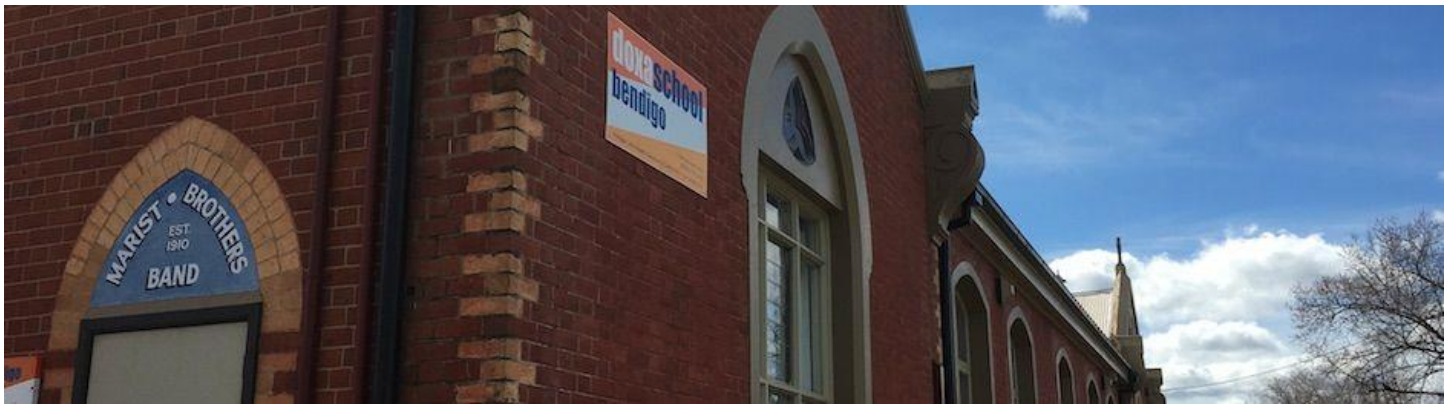


doxaschoolbendigo

valuing the diversity, resilience and potential of young people



VCAL

HANDBOOK

FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

WHAT IS VCAL?

The VCAL is a senior secondary school qualification designed to be undertaken at years 10, 11 and 12. It is a 'hands on' option that combines practical work-related experience with other skill development like literacy and numeracy.

A VCAL program can be made up of study units from VCAL, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Further Education in a way that suits students' interests and learning needs. It can lead to further study at TAFE and to employment, including apprenticeships.

The VCAL qualification and providers of VCAL are regulated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority while the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority governs the VCAL curriculum, assessment, administration and reporting.

WHAT IS THE VRQA?

The VRQA regulates all education and training providers in Victoria from home schooling to higher education. They maintain a register of all schools and providers in Victoria and the accredited qualifications they offer, including the VCAL and VCE. Every provider, unit and qualification on the register has met standards required under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 and regulations. For more information on the VRQA, go to <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/>.

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY (VCAA)

The VCAA provides curriculum and assessment programs for students in Victoria from prep to year 10, as well as the VCAL and VCE. VELs students have their enrolment and results recorded on the VASS central database (called VASS) as well as with Doxa School. The VCAA issues students with a Statement of Results and the VCAL qualification.

In addition to the information, guidance, resources and support provided to you by Doxa School as a VCAL teacher, you are encouraged to visit the VCAA website at <http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au> as it is an excellent resource for teachers.

THE STRUCTURE OF VCAL AT DOXA

There are two levels of VCAL offered at Doxa – Foundation and Intermediate. Each VCAL award level contains curriculum strands that make up your course of study:

- Literacy and Oracy Skills
- Numeracy Skills
- Industry Specific Skills
- Work Related Skills
- Personal Development Skills.

The curriculum strands contain VCAL units of study. Each VCAL unit is 100 nominal hours in length, which includes both scheduled and unscheduled time.

Your VET are in addition to the VCAL units listed here. The VET certificate/s are contained in the Industry Specific Skills strand of your VCAL program and their nominal hours vary.

Your VCAL coordinator and teachers will work through the course and assessment requirements of your VCAL program with you in detail, including your timetable, learning plan and course materials. They will provide learning support and ongoing assistance and advice while you are doing your VCAL.

As a reference, information about the VCAL curriculum is available from the VCAA website at <http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/>.

CREDIT AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

A credit is a successfully completed part of a course of study. If you have already completed units/modules from a Further Education, VET or VCE course these can count towards you achieving your VCAL certificate. Your VCAL coordinator will help you to work out any credits from previous study that can be counted and make sure they are documented and reported as part of your VCAL.

In addition to credits, there is the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment process through which you can apply for your work/life experiences and other education to be recognised as evidence of achievement in VCAL.

VCAL QUALIFICATION

To be awarded a VCAL certificate, you must complete a learning program that is made up of ten credits for a combination of VCAL units, VCE units and VET or Further Education modules/units. In VCAL one credit is awarded on successful completion of 100 nominal hours of your course.

You must have credits from all four of the curriculum strands -Literacy and Numeracy Skills, Industry Specific Skills, Work Related Skills and Personal Development Skills.

Six of the credits for your VCAL must be at the award level (Foundation, Intermediate or Senior), including one literacy credit and one VCAL Personal Development Skills unit credit. The other four credits can be drawn from the same award level or selected from a higher or lower award level. This means that you can carry credit forward from one level into the next.

All of the VCAL programs at Doxa School are designed to meet the qualification requirements. Your VCAL coordinator will work through these with you and do an 'individual student eligibility check' on VASS when you are enrolled to make sure that if you successfully complete your VCAL you will be eligible to receive the certificate. If you start a VCAL Program but do not complete it you will receive a Statement of Results.

The VCAA officially gives you the VCAL certificate and a Statement of Results.

In addition, if you successfully complete a VET and/or Further Education course as part of your VCAL, you will receive your certificate (or Statement of Attainment for partial completion) for those course/s from Doxa School.

VCAL ASSESSMENT

As a student in VCAL, your work will be assessed regularly and you will be given many opportunities to achieve a satisfactory result. You can present your assessment tasks in a range of ways – through physical demonstration, a log book, a journal, a piece of writing, an oral presentation, a discussion, performing a practical task, a role play, group work, photographs, a film production, a PowerPoint presentation and more. You can keep a record of these in a portfolio (hard copy and/or e-portfolio) which provides evidence that you have achieved the learning outcomes in your units of study.

Teachers in the VCAL often use an 'integrated approach' to learning and assessment. This means that you can participate in projects and activities that meet the learning outcomes of multiple units/modules in your program (VCAL, VET and Further Education parts).

Your teachers will explain all assessment tasks and given you clear guidance on how to complete them successfully. You will not be graded for these tasks. Your assessment will be based on a demonstration of competency; that is where you show that you have a particular skill to do a job or a task. Assessment of your units occurs internally, within Doxa School. This means there are not exams or external assessors; your teachers assess you.

You will need to have all of your assessments completed by the due dates given to you by your teachers throughout the year.

To be awarded a satisfactory result, you must demonstrate successful completion of all learning outcomes in each unit in your VCAL program. Successful completion of all learning outcomes for a VCAL unit may be

demonstrated during one integrated assessment project/activity or may be spread over a number of different tasks.

Your VCAL coordinator and teachers will give you ongoing feedback on your assessment and provide you with mid-year and end of year progress reports in written and/or verbal format.

VCAL RESULTS

There are two result codes that are used to report student achievement in VCAL to the VCAA. These are 'S' and 'N'.

The result code 'S' (Satisfied) means satisfactory completion of a unit/module. The result code 'N' (Not Yet Satisfied) is only used for VCE units and means that not all outcomes have been achieved. VCAL units with an 'N' result are not reported on a Statement of Results.

Teachers will advise of the last date for work to be submitted for assessment in line with the VCAA timelines.

To allow enough time for the work to be assessed and for all student results to be entered on VASS prior to the final date for results reporting.

The VCAA will send students' Statements of Results and VCAL certificates to Doxa School in December. You can collect your documents from the VCAL Program Office or they can be mailed to you.

In addition to the VCAA results, you will receive a certificate of participation from Doxa School.

VCAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

The awards acknowledge the achievements of VCAL students and the contributions of teachers and partner organisations to VCAL programs. Your VCAL coordinator can help you prepare an application for an award. If you wish to apply for an award please see your VCAL Coordinator.

[For more information visit the VCAA website at http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/excellenceawards/vcalachievement/index.html](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/excellenceawards/vcalachievement/index.html)

ENTRY TO VCAL

The VCAL programs are offered to young people, mainly those who are 16 to 19 years old who have not yet completed year 12 or a Certificate II level course. While there are no formal entry requirements, your readiness to do a VCAL program is an important consideration in selection through an interview process.

VCAL TIMETABLE

The timetables for each VCAL program are provided at the beginning of each school year.

WORK PLACEMENT

WORK PLACEMENT all VCAL programs offer structured work placements where students can learn about work opportunities, employment conditions and responsibilities, OHS and communication skills. Students are encouraged and supported to find their own work placements where possible. Workplaces are investigated by staff to ensure that they are appropriate for students to attend.

Students complete the Safe@Work online module and the Practical Placement Agreement before starting a placement. All students and host employers are contacted and visited during placement. Students are assessed for outcomes achieved.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Employability Skills help students to be effective in the workplace. Employers in Australia, and around the world, consider these skills to be important in every workplace and every job. They are:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Problem Solving
- Initiative and Enterprise
- Planning and organising Self-management Learning Technology

These skills are already included in the tasks and activities that form part of the VCAL.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Support is readily available to you at Doxa School – support for learning, career planning and personal matters. The main support people available to you are your Teacher and the Wellbeing support person. Each VCAL student develops a personalised vocational pathway plan with guidance support to.

- help you identify and explore your career goals and aspirations
- help you work out possible pathways that could be taken to achieve your career and personal goals
- advise and assist you with course selection
- assist with course applications help you to better understand and find your way around the education system refer you to other youth services, if agreed.

Your plan is used to record the actions you'll take to work towards your goals and your reflections along the way.

The Doxa School staff will provide wellbeing support and case management services to students on a case by case basis. Through the Wellbeing team you can be connected to a broad range of services such as housing, finance, employment, legal, counselling and learning support.

VCAL TERM DATES

Each year VCAL Term Dates at Doxa School will be the same as the school year dates for Victorian Schools.

IMPORTANT DATES IN THE VCAL CALENDAR

Your VCAL coordinator/teacher will explain these important dates in the VCAL year to you at induction and throughout the program.

ASSESSMENT:

All Final dates for Assessment and Submission of results will be determined by VCAA at the beginning of each school year and staff and students will be informed in a timely manner.

AWARDS:

All dates for Awards and Results will be determined by VCAA at the beginning of each year and students and staff informed in a timely manner.

CERTIFICATES:

VCAL certificates will be available mid-December and can be collected from the Doxa School office or sent by mail if requested.

ENROLMENT

Enrolment takes place in November/December. Any remaining places are filled in January from applications received. Places may become available during the year also. Young people who apply are invited to an enrolment interview.

ORIENTATION

Orientation activities are held before the start of semester to familiarise new students with their course and the school.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

At Doxa School every student has the right to feel safe from bullying. Please refer to the Doxa School bullying and harassment policy for more information.

USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

All students and parent/guardians of Doxa are required to sign a 'responsible use of information technology' policy.

MANDATORY REPORTING

Staff at Doxa School who have reasonable grounds to believe that a student under the age of 18 years needs protection from physical injury or sexual abuse are required by law to make a report to the Child Protection authority. This is called 'Mandatory Reporting'.

Under the 'Children, Youth and Families Act 2005', teachers are part of a group called 'mandated professionals'. Other professionals in this group are doctors, nurses, principals and police. If any of these people form a belief, one that other people in the same position as them would reasonably believe as being true, that a child (aged 0-17 years) needs protection they must report it.

For example, there may be reasonable grounds to believe a child needs protection when:

- a child says that they have been physically or sexually abused
- a child says that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves)
- someone who knows the child says that the child has been physically or sexually abused
- professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads the teacher (or other mandated professional) to believe that the child has been abused or is likely to be abused
- there are signs of physical or sexual abuse.

A report must be made as soon as possible after forming the belief, and on each occasion on which the teacher (or other mandated professional) becomes aware of any further reasonable grounds for believing that the abuse is real.

A report is made by the teacher (or other mandated professional) contacting Child Protection in the Loddon Mallee Region.

Your VCAL teacher and Wellbeing person will talk to you about the information given here.

More information on mandatory reporting is available at:

http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/office-forchildren/cpmanual/Output%20files/Practice%20phases/Output%20files/Execute/1122_mandatory_and_other_required_report.pdf

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

As learning and teaching takes place in a variety of settings, it is important for students to know that Doxa School has a responsibility to ensure that you are provided with information, instructions, training and supervision in order for you to study in a safe and secure manner.

What can you do to keep safe?

- Be informed – Doxa School has its own Occupational Health and Safety Policy and other associated policies and procedures to reduce the likelihood of students and staff being put at risk (see below).
- Be involved – each semester there will be evacuation exercises to practise what to do; be prepared to join in and learn.
- Be prepared – it is important for you to identify with your teacher the potential hazards and risks that exist and to follow the safety instructions given.

This will help to maintain the safe and caring delivery of learning and teaching across a range of on-campus and off-campus environments.

At Doxa School we all acknowledge our responsibilities and obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004. All of us must take reasonable and practicable precautions to manage hazards and risks for the health of each one of us. In your VCAL program, you will participate in activities and training about health and safety.

In the event of an Emergency:

Follow your teacher's or other staff member instructions. If a situation is life threatening, contact the Fire, Police or Ambulance first (see above). Remember to clearly state your location and the nature of the emergency. After calling the Emergency service seek further assistance from a staff member.

Appendix 1.

Student appeals against school decisions about breaches of rules

Section 2.5.21 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* provides that a student may appeal to the VCAA against a decision by the school, and any penalty imposed by the school, in respect of a contravention of the assessment rules (including the authentication rules) of the VCAA relating to School-based Assessments. This right of appeal does not apply to decisions about the satisfactory completion of a course arising from a student's attendance, or other disciplinary decisions of a school not arising from a contravention of VCAA assessment rules.

An appeal against a school decision must be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer of the VCAA not later than 14 days after the student receives written notice of the decision from the school. On receipt of a notice of appeal from a student, the Chief Executive Officer of the VCAA will nominate an officer of the VCAA to interview the parties to the appeal and attempt to resolve the matter.

Notice

Not later than seven days after the interview conducted by the VCAA, the school must, by notice in writing, advise the student and the VCAA that in relation to the student:

- It has rescinded its decision and any penalty imposed, or

- It has rescinded the penalty imposed; or
- It has reduced the penalty imposed; or
- It confirms both the decision and the penalty imposed.

School decision

If the school rescinds its decision and any penalty imposed in relation to the student, the student's appeal to the VCAA is taken to have been withdrawn. On receipt of a notice from the school that contains one of the following decisions, the VCAA must ask the student to either withdraw the appeal or confirm that the appeal is to proceed:

- The school has rescinded the penalty imposed.
- The school has reduced the penalty imposed.
- The school confirms both the decision and the penalty imposed.

Appeal

If a student elects to proceed with an appeal, the Chief Executive Officer of the VCAA must refer the appeal to a Review Committee for hearing and determination. An appeal of this nature is conducted as a re-hearing.

If the Review Committee is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the student has contravened the assessment rules of the VCAA relating to School-based Assessments, it may:

- Reprimand the student; or
- If practicable, permit the student to resubmit to the school work required for: assessment in the study or the course for satisfactory completion of the study or the course; or
- Refuse to accept part of the work and ask the school to assess the student on the remainder of the work.