

# VCE Information

The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) is an Australian senior school certificate operated by the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority (VCAA). It is one of two senior school options offered at Princes Hill Secondary College.

There are approximately 45 subjects in the VCE. Most subjects have four units, each lasting one semester or half-year.

- Units 1 and 2 are generally taken in Year 11.
- Units 3 and 4, which are more advanced, are usually taken in Year 12.
- Students can, however, take a unit 3 and 4 subject in Year 11 subject by approval.
- While units 1 and 2 can be taken as single units, units 3 and 4 must be taken as a sequence.

It is anticipated that students at Princes Hill SC will undertake:

- In Year 11: six unit 1's and six unit 2's, including English or EAL units 1 and 2.
- In Year 12: five unit 3 and 4 sequences including at least one of: English or EAL or Literature units 3 and 4.

The majority of students undertake VCE over two years, although it is possible to complete units over 3 (or more) years without penalty.

**For more details see the VCAA [VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook - Qualifications](#).**

**VCE (Baccalaureate) Those students who undertake a breadth of subjects may be eligible for this certificate.**

The following rules for satisfactory completion of the VCE will apply :

To satisfactorily complete the VCE a student must have a satisfactory result (S) for a minimum of 16 units.

This must include:

at least three units from the English Group, two of which must be a Unit 3 and 4 sequence

an additional three Unit 3 and 4 sequences of studies other than English, which may include any number of English sequences once the English requirement has been met.

Please note the English Group is English/ English Language /English as an Additional language and English Literature.

To gain an ATAR, both units 3 and 4 from the English group must be satisfactorily completed.

Students must complete units 1 and 2 of any VCE course prior to enrolling in units 3 and 4. While there are no prerequisites for undertaking any VCE 3 /4 units, faculty coordinators strongly recommend that units 1 and 2 of Languages, Physics and Chemistry are completed prior to undertaking these subjects as units 3 and 4.

Students undertaking VCE Mathematics need to consult the information '[Deciding which Mathematics units to take](#)' to determine the most beneficial sequence of units.

A teacher will not accept your work if they believe that it has been copied from somewhere else. To show the teacher that your work is your own, you must:

1. Regularly complete work in class.
2. Hand in work regularly throughout the semester. Show the teacher drafts of work when required.
3. Keep ALL drafts, notes etc. until the end of assessment.

If a teacher believes a student has cheated in a SAC, VCAA rules will apply. These rules are set out in the [VCAA VCE Handbook](#).

Breaches of the rules for the conduct of assessments are considered an infringement of VCAA assessment rules and guidelines and will be investigated as per VCAA requirements. The investigations will be conducted by the Senior Sub School Leader, Assistant Principal and/or Principal and subsequent penalties will occur as determined by the Principal.

The school determines tasks for units 1 and 2 assessment. Marks are not reported to the VCAA. Students will receive a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory grade for all units and this is reported to VCAA.

Teachers will determine a variety of assessment tasks to provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills of the outcomes in each unit. These outcomes are specified in each subject's study design set by the VCAA. Each VCE unit includes a set of outcomes. Achievement of the outcomes is based on the teacher's assessment of the student's performance on tasks designated for the unit. These series of tasks can include (but are not restricted to) SACs and SATS. The students will be awarded an 'S' for a unit when:

1. The work meets the required standard as described in the Study Design, and all required course work has been completed.
2. The work has been submitted on time.
3. The work is clearly the student's own.
4. There has been no serious breach of rules, including attendance rules.

In order to complete the VCE in two years, a minimum of eight units (four per semester and including at least one unit of English) must be satisfactorily completed in Year 11. With eight units, promotion to Year 12 is automatic. If a fewer than eight units have been satisfactorily completed, students will negotiate with the coordinator/s the most appropriate path, e.g. completing VCE over three years.

All studies have both school assessment and examination(s). School-assessed coursework (SAC) is made up of a number of assessment tasks that are specified in the study design. School-assessed coursework is part of the regular teaching and learning program and must be completed in class time within a limited time frame.

A small number of studies have school-assessed tasks (SAT). These are used in studies where products and models are assessed (e.g. Art, Visual Communication, etc.).

Students gain a Study Score out of 50 for each subject at Unit 3/4 level.

SACs and SATs form part of the Study Score for the unit, along with examination results. SATs and SACs are marked by the class teacher. SAT and SAC marks are reported to the VCAA and the results form part of the ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank - with rankings up to 99.95). The remaining part of your ATAR is comprised of your exam results.

ATAR stands for Australian Tertiary Admission Rank. The ATAR is an overall percentile ranking that reflects a student's comparative performance amongst the relevant year level in a given year. The ATAR allows tertiary institutions to compare students who have completed different combinations of VCE studies. It is calculated by VTAC (Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre) solely for use by institutions.

The ATAR is reported as a rank between 0.00 and 99.95 with increments of 0.05. An ATAR of 75.00 means that a student has achieved a VCE result that places them in the top 25% of the Year 12 group.

VTAC calculates an ATAR for all students who have qualified for an ATAR. However, only those who apply through VTAC for tertiary courses receive an ATAR statement. An ATAR will be calculated by VTAC for applicants when they first qualify for an ATAR. If you undertake further study in a later year and are awarded at least one study score or complete a non-scored VET sequence that entitles you to an additional VET increment, a new ATAR will be calculated. Ranking for courses will be based on the highest ATAR achieved. You will receive an official statement containing your ATAR from VTAC at the same time that you receive study scores from the VCAA if you have applied for tertiary entry through VTAC.

VTAC uses VCE results issued by VCAA. Subject to the restrictions outlined in VICTER (Victorian Tertiary Entrance Requirements), the ATAR is developed from an aggregate produced by adding:

- ATAR subject score in English, English Language, Literature or EAL
- the next best three ATAR subject scores (permissible); and
- 10% of the fifth and sixth permissible ATAR subject scores that are available.

In calculating VCE study scores, the VCAA does not determine any measure of overall performance in the VCE, but rather the performance of each student in each individual subject. In order to facilitate selection, institutions require an overall measure of the performance of students undertaking the VCE.

Before the scores of different VCE studies can be added together for the ATAR, they need to be scaled to take into account the different ability levels of the students taking different studies. This ensures that the ATAR provides a fair comparison for all students regardless of the combination of studies they take. The scaled score is called the ATAR subject score.

See the VCAA FAQ "[How is the ATAR calculated? How are subjects scaled?](#)" for more details.

Only one of the following combinations can be used in the best six (that is, in the calculation of the ATAR):

- English/English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Chinese (FL)/Chinese (SL)/Chinese (SL Advanced)
- Indonesian (FL)/Indonesian (SL)
- Japanese (FL)/Japanese (SL)
- Korean (FL)/Korean (SL)
- Mathematical Methods/Mathematical Methods (CAS).

In each of the study areas of English, Mathematics, History, Languages and Music:

- at most two results can contribute to the primary four
- at most three results can contribute to the ATAR, whether they are VCE results, Higher Education study results, or VET results.

The subjects included in these study areas are those listed in the VICTER guide.

Note: Studio Arts and Studio Arts:Photography are the same course. Students can choose only one of these subjects.

**School-assessed coursework (SAC)** has to take place in class time. Therefore, students must attend school for their SAC sessions.

The following rules will apply if a student is absent from a SAC session:

- If they were away and have a medical certificate they will be given an opportunity to undertake the task at another time to be negotiated between the student, teacher and VCE Coordinator.
- If they do not have a medical certificate, they will get a zero for that SAC.
- If a student misses part of a SAC, and has a medical certificate, consideration will be given for the time lost.
- If a student misses part of a SAC, but does not have a medical certificate, consideration will not be given for time lost, and the work will be marked as presented.
- If a situation of extreme illness or hardship develops, Special Provision may be applied and other arrangements made in liaison with the Sub School Leader.

SAC dates are indicated on the SAC Calendar accessed via the PHSC Homepage. Please note these dates are indicative only and may change due to unforeseen circumstances.

### School-assessed Tasks (SAT)

The following rules will apply for submission of SAT's:

- If they were away and have a medical certificate they will be considered for Special Provision. The student will be given an opportunity to submit at another date to be negotiated between the student, teacher and VCE Coordinator.
- If they do not have a medical certificate, they will get a zero for that SAT.
- If a student is concerned about submission of SATs by due dates they should see the YLL asap.

SAT dates are indicated on the SAC Calendar accessed via the PHSC Homepage.

The PHSC VCE Attendance policy was developed to fulfil VCAA requirements ([http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/handbook/2018/adhb18\\_FA2.pdf](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/handbook/2018/adhb18_FA2.pdf))

1. For each semester-length unit the following attendance policy applies: The maximum number of lessons a student can miss from any VCE unit is **twelve**. To meet the unit outcomes students are required to complete work in class so teachers can verify and authenticate their work. Students who exceed the permitted absence rate of **twelve** will immediately be given an 'unsatisfactory completion.' **If a student breaches this limit, they cannot pass the unit.**
2. There are two types of absence in VCE.
  - I. An **explained** absence is where a medical certificate is provided or parents have notified of absence. If a student misses a sac they must have medical certificate.
  - II. An **unexplained** absence is where the student has either arrived significantly late to class or has not attended class and no parental explanation is given. This is in effect truanting. The student will be required to attend a detention after school on Friday afternoon.
3. In VCE it is very important that family holidays should **ONLY** be arranged during scheduled school holidays.
4. When a student is absent from school for prolonged periods, or has been unable to complete all assessment tasks because of illness or other special circumstances, the school may, upon application from the student, grant Special Provision for School-based Assessments. In this case, the student will not be penalised for lack of attendance.
5. If a student is absent on a day when they have a SAC in one of their subjects, they **MUST** provide a medical certificate to explain their absence. If they cannot provide this, the SAC will not be assessed and receive **no score**.

Parents should check Compass regularly to view their child's attendance to ensure they are complying with the above policy.

A student may be eligible for exam assistance or adjustments to work load if affected to a significant degree by illness or other serious problems, or if he or she is disadvantaged by any physical disability or other impairment such as a learning problem. These arrangements are negotiated between the student and their parents, teachers and the Senior Sub School leader. The Principal makes the final decision about all cases of Special Provision.

For further details see the VCAA publication "[Special Provision](#)".

Eligible students may apply to the VCAA for special arrangements for their exams. In the case of Year 12 exams, applications must be supported by recent and thorough independent professional advice (medical, psychological and/or educational test results). This could mean, for example, extra reading and/or writing time, rest breaks or the use of a computer in exams. Applications must be made through the Senior Sub School leader as soon as possible. Applications are due in to VCAA early March. Emergency Arrangements can be made immediately prior to exams if necessary.

- The VCAA will make the final decision on your application.

If you have become ill or experienced a traumatic event in the two weeks leading up to examinations or during the examination period, you may apply to have your examination result determined by the VCAA. This applies to all examinations - written, oral and performance.

- You must apply through the Senior Sub School leader. The Principal will determine whether you are eligible and make a recommendation to the VCAA.
- Your application must be substantiated with evidence from an independent professional (e.g. doctor, social worker, police officer or solicitor). This must be made immediately prior to or on the day of the exam.
- The VCAA will make the final decision on your application.