eating and see your local doctor if concerned.

ADVICE FROM EXPERTS

Here is a sample of good advice and strategies for parents.

Robyn Chellew

Director of Life Business Consultancy, which specialises in running life and career coaching programs for year 12 students

- “Parents do have an important role in supporting their child through VCE - but it is a psychological rather than active one”.
- "It's about being respectful of what they're doing and showing that you take it seriously by doing things like creating a space for them in the home to study," she says.
- "Recognising the importance of what they're doing gives them a really clear indication of how supported they are and makes them realise that you do take it seriously."
- "If you say to them 'I'm here to help and offer any advice I can when you need it', they are more likely to come to you than if you try to impose rules and regulations on them.
- "If you keep telling them that they are not working hard enough and that they'll fail, they'll clam up and won't come to you when they really do need help."
- Parents shouldn't disappear from their VCE student's life.
  - "If you don't show interest in their studies, they will think you don't care. It's a really fine line between support and judgment. They really do need a lot of support, but it's about listening, being there when they want to come to you, bringing them a cup of tea - rather than things like telling them they need to work harder."
- Parents should air their concerns and anxiety about their child's performance out of earshot of their child.
  - "They're already terrified. They already know the consequences of the year. Discuss your own fears with your partner or friends; don't add them to what your child is already feeling."
- She says parents need to maintain positive reinforcement. "When you see effort being taken, praise them for it, tell them you've noticed how hard they're working."
Dr. Michael Carr – Gregg
Some of the best information and advice comes from Dr. Michael Carr-Gregg - one of Australia’s highest profile psychologists and an internationally recognized authority on teenage behaviour.

20 steps to success - based on psychology research findings
1. **Sleep** 8 ¾ - 9 ¼ hours are ideal. A good night’s sleep is the most important study tool: it allows the brain to consolidate what has been learned, prepares the brain to take in new information, learn new tasks faster and retain newly learned information.
2. **Eat breakfast**: students who had nothing to eat for breakfast performed very poorly on a test of memory and concentration.
3. **Improve your memory** – chewing gums while studying – research shows that brain performance and memory can increase by 35 %) Just don’t do this at school 😊
4. **Use a timer** – 50 minutes of study at a time is the maximum amount of time that the brain can handle. Allow a 15 minute breaks.
5. **Keep hydrated**; sip water every 20 minutes while studying – the brain is 80% water improves the ability to focus, concentrate and stay motivated during homework.
6. **Before revision – drink 2 cups of coffee** - this can help boost short term memory and keep you focussed. This is not advised during the evening – does not help you sleep!!!
7. **Exercise** - at least 30 minutes a day can boost your brain power. Students who do 3 lots of aerobic exercise a week perform much better than those who do nothing. Exercise is also a great defines against being depressed.
8. **Don’t study late at night** – don’t sacrifice sleep. Keep organised.
9. **Get into a rhythm** =- try to study at the same time and place. A proper study area is well lit with appropriate furniture, away from possible distractions such as TV.
10. **get parents support**; negotiate how they can support you, use a planner to show important dates to help structure family social life around major work times.
11. **Memory** – there are different approaches to learning, by identifying the one which works best may help you study effectively. Many students find it helpful to work in groups – discussing subjects, testing each other’s memory and talking through different aspects of the subject studies.
12. **Eat brain food** – complex carbohydrates (such as cereal), eggs, yoghurt, fish (anchovies, sardines, fish oil tablets), blueberries, flax seed oil.
13. **Avoid depression** - look for and monitor changes in behaviour, recognise and treat it – talk to someone: friends, teachers, Natasha.
14. **Music can reduce stress** – listen to music without lyrics.
15. **Avoid drugs and alcohol**
16. **Relationships** - a supportive caring relationship in year 12 can be a positive influence in your life, especially if you can study together. But ... the course of true love doesn’t always run smoothly – if you are unhappy in a relationship try to wait until after the exams to finish the relationship Dumping and being dumped can be very stressful.
17. **Cheating** - don’t even think it.
18. **Part time work** over 10 hours a week can have a significant negative effect on your studies and make it very difficult to achieve a balance of school work, social activities, exercise and leisure, as well as employment.
19. **Don’t read newspapers** - don’t get distracted about what is written about the stress and trauma of VCE students, particularly exam time – media hype. !!
20. **Juggling** – don’t laugh – the eye hand coordination involved helps your brain, strengthening brain connections – (and that’s gotta be good)
Dr. Fred Orr
Consulting psychologist, book author.

- “Parents should worry less about how and where a child is studying and more about their emotional state”
- “The VCE is the first chance for most teenagers to discover their own independence and is the first big test of their ability.”
- “Parents need to realise they cannot do the study for their child, they are they as quiet observers and supporters”.
  - “They have to stand back and let them do it - or not do it - their own way,” Badgering and nagging is ineffective and simply creates bad feeling within the family.
  - "Not every student will be the epitome of efficiency or productivity - in fact, the vast number of students are probably still wondering what they will do with their lives after the exams."
- Start with the basics,
  - make sure they have a good diet, plenty of sleep and regular exercise. Health experts recommend small, regular meals with plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables and water to sustain students.
  - Parents can offer tempting, healthy snacks, set reasonable limits on socialising and offer a structured routine.
- Help keep the year in perspective and encourage them regular breaks from the work. "Small regular breaks built into their study plan can be just as effective as another half-hour of revision,”

Part-time work? Dr. Orr says it can have benefits. "It gives them another perspective of the world, they meet and interact with different people and get a chance to escape their studies. But I would say no more than about 10 to 12 hours of work a week."
THE MYSTERY OF VCE STUDY SCORES AND TERTIARY ENTRANCE RANKS

WHAT IS A SAC GRADE?
A SAC grade is the mark awarded by the school for internally assessed tasks. Grades are awarded from A+ (highest) to E (lowest passing score) with 'N' indicating a failure to satisfy the learning outcomes and 'UG' indicates that the work does not warrant a grade and needs to be resubmitted to gain an `S' grade.

WHAT IS AN ATAR?
The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank, or ATAR, measures how well the student performed in their studies compared to all other VCE students. It is used to compare the overall achievement of students who have completed different combinations of VCE studies. The ATAR is calculated for tertiary selection purposes only.

How Is The ATAR Calculated?
VTAC scales all VCE Study Scores issued by VCAA (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority) to calculate the ATAR. Studies are scaled to adjust for the fact that it is more difficult to obtain a high study score in some studies than others. VTAC uses the scaled study scores to calculate an ATAR Aggregate and then the ATAR.

The ATAR Aggregate is calculated by adding:

- your best subject score in one of English, English Language, Literature or ESL, plus
- the scores of your next best three permissible studies (which together with the English study make the ‘Primary Four’), plus
- 10 per cent of the scores for any fifth and sixth permissible study which you may have completed (these are called increments)

All eligible VCE students are then ranked in order of their ATAR Aggregate. From this ranking you are assigned a percentage rank over a 100 point scale which is then converted into an ATAR.

The ATAR is a number from 0 and 99.95 in intervals of 0.05. The highest rank is 99.95, the next highest 99.90, and so on. The lowest automatically reported rank is 30.00, with ranks below 30.00 being reported as ‘less than 30’.

VCE STUDY SCORES AND SCALING
Each of the Study Scores provided by the VCAA is calculated from the total marks received for each graded assessment in that study. The Study Scores for all studies are reported on a scale of 0 to 50 with an average score of 30.

The VCE Study Score is not a score out of 50. It is a ranking or relative position which shows a student’s performance compared with all other students who took that study in the same year.

A student with a VCE Study Score of 30 is in the middle of the cohort, or has performed better than about half of all students. A student with a VCE Study Score of 40 has performed better than about 91 per cent of all students who did that study.

What this means is that the middle student in any study will have a VCE Study Score of 30, regardless of how strong the other students were in the study and how difficult it was to achieve the middle ranking.

VTAC’s role is to provide a way of ranking students that is fair to students even though they have taken different studies.

In studies where the strength of competition is high, VCE Study Scores need to be adjusted upwards; otherwise students in that study would be disadvantaged.

Similarly, in a study where the student competition is weaker, the Study Scores need to be adjusted downwards; otherwise students doing that study would be advantaged.

Scaling ensures that it is equally easy to attain a high ATAR regardless of the combination of studies a student undertakes.

This is not always well understood and many students believe that to achieve their best possible ATAR they need to choose studies that are scaled up. This is not true and may even work against you.
If you choose a study that you are not very good at simply because it will be scaled up, the VCE Study Score you receive will most likely be a lot lower than what you could expect in a study you are good at and that interests you. Yes, your score will be scaled up, but it is unlikely that your scaled ATAR Subject Score would be any higher than if you had chosen a more suitable study, even one that is scaled down.

The way to ensure that you achieve your best ATAR is to choose your studies according to what you are interested in, what you are good at, and what studies you need for future study.

The calculation of the ATAR is a complex process, but it is the fairest system which allows students to undertake the studies they want and enables tertiary institutions to compare students who have completed different combinations of VCE studies.

The use of the ATAR ensures that all studies are treated equally and provides you with a common score for tertiary selection across Australia. Information is available on the VTAC website. [http://www.vtac.edu.au/](http://www.vtac.edu.au/)

**HOW IS VCAL ACCREDITED?**

VCAL is assessed at 3 levels Senior, Intermediate and Foundation. At each level students have outcomes to complete at the prescribed levels. To attain a VCAL Certificate of any level, students must complete with competency all 10 units. These units are:

- VCAL Literacy – Reading and Writing
- VCAL Literacy - Oracy
- VCAL Personal Development Skills
- VCAL Work Related Skills Unit 1 & 2
- VCAL Numeracy
- VCE – 2 units (either 1&2 or 3&4)
- VET Certificate (2 units)
PROCEDURES AND RULES

AUTHENTICATION OF WORK

Authentication is the process by which we ensure that work is in fact that of the student. VCAA has a strict set of Procedures and Rules contained in the VCE/VCAL Administrative Handbook. A summary is given below.

- Students must ensure that all unacknowledged work submitted for coursework or an assessment task is genuinely their own work.
- All work that involves other sources must be acknowledged as such. This includes texts, Internet sites, source material and the names and status of people who have provided assistance (and the type of assistance provided).
- Students must not accept undue assistance from others in the preparation and submission of work.
- Students must ensure that the teacher sees the development of work over a period of time. The work will only be assessed if the teacher can attest that all unacknowledged work is the student’s own.
- Students may be asked to demonstrate understanding of the task at the time of submission or assessment.
- Students must ensure that the teacher sees the development of work over a period of time. The work will only be assessed if the teacher can attest that all unacknowledged work is the student’s own.
- Students may be asked to demonstrate understanding of the task at the time of submission or assessment.
- Students must not submit the same piece of work for assessment in more than one study.
- Students who knowingly assist other students in a breach of rules may be penalised.
- If a piece of work cannot be authenticated, then the matter must be dealt with as a breach of rules as outlined below.

COMPUTER USE

When students use a computer to produce work it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that:

1. There is an alternative system available for use in case of computer or printer malfunction or unavailability.
2. Hard copies of the work in progress are produced regularly to meet drafting and authentication requirements.
3. Each time changes are made, the work should be saved onto a back-up disk. The back-up disk should not be stored with the computer.

It is vital that students do not store any coursework or assessment task material on the hard disk of the school computers. This is in breach of VCAA rules as it allows other students to access this material. A password protected folder is provided on the network for this purpose (see the Learning Technologies Manager).

BREACH OF RULES

Students must be able to provide evidence that the work submitted is their own and/or was completed in accordance with the VCAA’s requirements. If the school is satisfied on the basis of evidence and following an interview with the student, that there has been a substantial breach of rules, the Principal has the power to:

- Reprimand the student and impose disciplinary measures or
- Give the student the opportunity to resubmit work or
- Refuse to accept that part of the work which infringes the rules or
- Refuse to accept the work in which case an ‘N’ will be awarded.

STUDENTS RIGHT OF APPEAL

A student has the right of appeal to the school concerning non-satisfactory completion of a unit, Special Provision, or breach of rules. The school will set up an Appeal Committee to hear such appeals.

Students have a right of appeal to VCAA concerning school decisions about breach of rules, VCAA’s decision about Special Examination Arrangements and VCAA’s decision about Derived Examination Scores applications. The Principal must receive the student’s appeal application in writing within 14 days of the student receiving notification of the decision.

SPECIAL PROVISION

Special provision provides for students whose ability to demonstrate achievement is affected by illness, accidents or personal circumstances.

Students who are eligible for Special Provision are still required to meet the requirements for Satisfactory Completion of Outcomes. If eligible, the school may assist by:

- Rescheduling assessment tasks
- Setting alternative or substitute tasks
- Allowing more time to complete a task
- Allowing the use of different arrangements to complete an assessment

If none of these provisions is effective, the school may award a score determined by the teacher, based on other completed work.
Special Arrangements for Examinations
The school may apply to the VCAA for special arrangements for students who because of illness or disability are unable to complete their examinations in the same way or under the same conditions as other students. Any application must be accompanied by recent supportive medical or specialist documentation. Other supporting evidence is required for students applying for special arrangements such as extra reading / writing time / use of technology due to a learning disability.

Derived Examination Score
If a student becomes ill or experiences an accident or personal trauma in the 2 weeks leading up to the examinations or during the examination period, they may apply to have the examination result determined by the VCAA, using the students other scores and indicative grades. Application is made to the Principal through the VCE Coordinators and if eligible a recommendation is made to the VCAA.

- This must be substantiated with evidence from an independent professional
- If approved, the VCAA will derive a final result for the examination using moderated school assessments, GAT scores, other examinations if applicable and the Indicative Grades provided by the school and use this to calculate the Study Score.

Application for Special Provision
It is the student’s responsibility to see the VCE Coordinator as soon as possible if they consider they are eligible for Special Provision.

Accident, experience illness or a significant change in personal circumstances just prior to examinations
Inform the YLC as soon as possible to apply for Special Provision – a Derived Examination Score

- A Health Professional and the Examination Supervisor will be required to complete a special application form
- NOTE: there is only a short time frame in which to apply.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
WHAT SHOULD I MY CHILD DO .............

If they arrive to school after form assembly?

- **ALWAYS** report to the General Office to be marked present
- Check with other students about the information covered.

If they cannot wear correct school uniform?

- Bring a note to the General Office

If they need to leave school during the day?

- Before you leave, report to the General Office

If they need to go down the street at lunch time?

- Sign the sign/in out book in the Office.

If they need to go down the street during recess or study sessions?

- Check with the YLC first and if given permission, sign the ‘sign out/in book’

If they have an appointment during the day, but will be returning to school?

- Report their departure and arrival to the General Office
- Or indicate departure and arrival time in the year 12 ‘sign out/in book’ after checking with the YLC

During their ‘study’ sessions?

- Study in the library
- They may not go to the caf.

If they want to borrow a Netbook?

- Go to the General office and fill out the log out sheet with your name and the session you are borrowing the computer beside the corresponding number on the netbook.
- VCE Netbooks must be borrowed with a bag and be carried in the bag

If they are considering not doing exams?

It is possible to complete the VCE without being graded and receiving an ATAR score. This will be discussed at Information sessions for students and parents and at pathways interviews. Withdrawing from exams involves a formal process.

- Students need to see the YLC for the relevant application form or there is one contained in the Administration booklet.
- Students will need to discuss this with parents, the subject teacher and the YLC before a final decision is made.
If they want to change or ‘drop’ a unit?

Students need to be aware that there are restrictions on when this is possible, and also that there are implications on your VCE / VCAL program

- They must discuss this with YLC, subject teacher, and parents
- Complete the application form (sample included in their Administration booklet.)

How much time should they be studying for my VCE?

It is suggested they should devote a minimum of approximately 40 hours per week to their studies. This includes approximately 20 hours of class time so 20 hours of additional study time must be planned for and used effectively during semester one, increasing significantly in semester two.

If they feel they have too many SAC’s scheduled at once?

The SAC timetable is developed in consultation with subject teachers and adheres to the timelines specified by VCAA. Teachers also consider course requirements and student work load when determining these dates. It may not be possible / appropriate to alter these dates.

- Discuss the individual situation with subject teacher and YLC

If they fail an assessment task?

- They may be given the chance to resubmit the task, submit additional work, undertake an alternative task to enable them to meet the unit outcome and still ‘pass’ the unit.

However, your graded assessment cannot be altered

Do they have to sit the GAT if they do not want an ATAR score?

- Yes

If they are absent from school / classes?

Note: attending 90% of classes is essential for satisfactory completion of units, and students receiving any form of government assistance need to be aware that any unauthorized absences must be forwarded to Centrelink and payments may be affected

- Provide evidence of authorized absences (other than school activities) to the YLC
  - Note from home relating to illnesses / appointments
  - Note from home relating to special circumstances
  - Certificates from health professionals
- Or discuss the situation with YLC, SSL, or Principal Class
If they wish to do ‘other work’ during a timetabled class?

At any stage of the year they must

- Ask the teacher of the timetabled class for permission to miss the class, make arrangements to catch up on missed work etc. Note: this is not automatically granted, and may still be considered an unauthorized absence.

If they are absent from school / class with a genuine illness during a VCAL work placement, during an assessment task or when work for an assessment task is due for submission?

It is essential that they

- ring the school (or parents can ring) to inform the YLC of the absence and the reason as soon as possible
- Provide documentary evidence of illness or other serious unavoidable absence to the YLC as soon as they return
- In the case of external examinations, the YLC will assist with completion of the required application forms. (They may be eligible for Special Provision)

If they have a medical certificate or note?

- Hand it to the Coordinator or the Office as soon as they return to school (this will be copied for the office for attendance rolls and a copy kept in your files)
- Tell subject teachers.

If the family is going away on a holiday during school time?

This is not recommended during VCE. These are not generally considered ‘approved absences’ and extended absences impact on the continuity of learning

- Try to schedule holidays during regular holiday time so they do not effect your child’s studies
- Talk to the YLC, subject teachers at least a week or two prior to the holiday, or even during planning, to discuss work that can be / needs to be organised and ‘catch up’ time.

If they bring their car to school?

- It must be parked out of the school grounds
- They cannot drive other students during school hours

Are they allowed to car pool with other students to go to Tafe?

- Yes if all parents have been consulted prior to travelling to Tafe and written permission has been given to the General Office.

What if they cannot go to my work placement?

- Students will need to contact the employer to let them know they will be absent on that day.
If they are having difficulty with coursework and/or deadlines?

- The student needs to talk to the subject teacher and the YLC
- They may be eligible for some form of special provision, if this is due to illness/personal difficulties.
- At the earliest opportunity discuss the situation with the teacher and the YLC. As far as possible, detailed information will be confidential.

They are having trouble with their school work?

- Ask the teacher for help during class
- Make an appointment to see the teacher out of class
- Attend lunchtime tutorials
- See the YLC for some general support and advice

If they are having concerns with any aspect of VCE or VCAL?

- See your YLC, SSL, Careers Teacher