



Red Cliffs Secondary College

Council Policy

Policy Title:		VCE VCAL Assessment and Reporting Statement	
Date Ratified by Council:		<i>October 11th 2016</i>	
Council President:	Philip Hand	Signature:	<i>[Signature]</i>
Principal:	David Browne	Signature:	<i>[Signature]</i>

VCE/VCAL DELIVERY AND ASSESSMENT

VCE/VCAL TEACHER GUIDELINES

VCE DELIVERY AND ASSESSMENT POLICY:

The school community accepts and promotes the idea that all students can learn and that improvement in learning requires that students and parents/guardians have as much information as possible about what students learn at school.

The responsibility for VCE delivery and assessment is located with teachers. The VCAA VCE Study design will be the key document to inform design and delivery in each study.

Teachers will be appropriately supported by the school community, and through continuous professional development opportunities. Key documents for each Unit 3 and 4 teacher will include VCAA previous year's Results Data Analysis by study, in particular results. By improving quality of delivery and assessment there is an improvement in the quality of teaching.

The Senior School Coordinator, AP School Improvement, Year 11 and 12 Student Coordinators, Faculty Coordinators and Leading Teachers are available at any time to assist and advise regarding delivery and assessment of VCE Units. Wendy Porker is responsible for the recording of all information into VASS.

Students (and parents/guardians) must be provided with a clear written Course Outline at the onset of classes for each unit. This should outline what is required and how all required outcomes can best be achieved. Throughout the semester, course requirements need to be clearly defined through written outlines.

Assessment practices define what is valued in the school curriculum and influence a student's motivation to learn. Student learning is not best fostered by assessment that is simply a mark or

grade. A description and written comment (e.g. Feedback Sheet) should accompany any grade given for any piece of work. Students should be assisted to develop an understanding of their strengths and their weaknesses. The focus should be on what the student is achieving, and how to further improve their skills and results.

There should be coherence between assessment procedures and teaching and learning. In each study there should be inter-relationship between the objectives of the study, its content, teaching strategies and assessment.

Assessment procedures should define and communicate educational expectations and ensure that these standards are maintained. These procedures should support a wide range of learning and teaching approaches and outcomes.

AP School Improvement and KLA Leaders will provide delivery planning and moderation/assessment support for teachers of all units including past results Data Analysis sessions, and will facilitate moderation processes where more than one class operates for any VCE Unit. (See also: VCE Policy, Assessment, Report writing).

VCE Units 3 and 4: Assessments submitted by this school must be in accordance with VCAA guidelines so that they will be comparable on a state-wide basis as all school leavers compete for employment and entry into tertiary institutions and courses.

Record Keeping: All teachers must maintain up to date and accurate records of their delivery in each unit and assessment of student work. It is particularly important to maintain accurate records of the receipt of required work. In the event of a query regarding any assessment, a teacher will be required to present the relevant assessment records, including records indicating when or if the required work has been received, and will need to justify the assessment.

SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF OUTCOMES AND UNITS

FROM THE VCAA HANDBOOK:

- *The decision about satisfactory completion of outcomes is based on the teacher's assessment of the student's overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit. The decision is distinct from the assessment of levels of performance*
- *The key knowledge and skills and the advice for teachers included in the study design will assist teachers in making this judgement. The key knowledge and skills do not constitute a checklist of elements that needs to be assessed separately.*

FROM THE ASSESSMENT GUIDES:

- *Teachers must select assessment tasks from the designated list for each outcome published in the study design. Assessment tasks should be a part of the regular teaching program and should not add unduly to student workload. Assessment tasks should be completed mainly in class within a limited timeframe.*
- *The overall assessment program for the unit should include a variety of assessment task formats, include provision for authentication of student work and take into account the overall workload for students.*

What is a designated assessment task?

A list of study specific designated assessment tasks appear in Study Designs at the conclusion of each unit. Typically, these tasks include tests, short and extended responses, reports, folios, analyses, presentations, annotated folios, summaries, a selection of exploratory works, practical activities, problem solving, etc.

As can be seen from the list above, the term 'designated assessment task' encompasses SACs and SATs and ATs which are formal assessment tasks used to verify our reading of a student's understanding, to grade student performance, and to prepare them for the end of year examination (or end of semester examination in the case of Unit 1 and 2), and the coursework activities most teachers set as a part of their day to day teaching.

How do I award an S or N?

To satisfy the outcome students must demonstrate satisfactory completion of all SACs and SATs and undertake sufficient coursework to demonstrate engagement with the outcome.

Students who have passed the SACs, SATs, and ATs and have, on balance, satisfied the coursework requirements for an outcome will be assessed as S for that outcome.

Students who have not passed the SACs, SATs and ATs and have, on balance, not shown sufficient satisfaction of the coursework requirements for an outcome will be assessed as N for that outcome.

Students who have passed formal assessment tasks are likely to have demonstrated engagement with the course through the knowledge and skills they have demonstrated in these tasks. Should this not be the case, students may query their results and teachers may be required to provide records of the role the uncompleted tasks play in satisfying the outcome.

What is coursework?

Coursework encompasses a range of classroom and homework activities set by the teacher to scaffold and support student learning with a view to students performing better on SACs/SATs/ATs as a result.

In moving to the use of coursework as a measure of engagement, we must build in checks and balances to protect both teachers' professionalism and students' rights to equity within and between studies in the VCE.

What does this mean in practice?

FROM THE VCAA HANDBOOK:

- *All VCE units require 50 hours of class time. A student needs to attend sufficient class time to complete work. The school sets a minimum class time and attendance rules. Where a student has completed work, but there has been substantive breach of attendance rules and the school therefore wishes to assign an N to the unit, the school must assign N for one or more of the outcomes and thus the unit.*
- *A school policy and set of procedures to cover absence from assessment tasks should be published and made available to staff, students and parents. 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 should not be penalised for lack of attendance. The Special Provision granted may allow a student to work from home for a period of time. The student and the school should completed the application for Special provision for School-assessed Coursework and School assessed Tasks and the Unit Completion form and retain this at the school together with the supporting evidence.*

It is expected that students with high levels of attendance who have listened to and/or participated in classroom activities, lectures and discussions, kept a fairly organised workbook and undertaken some homework tasks will easily demonstrate engagement.

Underlying principles

Whilst we would like all students to work harder we know that adding extra layers of work or more hoops to jump through will not achieve this goal. The impetus of this development springs from the sound pedagogical practice of linking preparation with performance through engagement. It is about a carrot rather than a stick and is an opportunity to put the E5 model to use:

Engage → Explore → Explain → Elaborate → Evaluate

Course Outline: Informing students and their families

All students must be advised in advance of the assessment tasks and coursework requirements that must be satisfactorily completed to pass each outcome. This information will normally appear in the document that outlines the course that is provided to students in the first week of the semester.

It is wise for all teachers to remind students of what is required of them from time to time. Students then have time and support to catch up and to plan for the remaining weeks of the semester. Class teachers, Form teachers or YLCs may need to help students with study planners and interim deadlines, even if they have already missed many deadlines.

All VCE/VCAL teachers at Red Cliffs Secondary College will provide their class with a Course Outline within the first two weeks of the beginning of the year/each semester. This outline will also be provided to the Senior School Coordinator. SAC/SAT information from these outlines will be collated to create an 'ASSESSMENT CALENDAR' for each year level, outlining when Assessment Tasks will be conducted in classes, which will be published for access by staff, students and parents. It will be understood that this document is subject to amendment.

What should be in a course outline?

The course outline should detail all formal assessments tasks including the form these tasks will take and the dates on which they will be held as well as information about any coursework requirements that students will be required to undertake to satisfy each outcome.

Coursework tasks will be drawn from the list of designated tasks and expressed in the detail appropriate to the study. For some studies such tasks will be explicit such as, for example, attendance at a performance, summaries of textbook chapters, a glossary of terms, designated problems. For other studies tasks may be more generic including for example, the maintenance of a workbook or visual diary, participation in classroom discussions, a collection of cuttings from a newspaper or garden, etc. It is important to explain these requirements to students but inadvisable to provide fine detail as tasks may vary as the semester progresses.

Coursework tasks should not add unduly to student workload.

Shared practice is the way to a common understanding

There has been concern expressed by VCAA/DET that some teachers may set much more or less coursework than others. Such concern can be overcome by sharing the types and breadth of coursework that is being set between teachers and studies. Other measures that will break down this concern include professional learning activities such as guided observations of teachers' classrooms, research at work activities such as investigating the link between coursework and performance, and the collection of examples of coursework requirements by the curriculum manager.

Special Provision and data collection

Information will be collected at the conclusion of each semester about students who have not passed SACs and not satisfied coursework requirements. The Senior School Coordinator will undertake this. Such information will be distributed to YLCs (and where applicable, the welfare team), who in consultation with the Senior School Coordinator will determine a process for Special Provision. This data will drive further development of the initiative.

Teachers who have any questions about the management of this process should see the Senior School Coordinator. Those who would like to discuss curriculum implications should see the AP: School Improvement.

Students or parents/guardians who are concerned about this shift in approach should be referred to the Principal. These students and teachers may be required to present evidence of the work set and completed and, in the case of teachers, records of evidence collected. The final decision will, as always, rest with the Principal. It is expected that there will be few, if any, such situations.

School-assessed coursework and classroom coursework – what is the difference and how can we make it work for us?

All teachers provide students a course outline with details of the course, outcomes, and assessment task dates at the beginning of each unit.

In addition, teachers employ a range of class work, homework and coursework tasks, designed to engage students and ensure that they are:

- Creating a written and/or visual record of their developing knowledge and skills
- Consolidating their knowledge and skills through practise
- Demonstrating their grasp of the material covered in the course
- Creating a study resource for exam revision.

For teachers the results of these tasks also provide a useful evaluation of one's teaching.

Types of tasks set at the school include:

- Topic tests
- Chapter questions
- Homework that is
 - Sighted and recorded
 - Collected and assessed
 - Expected or understood to have been completed
- Compilation of glossaries
- Cloze tests
- Charts or tables for filling in
- Journals with a designated number of entries per topic
- Visual diaries
- Practise SACs
- Take home SACs
- Question sheets
- Activities to be completed at home including reading, research, responding to a stimulus, writing or creating
- A requirement to attend school outside of regular school times to complete or make up a task or to attend an extra class
- Rehearsals
- The preparation of cheat sheets.

Ensuring the completion of these tasks can be difficult when students erroneously focus on assessment tasks at the expense of regular work practices. Some teachers record or assess coursework tasks, others don't. Some students are confused about which tasks contribute to satisfactory completion of an outcome and which don't.

FROM THE VCAA HANDBOOK:

- *The decision about satisfactory completion of outcomes is based on the teacher's assessment of the student's overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit. **This decision is distinct from the assessment of levels of performance.***
- *The key knowledge and skills and the advice for teachers included in the study design will assist teachers in making this judgement. The key knowledge and skills do not constitute a checklist of elements that needs to be assessed separately.*

This means that if students satisfy each assessment task as designated in the Study Design for a unit, provided there has been no breach of rules they will satisfy the unit.

FROM THE ASSESSMENT GUIDES:

- *Teachers must select assessment tasks from the designated list for each outcome published in the study design. Assessment tasks should be part of the regular teaching and learning program and should not add unduly to student workload. Assessment tasks should be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.*
- *The overall assessment program for the unit should include a variety of assessment task formats, include provision for authentication of students work and take into account the overall workload for students.*

Students are not always aware of the difference between assessment tasks used to demonstrate the satisfactory completion of an outcome and coursework required by the teacher for the purpose of teaching and learning.

Students must be informed in advance when they are to be assessed for the satisfactory completion of an outcome using a designated assessment task. They must be provided with information about the task including the date on which it will take place, the scope and duration of the task and the criteria for assessment.

Coursework tasks should not be confused with assessment tasks. They make a valuable contribution to students' learning but their completion cannot be used to pass or fail a student for a unit.

In 2015, Red Cliffs Secondary College will publish an attendance requirement of 90% and have set an attendance protocol and procedures in place to decide on satisfactory completion of a unit.

See: ATTENDANCE POLICY 2015 (As provided to students)

The VCAA allows schools to set the attendance requirements for the satisfactory completion of a unit but this has been problematic over the years.

A solution that reinforces attendance, assists in the completion of coursework and therefore increases satisfactory completion of units and maximises students' results.

Whilst we cannot make unofficial coursework a requirement for satisfying outcomes or a unit of study, we can work with the satisfactory completion conditions set by VCAA. The key is the requirement of 50 hours of class time (or equivalent).

FROM THE VCAA HANDBOOK:

- *All VCE units require 50 hours of class time. A student needs to attend sufficient class time to complete work. The school sets minimum class time and attendance rules. Where a student has completed work but there has been substantive breach of attendance rules and the school therefore wishes to assign N to the unit, the school must assign N for one or more outcomes and thus the unit.*
- *A school policy and set of procedures to cover absence from assessment tasks should be published and made available to staff, students, parents/guardians. 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 should not be penalised for lack of attendance. The Special Provision granted may allow a student to work from home for a period of time. The student and school should complete the application for Special Provision for School-assessed Coursework and School-assessed Tasks and the Unit Completion form and retain this at the school with supporting evidence.*

Coursework Policy

1. Students should expect to demonstrate 50 hours of work in each study. If they attend regularly and complete the coursework in class, this requirement will be easy to demonstrate.
2. Coursework supports learning and maximises students' opportunities to achieve the best result possible. Students will keep a record of their learning in their workbooks. This record may be used to redeem an unsatisfactory assessment task.

FROM THE VCAA HANDBOOK:

- *If, in the judgement of the teacher, work submitted by a student for the assessment of an outcome does not meet the required standard for satisfactory completion, the teacher may take into consideration work previously submitted by the student provided it meets the requirements set out, or allow the student to submit further work. A teacher may permit a student to submit further work to meet satisfactory completion requirements of a unit. Students may **not submit further** tasks for the reconsideration of School-assessed Coursework scores awarded by the school.*

3. Teachers will make coursework requirements explicit at the beginning of each unit and will reinforce these requirements by regularly recording coursework completion throughout the semester.
4. Coursework tasks are to be a regular part of teaching and learning. Tasks to support development of knowledge and skills related to outcomes.
5. Teachers will keep accurate records of coursework requirements and achievement.
6. Students who are away are expected to work at home to catch up.
7. Students who fall behind will be required to catch up. YLCs will be informed of progress through the classroom teachers' use of XUNO. This progress will then be the subject of a conversation between the YLC, student and parent.
8. For students who are unwell or have other documented extenuating circumstances, Special Provision can be applied for to allow extra time to complete work.
9. Teachers in each KLA to meet regularly to share examples of coursework and to ensure that coursework requirements are applied equitably across studies and teachers. A collection of coursework requirements be made to provide exemplars and to support teachers new to the school. This process will be managed by AP: School Improvement.
10. Teachers will be required to participate in any VCAA Auditing and Quality Assurance process as requested by VCAA.
11. Teachers will be required to adjust task conditions, such as granting rest breaks etc. during SAC/SATs as deemed necessary under the provisions of Special Exam Arrangements and School-based Special Provision. Teachers must make a reasonable adjustment: to the curriculum so that all students who have disability or impairment can access the curriculum regardless of whether they received funding under the DET PSD Program .

Evaluation

This policy will be ratified as part of the school's four year review cycle.

This policy will be reviewed each year.