HERITAGE COLLEGE
KNOX

SENIOR PATHWAYS HANDBOOK

2026

www.heritage.vic.edu.au

INTRODUCTION TO

SENIORS HANDBOOK 2026

This handbook is designed to assist senior students at Heritage College Knox in selecting subjects and planning their pathways through Years 11-12.

Our aim is to provide detailed information that enables students to make informed decisions about their education, with the support of their families.

Together, we can support our students in their final years of schooling, preparing them to become responsible, contributing citizens who are ready for the future and trust God to guide their lives.

Maureen Theobald
Principal

“The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”
Dr Seuss

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Course Selection Handbook 2026

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Terminology

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ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admission Rank	The ATAR is calculated by VTAC solely for the use of tertiary institutions to compare the overall achievements of students who have completed different combinations of VCE studies. It is a rank on a scale of 0 – 99.95 which shows a student's achievement relative to other students. VTAC uses the VCE results issued by the VCAA to calculate the ATAR. The ATAR is calculated by adding: 1. One English study score 2. The next best three study scores 3. 10% of the fifth and sixth study scores Note: There are rules about which subjects can be used to generate an ATAR. Information about these rules and restrictions for the ATAR is available in the VTAC Guide to Scaling and the ATAR. https://vtac.edu.au/guides/atar-scaling-guide-2026.html
Aggregate		The aggregate is the total of all permissible scaled study scores. It will appear on the student's ATAR statement. Once aggregates are calculated, they are placed in percentile order and converted into an ATAR.
Coursework		Means by which students demonstrate their satisfactory key knowledge and/or key skills foreach outcome.
GAT	General Achievement Test	The GAT is a pen-and-paper test of general knowledge and skills taken by students in the course of completing their senior secondary studies. The GAT plays an important role in the quality assurance of VCE assessments and also provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate they meet the Victorian Literacy and Numeracy Standards expected at a senior secondary level.
Outcomes		To satisfactorily complete a unit of work, students must demonstrate the required key knowledge and/or key skills. These are known as Outcomes in the study design for VCE. NOTE: Outcomes are assessed through SACs/SATs and coursework.
SAC	School Assessed Coursework	Assessments by which a student's level of achievement for each outcome is judged. These generate a student's numerical grade for their achievement. They are usually sat under supervision and work must be able to be authenticated as the student's own work.
SAT	School Assessed Tasks	School-assessed tasks occur in studies where products and models are assessed. The following VCE studies have school-assessed tasks: Algorithmics (HESS), Art, Applied Computing, Media, Product Design and Technology, Systems Engineering, Visual Communication Design. Student work will have authentication requirements.
Special Provisions		Policy designed by the VCAA to provide students in defined circumstances with the opportunity to participate in and complete their senior secondary studies. Year 10 and 11 – applications processed internally by the school. Year 12 – applications processed by the VCAA.
Study		In VCE, a subject is referred to as a study. A study consists of 4 units (1-4) studied over two years.

Terminology

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Study Score		Shows how well the student has performed in a study at Unit 3-4 level, compared to everyone else in Victoria who took that study. To generate a study score at Unit 3-4 level, students need to complete the graded assessments (SACs/SATs) and examination and must complete both Units satisfactorily. Study scores can range from 0 to 50. The mean study score is 30 across all studies. A score of 23 to 37 shows that a student is in the middle range; a score of 38 or more indicates that a student is in the top 15%. For studies with large enrolments (1,000+), 2% of students will get a score of 45 or above. The study scores calculated by the VCAA are used by VTAC to calculate students' ATARs.
Unit		A unit is a semester-length course that makes up part of a study.
Units 1 and 2		Unit 1 & 2 are the first units in a study and are usually undertaken in Year 11. They are generally introductions to the more in-depth studies in each subject undertaken in Units 3 and 4. Unit 1-2 subjects can also be undertaken by students in Year 10. Units run for one semester each (i.e., Unit 1 subjects are taught across Semester 1, Unit 2 subjects across Semester 2). Although gaining a good base across both Units 1 and 2 is generally recommended, some students may complete Unit 1 of a subject and then change to study Unit 2 of a different subject in Semester 2. Students also sit an internally set and graded exam for each study.
Units 3 and 4 VCE Studies		Studies undertaken normally in Year 12. Year 11 students can undertake a Unit 3-4 study if they have successfully completed Units 1 and 2. Teachers assess student level of performance and completion of units/outcomes through SACs/SATs and coursework. Students also sit an externally set and graded exam for each study.
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education	The minimum requirement for a student's program for the award of the VCE is satisfactory completion of 16 units that include: • Three units from the English group, including a Unit 3-4 sequence • At least three other sequences of Units 3-4 studies
VET	Vocational Education and Training	VET studies allow secondary students to gain practical skills in a specific industry while contributing towards the completion of the VCE, including the VCE Vocational Major. Students can study VET through school-based apprenticeships or traineeships.
VTAC	Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre	The administrative body which processes applications for university institutions.
VCAA	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority	The governing authority which sets the policies, procedures and guidelines associated with the VCE/VM. It is responsible for designing the VCE/VCAL curriculum (published in study designs) and external Unit 3-4 exams. Website: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au

What is VCE?

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Structure and Requirements

1. **Duration:** Typically completed over two years, in Years 11 and 12 of secondary school.
2. **Subjects:** Students can choose to take between 20 and 24 units across the two years. These units are organised into subjects, with each subject having four units (Units 1 & 2 in Years 10 and 11 and Units 3 & 4 in Years 11 and 12).
3. **Types of Units:**
   - Units 1 & 2: Generally completed in Year 11, providing a foundation for Units 3 & 4.
   - Units 3 & 4: Taken in Year 12, these units are more advanced and are typically required for university entrance scores.
4. **Vocational Education and Training (VET):** Students can also complete VET courses as part of their VCE, providing practical skills and qualifications alongside their academic studies.
5. **Assessment**
   - School-based Assessments: These are assessments marked by teachers at the school and include assignments, tests, and projects.
   - External Assessments: These include exams set by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).

Scoring and ATAR

1. Study Scores: Each subject is scored out of 50. This score reflects the student's relative performance compared to all other students in the subject.
2. Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR): The ATAR is a percentile ranking used for university admissions. It is calculated based on the aggregate of a student's study scores. The calculation considers:
   - The student's best four study scores (one of which must be from an English subject).
   - 10% of their fifth and sixth subjects, if applicable.

Special Considerations

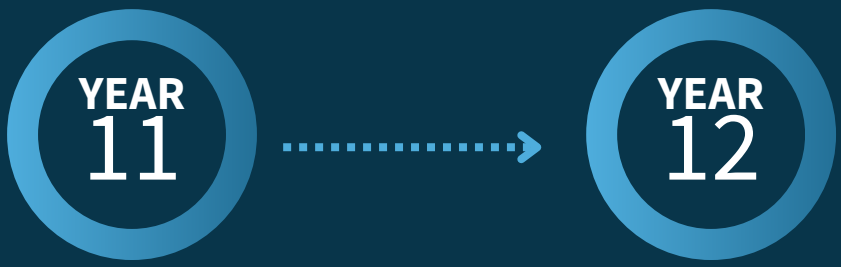
Special Provisions: Adjustments can be made for students who have disabilities, illnesses, or other significant circumstances that impact their ability to complete their assessments.

Completion

To receive the VCE, students must satisfactorily complete at least 16 units, including:

1. Three units from the English group, with a Unit 3 & 4 sequence.
2. At least three sequences of Units 3 & 4 studies other than English.

Subject Selection Process



- Choose up to 6 ATAR subjects, including English.
- Students who have completed Units 1 & 2 of a VCE subject in Year 10 may take Units 3 & 4 in Year 11.

- Choose between 4 and 6 ATAR subjects, including English.
- Units 3 & 4 must be completed to count towards your ATAR score

The Process Explained

Students will complete their selections for 2026 in Term 3 of 2025, with support from the Secondary Staff at Heritage College Knox.

The following opportunities are available for students and their parents or guardians to discuss subject offerings.

Wednesday 23 July 2025 - Periods 1 and 2
Students in Years 10 and 11 for 2026 - Subject information sessions

Tuesday 29 July 2025 - 7:00pm Pathways to Success Information Evening
Students and families in Years 10 and 11 in 2026 - Course Information Evening

Monday 4 August 2025 - 2:00 to 7:30pm Individual Course Discussion
25-minute personal course discussion for each Year 10-11 student and their parent or guardian

Thursday 7 August 2025 - Subject Selection forms due

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Where to now?

The 'Where to now?" resource is a fantastic summary of the options for students outside of this handbook.

The guide includes information related to VCE assessment, school-based apprenticeships, traineeships and VET options.

The guide provides examples of unique pathways that students may take through their senior secondary program.

Click here for Where to Now 2026

Click here for a short VCE Summary



VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY

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VCE Studies for 2026

The following is a list of VCE subjects which we anticipate will be offered at Heritage College Knox in 2026.

Click the links to explore the VCAA study designs.

- Art
- Biology
- Business Management
- Chemistry
- English
- Foundation Mathematics
- General Mathematics
- Geography
- Health and Human Development
- History
- Languages: Auslan
- Mathematical Methods
- Music
- Physical Education
- Psychology
- Religion and Society
- Visual Communication and Design

Please note

While the College is committed and dedicated to providing a broad range of subjects, all studies are subject to staffing and timetable requirements, student numbers and other factors.

A subject offered and elected by a student may not necessarily run. The College will work with all students who have unique pathway requirements to find solutions to any unique circumstances where a subject may not be possible for that student.

Subjects not offered

There are some subjects that approved students may enrol in through virtual learning platforms.

Any student who wishes to discuss a subject that is not offered at the College must speak with the Assistant Principal and demonstrate their suitability for the enrolment based on academic performance and future pathways.

Art Making and Exhibiting

Art Making and Exhibiting Units 1-4

What is Art Making and Exhibiting all about?

This study introduces students to the methods used to make artworks and how artworks are presented and exhibited. Students explore, develop and refine the use of materials, techniques and processes to develop their own knowledge and understanding of how art works are made. This study provides students with the opportunity to recognise their potential as artists, encourages self-expression and creativity, and can build confidence and a sense of identity.

The structure of Art Making and Exhibiting, with key concepts of art making and exhibiting art works across Units 1-4, is indicated in the following diagram.



Unit 1: Explore, expand and investigate

In this unit students explore materials, techniques and processes in a range of art forms. They expand their knowledge and understanding of the characteristics, properties and application of materials used in art making. They explore selected materials to understand how they relate to specific art forms and how they can be used in the making of artworks.

Areas of Study:

1. Explore - materials, techniques and art forms
2. Expand - make, present and reflect
3. Investigate - reserach and present

Art Making and Exhibiting

Art Making and Exhibiting Units 3-4

What is Art Making and Exhibiting all about?

This study introduces students to the methods used to make artworks and how artworks are presented and exhibited. Students explore, develop and refine the use of materials, techniques and processes to develop their own knowledge and understanding of how artworks are made. This study provides students with the opportunity to recognise their potential as artists, encourages self-expression and creativity, and can build confidence and a sense of identity.

Unit 3: Collect, extend and connect

In this unit, students are actively engaged in art making using various materials, techniques and processes. They explore contexts, subject matter and ideas to develop artworks in imaginative and creative ways. They also investigate how artists use visual language to represent ideas and meaning in artworks. The materials, techniques and processes of the art form the students work with are fundamental to the artworks they make.

Areas of Study:

1. Collect - inspirations, influences and images
2. Extend - make, critique and reflect
3. Connect - curate, design and propose

Unit 4: Consolidate, present and conserve

In Unit 4, students make connections to the artworks they made in Unit 3, consolidating and extending their ideas and art making to further refine and resolve artworks in specific art forms. The progressive resolution of these artworks is documented in the student's Visual Arts journal, demonstrating their developing technical skills in a specific art form, as well as their refinement and resolution of subject matter, ideas, visual language, aesthetic qualities and style.

Areas of Study:

1. Consolidate - refine and resolve
2. Present - plan and critique
3. Conserve - present and care

Biology

Biology Units 1-4

What is Biology all about?

Biology is a diverse and evolving science discipline that seeks to understand and explore the nature of life, past and present. Despite the diversity of organisms and their many adaptations for survival in various environments, all life forms share a degree of relatedness and a common origin. This study explores the dynamic relationships between organisms and their environments. It also explores the processes of life, from the molecular world of the cell to that of the whole organism.

Unit 1: How do organisms regulate their functions?

In this unit, students examine the cell as the structural and functional unit of life, from single-celled to multicellular organisms, including the requirements for sustaining cellular processes. Students focus on cell growth, replacement and death, and the role of stem cells in the differentiation, specialisation and renewal of cells. They explore how systems function through cell specialisation in vascular plants and animals, and consider the role of homeostatic mechanisms in maintaining an animal's internal environment.

Areas of Study:

1. How do cells function?
2. How do plant and animal systems function?
3. How do scientific investigations develop an understanding of how organisms regulate their function?

Unit 2: How does inheritance impact on diversity?

In this unit, students explore reproduction and the transmission of biological information from generation to generation, as well as the impact this has on species diversity. They apply their understanding of chromosomes to explain the process of meiosis. Students consider how the relationship between genes, the environment and epigenetic factors influences phenotypic expression. They explain the inheritance of characteristics, analyse patterns of inheritance, interpret pedigree charts and predict outcomes of genetic crosses.

Students analyse the advantages and disadvantages of asexual and sexual reproductive strategies, including the use of reproductive cloning technologies. They study structural, physiological and behavioural adaptations that enhance an organism's survival. Students explore interdependences between species, focusing on how keystone species and top predators structure and maintain the distribution, density and size of a population. They also consider the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and perspectives in understanding the survival of organisms in Australian ecosystems.

Areas of Study:

1. How is inheritance explained?
2. How do inherited adaptations impact on diversity?
3. How do humans use science to explore and communicate contemporary bioethical issues?

Biology Units 1-4

Unit 3: How do cells maintain life?

In this unit, students investigate the workings of the cell from several perspectives. They explore the relationship between nucleic acids and proteins as key molecules in cellular processes. Students analyse the structure and function of nucleic acids as information molecules, gene structure and expression in prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells, and proteins as a diverse group of functional molecules. They examine the biological consequences of manipulating the DNA molecule and applying biotechnologies.

Students explore the structure, regulation and rate of biochemical pathways, with reference to photosynthesis and cellular respiration. They explore how the application of biotechnologies to biochemical pathways could lead to improvements in agricultural practices.

Students apply their knowledge of cellular processes through the investigation of a selected case study, data analysis and/or a bioethical issue. The application of ethical understanding in VCE Biology involves the consideration of approaches to bioethics and ethical concepts.

Areas of Study:

1. What is the role of nucleic acids and proteins in maintaining life?
2. How are biochemical pathways regulated?

Unit 4: How does life change and respond to challenges over time?

In this unit, students consider the continual change and challenges to which life on Earth has been, and continues to be, subjected to. They study the human immune system and the interactions between its components to provide immunity to a specific pathogen. Students consider how the application of biological knowledge can be used to respond to bioethical issues and challenges related to disease.

Students consider how evolutionary biology is based on the accumulation of evidence over time. They investigate the impact of various change events on a population's gene pool and the biological consequences of changes in allele frequencies. Students examine the evidence for relatedness between species and change in life forms over time using evidence from paleontology, structural morphology, molecular homology and comparative genomics. Students examine the evidence for structural trends in the human fossil record, recognising that interpretations can be contested, refined or replaced when challenged by new evidence.

Areas of Study:

1. How do organisms respond to pathogens?
2. How are species related over time?
3. How is scientific inquiry used to investigate cellular processes and/or biological change?

Business Management

Business Management Units 1-4

What is Business Management all about?

In studying VCE Business Management, students develop knowledge and skills that enhance their confidence and ability to participate effectively as ethical and socially responsible members of society, managers and leaders of the business community, and as informed citizens, consumers and investors. The study of VCE Business Management leads to opportunities across all facets of the business and management field, such as small business owner, project manager, human resource manager, operations manager or executive manager. Further study can lead to specialisation in areas such as marketing, public relations and event management.

Unit 1: Planning a Business

Businesses of all sizes are major contributors to the economic and social wellbeing of a nation. The ability of entrepreneurs to establish a business and the fostering of conditions under which new business ideas can emerge are vital for a nation's wellbeing. Taking a business idea and planning how to make it a reality are the cornerstones of economic and social development. In this unit, students explore the factors affecting business ideas and the internal and external environments within which businesses operate, as well as the effects of these on planning a business. They also consider the importance of the business sector to the national economy and social wellbeing.

Areas of Study:

1. The business idea
2. Internal business environment and planning
3. External business environment and planning

Unit 2: Establishing a Business

This unit focuses on the establishment phase of a business. Establishing a business involves compliance with legal requirements as well as decisions about how best to establish a system of financial record keeping, staff the business and establish a customer base. In this unit students examine the legal requirements that must be met to establish a business. They investigate the essential features of effective marketing and consider the best way to meet the needs of the business in terms of staffing and financial record keeping. Students analyse management practices by applying key knowledge to contemporary business case studies from the past four years.

Areas of Study:

1. Legal requirements and financial considerations
2. Marketing a business
3. Staffing a business

Business Management Units 1-4

Unit 3: Managing a Business

In this unit, students explore the key processes and considerations for managing a business efficiently and effectively to achieve business objectives. Students examine different types of businesses and their respective objectives and stakeholders. They investigate strategies for managing both staff and business operations to meet objectives and develop an understanding of the complexity and challenges of managing a business. Students compare theoretical perspectives with current practice through the use of contemporary Australian and global business case studies from the past four years.

Areas of Study:

1. Business Foundations
2. Human Resource Management
3. Operations Management

Unit 4: Transforming a Business

Businesses are under constant pressure to adapt and change to meet their objectives. In this unit, students consider the importance of reviewing key performance indicators to determine current performance and the strategic management necessary to position a business for the future. Students study a theoretical model for undertaking change and consider a variety of strategies for managing change in the most efficient and effective way to improve business performance. They investigate the importance of effective management and leadership in change management. Using one or more contemporary business case studies from the past four years, students evaluate business practice against theory.

Areas of Study:

1. Reviewing Performance - The Need for Change
2. Implementing Change

Chemistry

Chemistry Units 1-4

What is Chemistry all about?

This study provides a comprehensive coverage of theory which students apply to understand the chemical processes involved in new drugs, synthetic materials, biotechnology, microelectronics, new forms of food preservation and fuels. The subject is important for students who are interested in careers in health, engineering or the sciences. It is recommended that students have achieved a high level in Year 10 Mathematics.

Unit 1: How can the diversity of materials be explained?

The development and use of materials for specific purposes is an important human endeavour. In this unit, students investigate the chemical structures and properties of a range of materials, including covalent compounds, metals, ionic compounds and polymers. They are introduced to ways that chemical quantities are measured. They consider how manufacturing innovations lead to more sustainable products being produced for society through the use of renewable raw materials and a transition from a linear economy towards a circular economy.

Students conduct practical investigations involving the reactivity series of metals, the separation of mixtures by chromatography, the use of precipitation reactions to identify ionic compounds, the determination of empirical formulas, and the synthesis of polymers.

Throughout this unit, students use chemistry terminology including symbols, formulas, chemical nomenclature and equations to represent and explain observations and data from their own investigations and to evaluate the chemistry-based claims of others.

Areas of Study:

1. How do the chemical structures of materials explain their properties and reactions?
2. How are materials quantified and classified?
3. How can chemical principles be applied to create a more sustainable future?

Unit 2: How do the chemical reactions shape the natural world?

Society depends on the work of chemists to analyse the materials and products in everyday use. In this unit, students analyse and compare different substances dissolved in water and the gases that may be produced in chemical reactions. They explore applications of acid-base and redox reactions in society.

Students conduct practical investigations involving the specific heat capacity of water, acid-base and redox reactions, solubility, molar volume of a gas, volumetric analysis, and the use of a calibration curve.

Areas of Study:

1. How do chemicals interact with water?
2. How are chemicals measured and analysed?
3. How do quantitative scientific investigations develop our understanding of chemical reactions?

Chemistry Units 1-4

Unit 3: How can chemical processes be designed to optimise efficiency?

The global demand for energy and materials is increasing with world population growth. In this unit, students explore energy options and the chemical production of materials with reference to efficiencies, renewability and the minimisation of their impact on the environment. Students compare and evaluate different chemical energy resources, including fossil fuels, biofuels, galvanic cells and fuel cells. They investigate the combustion of fuels, including the energy transformations involved, the use of stoichiometry to calculate the amounts of reactants and products involved in the reactions, and calculations of the amounts of energy released and their representations.

Students consider the purpose, design and operating principles of galvanic cells, fuel cells and electrolytic cells. In this context they use the electrochemical series to predict and write half and overall redox equations, and apply Faraday's laws to calculate quantities in electrolytic reactions. Students analyse manufacturing processes with reference to factors that influence their reaction rates and extent. They investigate and apply the equilibrium law and Le Chatelier's principle to different reaction systems, including to predict and explain the conditions that will improve the efficiency and percentage yield of chemical processes.

Areas of Study:

1. What are the current and future options for supplying energy?
2. How can the rate and yield of chemical reactions by optimised?

Unit 4: How are organic compounds categorised, analysed and used?

The carbon atom has unique characteristics that explain the diversity and number of organic compounds that not only constitute living tissues but also are found in fuels, foods and medicines, as well as many of the materials we use in everyday life. In this unit, students investigate the structural features, bonding, typical reactions and uses of the major families of organic compounds, including those found in food. Students study the ways in which organic structures are represented and named. They process data from instrumental analyses of organic compounds to confirm or deduce organic structures, and perform volumetric analyses to determine the concentrations of organic chemicals in mixtures.

Students consider the nature of the reactions involved to predict the products of reaction pathways and to design pathways to produce particular compounds from given starting materials. Students investigate key food molecules through an exploration of their chemical structures, the hydrolytic reactions in which they are broken down and the condensation reactions in which they are rebuilt to form new molecules. In this context, they explore the role of enzymes and coenzymes in facilitating chemical reactions. Students use calorimetry as an investigative tool to determine the energy released in the combustion of foods.

Areas of Study:

1. How are organic compounds categorised and synthesised?
2. How are organic compounds analysed and used?
3. How is scientific inquiry used to investigate the sustainable production of energy and/or materials?

English

English Units 1-4

Unit 1

On completion of this unit, students should be able to make personal connections with, and explore the vocabulary, text structures, language features and ideas in, a text. Students will also develop an understanding of effective and cohesive writing through the crafting of their own texts designed for a specific context and audience to achieve a stated purpose. They will also learn to describe individual decisions made about the vocabulary, text structures, language features and conventions used during writing processes.

Areas of Study:

1. Reading and Exploring Texts
2. Crafting Texts

Unit 2

Students will explore and analyse how the vocabulary, text structures, language features and ideas in a text construct meaning. They will also be able to explore and analyse persuasive texts within the context of a contemporary issue, including the ways argument and language can be used to position an audience; and to construct a point of view text for oral presentation.

Areas of Study:

1. Reading and Exploring Texts
2. Exploring Argument

Unit 3

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to analyse the ideas, concerns and values presented in a text, informed by the vocabulary, text structures and language features and how they make meaning. Additionally, student should be able to demonstrate effective writing skills by producing their own texts, designed to respond to a specific context and audience to achieve a stated purpose; and to explain their decisions made through writing processes.

Areas of Study:

1. Reading and Responding to Texts
2. Creating Texts

Unit 4

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to analyse the explicit and implicit ideas, concerns and values presented in a text, informed by vocabulary, text structures and language features and how they make meaning. Additionally, student should be able to analyse the use of argument and language in persuasive texts, including one written text (print or digital) and one text in another mode (audio and/or audio visual); and develop and present a point of view text.

Areas of Study:

1. Reading and Responding to Texts
2. Analysing Arguments

Geography

Geography Units 1-4

What is Geography all about?

Studying Geography allows students to explore, analyse and come to understand the characteristics of places that make up our world. Geographers are interested in key questions concerning places and geographic phenomena: What is there? Where is it? Why is it there? What are the effects of it being there? How is it changing over time? How could, and should, it change in the future? How is it different from other places and phenomena? How are places and phenomena connected?

Students explore these questions through fieldwork, the use of geospatial technologies and the investigation of a wide range of secondary sources. These methods underpin the development of a unique framework for understanding the world, enabling students to appreciate its complexity, the diversity and interactions of its environments, economies and cultures, and the processes that helped form and transform these.

Unit 1: Hazards and Disasters

This unit investigates how people have responded to specific types of hazards and disasters. Students undertake an overview of hazards before investigating two contrasting types of hazards and the responses to them. Students examine the processes involved with hazards and hazard events, considering their causes and impacts, human responses to hazard events and the interconnections between human activities and natural phenomena, including the impact of climate change. Students undertake fieldwork and produce a fieldwork report using the structure provided.

Areas of Study:

1. Characteristics of Hazards
2. Response to Hazards and Disasters

Unit 2: Tourism - Issues and Challenges

In this unit, students investigate the characteristics of tourism: where it has developed, its various forms, how it has changed and continues to change, its impact on people, places and environments, and the issues and challenges of ethical tourism. Students select contrasting examples of tourism from within Australia and elsewhere in the world to support their investigations. Students undertake fieldwork and produce a fieldwork report using the structure provided.

Areas of Study:

1. Characteristics of Tourism
2. Impact of Tourism: Issues and Challenges

Geography Units 1-4

Unit 3: Changing the Land

This unit focuses on investigating two types of geographical change: change to land cover and change to land use. Students investigate two major processes that are changing land cover in many regions of the world: melting glaciers and ice sheets, and deforestation. They investigate the distribution and causes of the two processes. Students select one location for each process to develop a greater understanding of the changes to land cover produced by these processes, the impacts of these changes and responses to these changes at different scales.

At a local scale, students investigate land use change using appropriate fieldwork techniques and secondary sources. They investigate the processes of change, the reasons for change and the impacts of change. Students undertake fieldwork and produce a fieldwork report using the structure provided. They develop a research question and hypothesis and use both primary and secondary sources to collect data. Fieldwork techniques including geospatial technologies are employed to collect and present data.

Areas of Study:

1. Land Cover Change
2. Land Use Change

Unit 4: Human Population - Trends and Issues

In this unit, students investigate the geography of human populations. They explore the patterns of population change, movement and distribution, and how governments, organisations and individuals have responded to those changes in different parts of the world. In this unit, students study population dynamics before undertaking an investigation into two significant population trends arising in different parts of the world. They examine the dynamics of populations and their economic, social, political and environmental impacts on people and places. Students investigate the interconnections between the reasons for population change. They evaluate strategies developed in response to population issues and challenges, in both a growing population trend of one country and an ageing population trend of another country, in different parts of the world.

Areas of Study:

1. Population Dynamics
2. Population Issues and Challenges

Health and Human Development

Health and Human Development Units 1-4

What is Health and Human Development all about?

The study of Health and Human Development provides an opportunity for students to investigate health and human development across the lifespan. Students examine the factors that promote well-being in individuals and families, as well as their local and global communities. This study explains the physical, social and emotional aspects of health and development. Health and development are closely related and are influenced by lifestyle, environment, heredity and access to health services, and the interactions between these.

Unit 1: Understanding health and wellbeing

This unit looks at health and wellbeing as a concept with varied and evolving perspectives and definitions. It takes the view that health and wellbeing are subject to a wide range of contexts and interpretations, with different meanings for different people. As a foundation to the understanding of health, students investigate the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition and also explore other interpretations. Wellbeing is a complex combination of all dimensions of health, characterised by an equilibrium in which the individual feels happy, healthy, capable and engaged.

In this unit, students identify personal perspectives and priorities relating to health and wellbeing, and enquire into factors that influence health attitudes, beliefs and practices, including among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. With a focus on youth, students consider their own health as individuals and as a cohort. They build health literacy through interpreting and using data, through investigating the role of food, and through extended inquiry into one youth health focus area

Areas of Study:

1. Concepts of Health
2. Youth Health and Wellbeing
3. Heath and Nutrition

Unit 2: Managing Health and Development

This unit investigates transitions in health and wellbeing, and development, from lifespan and societal perspectives. Students look at changes and expectations that are part of the progression from youth to adulthood. This unit promotes the application of health literacy skills through an examination of adulthood as a time of increasing independence and responsibility, involving the establishment of long-term relationships, possible considerations of parenthood and management of health-related milestones and changes.

Students enquire into the Australian healthcare system and extend their capacity to access and analyse health information. They investigate the challenges and opportunities presented by digital media and health technologies, and consider issues surrounding the use of health data and access to quality health care.

Areas of Study:

1. Developmental Transitions
2. Youth Health Literacy

Health and Human Developments Units 1-4

Unit 3: Australia's health in a globalised world

This unit looks at health, wellbeing and illness as multidimensional, dynamic and subject to different interpretations and contexts. Students begin to explore health and wellbeing as a global concept and to take a broader approach to inquiry. As they consider the benefits of optimal health and wellbeing and its importance as both an individual and a collective resource, their thinking extends to health as a universal right.

Students look at the fundamental conditions required for health improvement, as stated by the World Health Organization (WHO). They use this knowledge as background to their analysis and evaluation of variations in the health status of Australians. Area of Study 2 focuses on health promotion and improvements in population health over time. Students look at various public health approaches and the interdependence of different models as they research health improvements and evaluate successful programs. While the emphasis is on the Australian health system, the progression of change in public health approaches should be seen within a global context.

Areas of Study:

1. Understanding Health and Wellbeing
2. Promoting Health in Australia

Unit 4: Health and human development in a global context

This unit examines health and wellbeing, and human development in a global context. Students use data to investigate health status and the burden of disease in different countries, exploring factors that contribute to health inequalities between and within countries, including the physical, social and economic conditions in which people live.

Students build their understanding of health in a global context by examining changes in the burden of disease over time and studying the key concepts of sustainability and human development. They consider the health implications of increased globalisation and worldwide trends relating to climate change, digital technologies, world trade and the mass movement of people.

Area of Study 2 looks at global action to improve health and wellbeing and human development, focusing on the United Nations' (UN's) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the work of the World Health Organization (WHO). Students also investigate the role of non-government organisations and Australia's overseas aid program. Students evaluate the effectiveness of health initiatives and programs in a global context and reflect on their capacity to take action.

Areas of Study:

1. Global Health and Human Development
2. Health and Sustainable Development Goals

History

History Units 3-4

What is History all about?

The study of VCE History assists students to understand themselves, others, and the contemporary world, and broadens their perspective by examining events, ideas, individuals, groups and movements. While exploring challenging and interesting events from the past, students develop many transferrable skills, such as initiative and enterprise (being creative), planning and organisational skills, and self-management and communication skills. These skills are in demand for employment in almost all areas of work and undoubtedly assist in any further tertiary study that may be undertaken.

Unit 3: The American Revolution

Students investigate the American Revolution from 1754 to 4th July 1776: the events and conditions that contributed to the outbreak of revolution, the ideas that played a significant role in challenging the existing order, the role of individuals in challenging or maintaining the power of the existing order, and the contributions of popular movements. Then the focus turns to the consequences of the American Revolution, including the war of independence, economic recession, the role of George Washington and the experiences of different groups in revolution, such as the Loyalists, women, and American Indians.

Areas of Study:

1. Causes of revolution
2. Consequences of revolution

Unit 4: The Russian Revolution

In Unit 4, students investigate the Russian Revolution from 26 October 1917 to 1927. Students examine the ideas, events and personalities that brought about revolution, such as the Tsars, Rasputin, the rise of communism, workers' protests and peasants' uprisings. Then the focus turns to the consequences of the Russian Revolution: war communism, the red terror, civil war, the role of Lenin and Trotsky, and the changes to living conditions for all groups of Russians – from peasants to nobles.

Areas of Study:

1. Causes of revolution
2. Consequences of revolution

Languages - Auslan

Languages - Auslan Units 1-4

What is Auslan all about?

Auslan is the contemporary visual-spatial language of an Australian linguistic group, the Australian Deaf community. Auslan is a unique Australian language characterised by its own grammar and lexicon. It does not have a written form and is a highly contextualised language. In the study of Auslan, students use the language to communicate with others, understand and appreciate the cultural contexts in which Auslan is used, understand language as a system, and use Auslan to meet the demands of different purposes, contexts and audiences.

Units 1-4:

This study comprises themes and topics, grammar, informal (spontaneous) and formal (prepared) signed text types, and vocabulary in informal and formal signing contexts. This is common to all four units of the study, which are designed to be drawn upon in an integrated way, as appropriate to the linguistic needs of the student and the outcomes for the unit.

The themes and topics are the vehicle by which the student demonstrates achievement of the outcomes, in the sense that they form the subject of the activities and tasks the student undertakes.

The grammar, vocabulary, and signed text types are linked, both to each other and to the themes and topics. Together, as common areas of study, they add a further layer of definition to the knowledge and skills required for successful achievement of the outcomes.

The common areas of study have been selected to provide the opportunity for the student to build upon what is familiar, as well as develop knowledge and skills in new and more challenging areas.

Areas of Study:

1. The individual
2. The deaf and hearing community
3. The changing world

Course Selection Handbook 2026

Mathematics

Foundation Mathematics	• Foundation Mathematics Units 1 and 2 • Foundation Mathematics Units 3 and 4
General Mathematics	• General Mathematics Units 1 and 2 • General Mathematics Units 3 and 4
Mathematical Methods	• Mathematical Methods Units 1 and 2 • Mathematical Methods Units 3 and 4
Specialist Mathematics	• Specialist Mathematics Units 1 and 2 • Specialist Mathematics Units 3 and 4

Choosing a Mathematics Course: Units 1-4

Students are encouraged to refer to the VCE Mathematics Subject Selection Overview (above), in addition to reading the following information.

Before selecting a Mathematics course, students should be aware of tertiary entrance prerequisite requirements.

Course combinations other than those outlined below are possible and should be discussed.

Possible Two-year Courses

Course	Units
Option 1	Year 11: Foundation Mathematics Units 1 and 2 Year 12: Foundation Mathematics Units 3 and 4
Option 2	Year 11: General Mathematics Units 1 and 2 Year 12: General Mathematics Units 3 and 4
Option 3	Year 11: General Mathematics Units 1 and 2 Year 12: Foundation Mathematics Units 3 and 4
Option 4	Year 11: Mathematical Methods Units 1 and 2 Year 12: Mathematical Methods Units 3 and 4
Option 5	Year 11: Mathematical Methods Units 1 and 2 Year 12: General Mathematics Units 3 and 4
Option 6	Year 11: Specialist Mathematics Units 1 and 2 and Mathematical Methods Units 1 and 2 Year 12: Specialist Mathematics Units 3 and 4 and Mathematical Methods Units 3 and 4

Course Selection Handbook 2026

Mathematics

Restrictions on Course Selection

Students should be aware that there are certain restrictions on the choice of Mathematics courses, including:

- Specialist Mathematics 1 and 2 may not be taken without Mathematical Methods Units 1 and 2.
- Students studying Mathematical Methods Units 3 and 4 must have successfully completed Mathematical Methods Units 1 and 2.
- Students intending to study Specialist Mathematics in Year 12 must also have completed or be concurrently studying Mathematical Methods Units 3 and 4 and are strongly encouraged to have completed Specialist Mathematics Units 1 and 2. If they have not completed Specialist Mathematics Units 1 and 2 then they must be prepared to complete intensive work independently over the summer break between Years 11 and 12.

Students can only include up to two of the following Unit 3 and 4 sequences in their primary four subjects towards their ATAR Score: Foundation Mathematics, General Mathematics, Mathematical Methods and Specialist Mathematics. The third, or University Extension Mathematics, contributes an increment to the ATAR Score. University Extension only counts as a sixth subject and no more than three of the four possible Mathematics courses are included in the ATAR Score.

All units in Mathematics are designed to enable students to:

- Develop mathematical skills and knowledge
- Apply mathematical knowledge, analyse, investigate and solve problems in a variety of situations, ranging from well-defined and familiar situations to unfamiliar and open-ended situations
- Use technology as an effective support for mathematical activity

Calculators

All VCE mathematic students are required to have Casio CAS CP400 Calculator.



Foundation Mathematics

Foundation Mathematics Units 1-2

What is Foundation Mathematics all about?

Foundation Mathematics Units 1 and 2 focus on providing students with the mathematical knowledge, skills, understanding and dispositions to solve problems in real contexts for a range of workplace, personal, further learning, and community settings relevant to contemporary society. They are also designed as preparation for Foundation Mathematics Units 3 and 4 and contain assumed knowledge and skills for these units.

Unit 1: Foundation Mathematics

Students consolidate mathematical foundations, further develop their knowledge and capability to plan and conduct activities independently and collaboratively, communicate their mathematical ideas, and acquire mathematical knowledge skills to make informed decisions in their lives. The areas of study for Foundation Mathematics Unit 1 are 'Algebra, number and structure', 'Data analysis, probability and statistics', 'Discrete mathematics', and 'Space and measurement'. The content should be developed using contexts present in students' other studies, work and personal or other familiar situations.

Areas of Study:

1. Algebra, number and structure
2. Data analysis, probability and statistics
3. Discrete mathematics
4. Space and measurement

Unit 2: Foundation Mathematics

Unit 2 focuses on extending the breadth and depth of the application of mathematics to practical problems from contexts present in students' other studies, work and personal or other familiar situations. The areas of study for Foundation Mathematics Unit 2 are 'Algebra, number and structure', 'Data analysis, probability and statistics', 'Discrete mathematics', and 'Space and measurement'.

Areas of Study:

1. Algebra, number and structure
2. Data analysis, probability and statistics
3. Discrete mathematic
4. Space and measurement

Foundation Mathematics Units 1-4

Unit 3 and 4: Foundation Mathematics

Foundation Mathematics Units 3 and 4 focus on providing students with the mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding to solve problems in real contexts for a range of workplace, personal, further learning, community and global settings relevant to contemporary society. The areas of study for Units 3 and 4 are 'Algebra, number and structure', 'Data analysis, probability and statistics', 'Discrete mathematics' and 'Space and measurement'. All four areas of study are to be completed over the two units, and content equivalent to two areas of study is covered in each unit. The selected content for each unit is developed using contexts present in students' other studies, work and personal or other familiar situations, and in national and international contexts, events and developments.

Assumed knowledge and skills for Foundation Mathematics Units 3 and 4 are contained in Foundation Mathematics Units 1 and 2. They are drawn on as applicable in the development of related content from the areas of study, and key knowledge and key skills for the outcomes.

In undertaking these units, students are expected to be able to apply techniques, routines and processes involving rational and real arithmetic, sets, lists and tables, contemporary data displays, diagrams, plans, geometric objects and constructions, algebra, algorithms, measures, equations and graphs, with and without the use of technology. They should have facility with relevant mental and by-hand approaches to estimation and computation. The use of numerical, graphical, geometric, symbolic and statistical functionality of technology for teaching and learning mathematics, for working mathematically, and in related assessment, is incorporated throughout each unit as applicable.

Areas of Study:

1. Algebra, number and structure
2. Data analysis, probability and statistics
3. Discrete mathematics
4. Space and measurement

General Mathematics

General Mathematics Units 1-4

What is General Mathematics all about?

Units 1 and 2 cater for a range of student interests, provide preparation for the study of VCE General Mathematics at the Units 3 and 4 level and contain assumed knowledge and skills for these units.

Units 1-2: General Mathematics

General Mathematics Units 1 and 2 is designed to be widely accessible for students and may lead on to General Mathematics Units 3 and 4.

Students learn to practice and apply mathematical algorithms, routines and techniques by undertaking investigative projects involving the use of mathematics; solving problems set in unfamiliar situations and in real-life situations; and finding solutions to standard problems.

CAS technology and reference material are used throughout the course to support learning and are used for each assessment.

Areas of Study:

1. Data Analysis, Probability and Statistics
2. Algebra, number and structure
3. Function, relations and graphs
4. Discrete mathematics
5. Space and measurement

Units 3-4: General Mathematics

General Mathematics Units 3 and 4 focus on the real-life application of mathematics and consist of the areas of study 'Data analysis, probability and statistics' and 'Discrete mathematics'.

Unit 3 comprises Data analysis and Recursion and financial modelling, and Unit 4 comprises Matrices and Networks and decision mathematics.

Assumed knowledge and skills for General Mathematics Units 3 and 4 are contained in General Mathematics Units 1 and 2. They will be drawn on as applicable in the development of related content from the areas of study, and key knowledge and key skills for the outcomes of General Mathematics Units 3 and 4.

Areas of Study:

1. Data Analysis, Probability and Statistics
2. Discrete mathematics

Mathematical Methods

Mathematical Methods Units 1-4

What is Mathematical Methods all about?

Mathematical Methods Units 1 and 2 provide an introductory study of simple elementary functions of a single real variable, algebra, calculus, probability and statistics and their applications in a variety of practical and theoretical contexts. The units are designed as preparation for Mathematical Methods Units 3 and 4 and contain assumed knowledge and skills for these units.

Units 1: Mathematical Methods

The focus of Unit 1 is the study of simple algebraic functions, and the areas of study are 'Functions, relations and graphs', 'Algebra, number and structure', 'Calculus' and 'Data analysis, probability and statistics'. At the end of Unit 1, students are expected to have covered the content outlined in each area of study, with the exception of 'Algebra, number and structure', which extends across Units 1 and 2.

Areas of Study:

1. Functions, relations and graphs
2. Algebra, number and structure
3. Calculus
4. Data analysis, probability and statistics

Unit 2: Mathematical Methods

The focus of Unit 2 is the study of simple transcendental functions, the calculus of polynomial functions and related modelling applications. The areas of study are 'Functions, relations and graphs', 'Algebra, number and structure', 'Calculus' and 'Data analysis, probability and statistics'. At the end of Unit 2, students are expected to have covered the content outlined in each area of study.

Areas of Study:

1. Functions, relations and graphs
2. Algebra, number and structure
3. Calculus
4. Data analysis, probability and statistics

Mathematical Methods Units 1-4

Unit 3-4: Mathematical Methods

Mathematical Methods Units 3 and 4 extend the introductory study of simple elementary functions of a single real variable to include combinations of these functions, algebra, calculus, probability and statistics, and their applications in a variety of practical and theoretical contexts.

A selection of content would typically include the areas of study 'Functions, relations and graphs' and 'Algebra, number and structure', applications of derivatives and differentiation, and identifying and analysing key features of the functions and their graphs from the 'Calculus' area of study.

In undertaking these units, students are expected to be able to apply techniques, routines and processes involving rational and real arithmetic, sets, lists and tables, diagrams and geometric constructions, algorithms, algebraic manipulation, equations, graphs, differentiation, anti-differentiation, integration and inference, with and without the use of technology.

Areas of Study:

1. Functions, relations and graphs
2. Algebra, number and structure
3. Calculus
4. Data analysis, probability and statistics

Music

Music Units 3-4

What is Music all about?

VCE Music is based on active engagement in all aspects of music. Students develop and refine musicianship skills and knowledge and develop a critical awareness of their relationship with music as listeners, performers, creators and music makers. Students explore, reflect on and respond to the music they listen to, create and perform. They analyse and evaluate live and recorded performances, and learn to incorporate, adapt and interpret musical practices from diverse cultures, times and locations into their own learning about music as both a social and cultural practice. Students study and practice ways of effectively communicating and expressing musical ideas to an audience as performers and composers, and responding to musical works as an audience.

Unit 3: Music Contemporary Performance

This study offers pathways for students whose performance practice includes embellishment and/or improvisation, uses collaborative and aural practices in learning, often takes recordings as a primary text, and projects a personal voice. Students study the work of other performers and analyse their approaches to interpretation and how a personal voice can be developed by reimagining existing music works. They refine selected strategies to enhance their own approach to performance.

Students identify technical, expressive and stylistic challenges relevant to works they are preparing for performance and endeavour to address these challenges. They listen and respond to a wide range of music by a variety of performers in contemporary styles. They also study music language concepts such as scales, harmony and rhythmic materials that relate to contemporary music.

Areas of Study:

1. Performing
2. Analysing for performance
3. Responding

Unit 4: Contemporary Performance

Students continue to work towards building a performance program they will present at their end-of-year examination in line with their Statement of Intent. Students continue to study the work of other performers and their approaches to interpretation and personal voice in performing music works, refining selected strategies to optimise their own approach to performance.

Students further develop strategies to address the technical, expressive and stylistic challenges relevant to works they are preparing for performance.

Students listen and respond to a further range of recorded music by a variety of performers in contemporary styles. They continue to study music language concepts that relate to contemporary music.

Areas of Study:

1. Performing
2. Analysing for performance
3. Responding

Physical Education (PE)

Physical Education Units 1-4

What is Physical Education all about?

VCE Physical Education explores the complex interrelationships between anatomical, biomechanical, physiological and skill acquisition principles to understand their role in producing and refining movement. It also examines behavioural, psychological, environmental and sociocultural influences on performance and participation in physical activity. Students participate in practical activities to examine the core concepts that underpin movement and influence performance and participation in physical activity, sport and exercise.

Unit 1: The human body in motion

In this unit, students explore how the musculoskeletal and cardiorespiratory systems work together to produce movement. Through practical activities, students explore the relationships between the body systems and physical activity, sport and exercise, and how the systems adapt and adjust to the demands of the activity. Students investigate the roles and functions of the main structures in each system and how they respond to physical activity, sport and exercise. They explore how the capacity and functioning of each system acts as an enabler or barrier to movement and participation in physical activity.

Areas of Study:

1. How does the musculoskeletal system work to produce movement?
2. What role does the cardiorespiratory system play in movement?

Unit 2: Physical activity, sport, exercise and society

This unit develops students' understanding of physical activity, sport and society from a participatory perspective. Students are introduced to types of physical activity and the role of participation in physical activity and sedentary behaviour in their own health and wellbeing, as well as in other people's lives in different population groups. They collect data to determine perceived enablers of and barriers to physical activity and the ways in which opportunities for participation in physical activity can be extended in various communities, social, cultural and environmental contexts.

Students investigate individual and population-based consequences of physical inactivity and sedentary behaviour. They then create and participate in an activity plan that meets the physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines relevant to the particular population group being studied.

Areas of Study:

1. How do physical activity, sport and exercise contribute to healthy lifestyles?
2. What are the contemporary issues associated with physical activity and sport?

Physical Education Units 1-4

Unit 3: Movement skills and energy for physical activity, sport and exercise

This unit introduces students to the biomechanical and skill acquisition principles used to analyse human movement skills and energy production from a physiological perspective. Students use a variety of tools and techniques to analyse movement skills and apply biomechanical and skill acquisition principles to improve and refine movement in physical activity, sport and exercise. They use practical activities to demonstrate how the correct application of these principles can lead to improved performance in physical activity and sport.

Students investigate the relative contributions and interplay of the three energy systems to performance in physical activity, sport and exercise. In particular, they investigate the characteristics of each system and the interplay of the systems during physical activity. Students explore the causes of fatigue and consider different strategies used to postpone fatigue and promote recovery.

Areas of Study:

1. How are movement skills improved?
2. How does the body produce energy?

Unit 4: Training to improve performance

In this unit, students analyse movement skills from a physiological, psychological and sociocultural perspective, and apply relevant training principles and methods to improve performance within physical activity at an individual, club and elite level. Improvements in performance, particularly fitness, depend on the ability of the individual and/or coach to gain, apply and evaluate knowledge and understanding of training. Students analyse skill frequencies, movement patterns, heart rates and work to rest ratios to determine the requirements of an activity. Students consider the physiological, psychological and sociological requirements of training to design and evaluate an effective training program.

Students participate in a variety of training sessions designed to improve or maintain fitness and evaluate the effectiveness of different training methods. Students critique the effectiveness of the implementation of training principles and methods to meet the needs of the individual, and evaluate the chronic adaptations to training from a theoretical perspective.

Areas of Study:

1. What are the foundations of an effective training program?
2. How is training implemented effectively to improve fitness?

Psychology

Psychology Units 1-4

What is Psychology all about?

Psychology is the scientific study of mental processes and behaviour in humans. Biological, behavioural, cognitive and socio-cultural perspectives inform the way psychologists approach their research into the human condition.

Unit 1: How are behaviour and mental processes shaped?

In this unit, students examine the complex nature of psychological development, including situations where psychological development may not occur as expected. Students examine the contributions of classical and contemporary knowledge from Western and non-Western societies, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to an understanding of psychological development and to the development of psychological models and theories used to predict and explain the development of thoughts, emotions and behaviours.

They investigate the structure and functioning of the human brain and the role it plays in mental processes and behaviour, and explore brain plasticity and the influence that brain damage may have on a person's psychological functioning.

Areas of Study:

1. What influences psychological development?
2. How are mental processes and behaviour influenced by the brain?
3. How does contemporary psychology conduct and validate psychological research?

Unit 2: How do external factors influence behaviour and mental processes?

In this unit, students evaluate the role social cognition plays in a person's attitudes, perception of themselves and relationships with others. Students explore a variety of factors and contexts that can influence the behaviour of individuals and groups, recognising that different cultural groups have different experiences and values. Students are encouraged to consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's experiences within Australian society and how these experiences may affect psychological functioning.

Students examine the contributions that classical and contemporary research have made to the understandings of human perception and why individuals and groups behave in specific ways. Students investigate how perceptions of stimuli enable a person to interact with the world around them and how their perceptions of stimuli can be distorted.

Areas of Study:

1. How are people influenced to behave in certain ways?
2. What influences a person's perception of the world?
3. How do scientific investigations develop understanding of influences on perception and behaviour?

Psychology Units 1-4

Unit 3: How does experience affect behaviour and mental processes?

The nervous system influences behaviour and the way people experience the world. In this unit, students examine both the macro-level and micro-level functioning of the nervous system to explain how the human nervous system enables a person to interact with the world around them. They explore how stress may affect a person's psychological functioning and consider the causes and management of stress.

Students investigate how mechanisms of memory and learning lead to the acquisition of knowledge, the development of new capacities and changed behaviours. They consider the limitations and fallibility of memory and how memory can be improved. Students examine the contributions that classical and contemporary research have made to the understanding of the structure and function of the nervous system, and to the understanding of the biological, psychological and social factors that influence learning and memory.

Areas of Study:

1. How does the nervous system enable psychological functioning?
2. How do people learn and remember?

Unit 4: How is wellbeing developed and maintained?

Consciousness and mental health are two of many psychological constructs that can be explored by studying the relationships between the mind, brain and behaviour. In this unit, students examine the nature of consciousness and how changes in levels of consciousness can affect mental processes and behaviour. They consider the role of sleep and the impact that sleep disturbances may have on a person's functioning.

Students explore the concept of a mental health continuum and apply a biopsychosocial approach, as a scientific model, to analyse mental health and disorder. They use specific phobia to illustrate how the development and management of a mental disorder can be considered as an interaction between biological, psychological and social factors. Students examine the contributions that classical and contemporary research have made to the understanding of consciousness, including sleep, and the development of an individual's mental functioning and wellbeing.

Areas of Study:

1. How does sleep affect mental process and behaviour?
2. What influences mental wellbeing?
3. How is scientific inquiry used to investigate mental processes and psychological functioning?

Religion and Society

Religion and Society Units 1-4

What is Religion and Society all about?

Religious traditions develop and evolve over time through the participation and contribution of members and through interactions with society. Throughout history, religion and society have interacted with each other in broad ways in response to a range of important issues. Religion initiates changes to society and vice versa, and the consequences of these dynamic processes are part of the scope of this study. Some religious traditions continue to thrive while others have declined or disappeared, or parts of them have been assimilated into other religions, allowing their ideas to live on in some form. New religious movements can develop into religious traditions.

Unit 1: The role of religion in society

In this unit, students explore the spiritual origins of religion and understand its role in the development of society, identifying the nature and purpose of religion over time. They investigate religion, including the totality of phenomena to which the term 'religion' refers, and acknowledge religion's contribution to the development of human society. They also focus on the roles of spiritualities, religious traditions and religious denominations in shaping personal and group identities over time.

Students examine how individuals, groups and new ideas have affected and continue to affect spiritualities, religious traditions and religious denominations. The unit provides an opportunity for students to understand the often complex relationships that exist between individuals, groups, new ideas, truth narratives, spiritualities and religious traditions broadly and in the Australian society in which they live.

Areas of Study:

1. The nature and purpose of religion
2. Religion through the ages
3. Religion in Australia

Unit 2: Religion and ethics

How do we know what is good? How do we make decisions in situations where it is unclear what is good or not good? Do we accept what society defines as good? Do we do what feels right? Or do we rely on a definition of what is good from a spirituality, religious tradition or religious denomination? What are the principles that guide decision-making? Ethics is concerned with discovering the perspectives that guide practical moral judgement. Studying ethics involves identifying the arguments and analysing the reasoning, and any other influences, behind these perspectives and moral judgements. An important influence on ethical perspective is the method of ethical decision-making, made up of concepts, principles and theories.

In this unit, students study in detail various methods of ethical decision-making in at least two religious traditions and their related philosophical traditions. They then explore ethical issues in societies where multiple worldviews coexist, in the light of these investigations.

Areas of Study:

1. Ethical decision-making and moral judgement
2. Religion and ethics
3. Ethical issues in society

Religion and Society Units 1-4

Unit 3: The search for meaning

The beliefs of religion are the ideas held about ultimate reality and the meaning of human existence, such as the purpose of all life and notions of the afterlife. These beliefs, together with their expressions through other aspects, form the distinctive identity of a religious tradition or religious denomination.

In this unit, students study the purposes of religion generally and then consider the religious beliefs developed by a religious tradition or religious denomination in response to the big questions of life. Students study how particular beliefs within a religious tradition or religious denomination may be expressed through the other aspects of religion, and explore how this is intended to foster meaning for adherents. Students then consider the interaction between significant life experiences and religion.

Religious traditions or religious denominations are selected from Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

Areas of Study:

1. Responding to the search for meaning
2. Expressing meaning
3. Significant life experiences, religious beliefs and faith

Unit 4: Religion, challenge and change

This unit focuses on the interactions over time among religious traditions and religious denominations and the societies of which they form a part. For a large part of human history, religion has been drawn on as a truth narrative, offering a means for finding answers to the big questions of life. Religious traditions and religious denominations are in a dynamic process of engagement and negotiation with members individually and collectively, as well as with other key institutions in the wider society associated with power, authority and credibility. Religious traditions and religious denominations are living institutions that interact with society and can likewise be influenced by society. They can stimulate and support society, acting as levers for change themselves and embracing or resisting forces for change within society.

Students explore challenges for religious traditions or religious denominations generally over time and then undertake a study of challenges and changes for a religious tradition or religious denomination.

Areas of Study:

1. Challenge and response
2. Interaction of religion and society

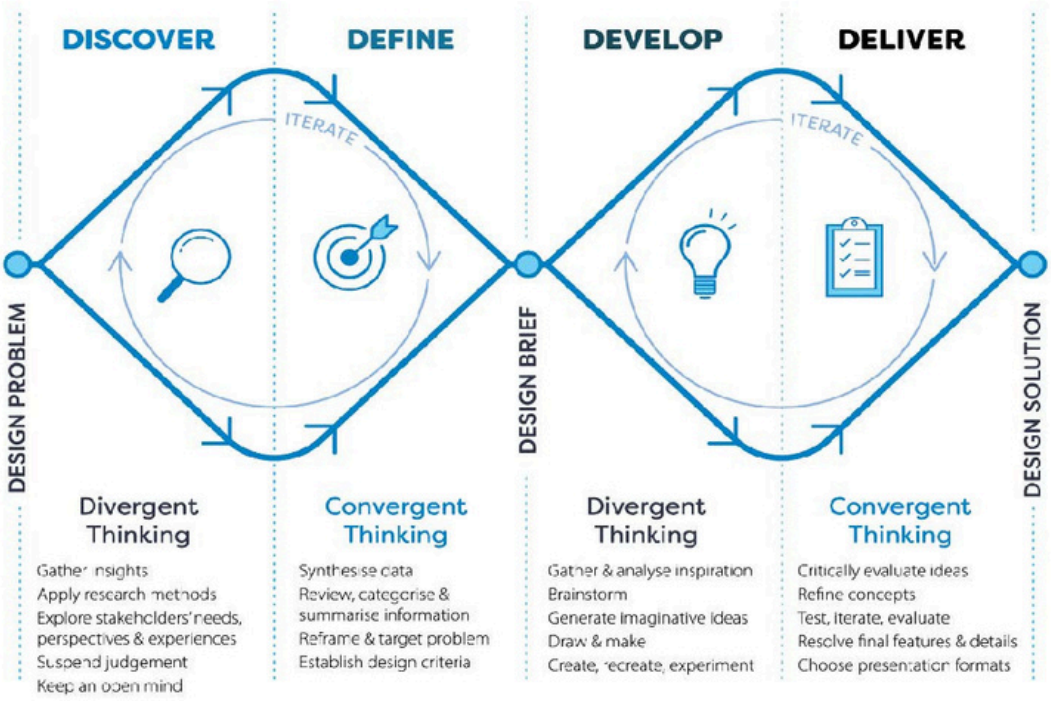
Visual Communication and Design

Visual Communication and Design Units 1-4

What is Visual Communication and Design all about?

Visual Communication Design is distinct in its study of visual language and the role it plays in communicating ideas, solving problems and influencing behaviours. Students learn how to manipulate type and imagery when designing for specific contexts, purposes and audiences. In doing so, students learn how aesthetic considerations contribute to the effective communication and resolution of design ideas, and how an understanding of visual language and its role and potential form the foundation of effective design practice.

The VCD design process model, shown below, underpins the study.



Unit 1: Finding, reframing and resolving design problems

In this unit, students are introduced to the practices and processes used by designers to identify, reframe and resolve human-centred design problems. They learn how design can improve life and living for people, communities and societies, and how understandings of good design have changed over time. Students learn the value of human-centred research methods, working collaboratively to discover design problems and understand the perspectives of stakeholders.

Areas of Study:

1. Reframing design problems
2. Solving communication design problems
3. Design's influence and influences on design

Visual Communication and Design Units 1-4

Unit 2: Design contexts and connections

Students draw on conceptions of good design, human-centred research methods and influential design factors as they revisit the VCD design process, applying the model in its entirety. Practical tasks across the unit focus on the design of environments and interactive experiences. Students adopt the practices of design specialists working in fields such as architecture, landscape architecture and interior design, while discovering the role of the interactive designer in the realm of user-experience (UX).

Areas of Study:

1. Design, place and time
2. Cultural ownership and design
3. Designing interactive experiences

Unit 3: Visual communication in design practice

In this unit, students explore and experience the ways in which designers work, while also analysing the work that they design. Through a study of contemporary designers practising in one or more fields of design practice, students gain deep insights into the processes used to design messages, objects, environments and/or interactive experiences.

Areas of Study:

1. Collect - inspirations, influences and images
2. Extend - make, critique and reflect
3. Connect - curate, design and propose

Unit 4: Delivering design solutions

In this unit, students continue to explore the VCD design process, resolving design concepts and presenting solutions for two distinct communication needs. The ideas developed in Unit 3, Outcome 3 are evaluated, selected, refined and shared with others for further review. An iterative cycle is undertaken as students rework ideas, revisit research and review the design criteria defined in the brief.

Areas of Study:

1. Design process: refining and resolving design concepts
2. Presenting design solutions

Vocational and Education Training (VET)

HERITAGE COLLEGE KNOX

VET stands for Vocational Education and Training delivered to secondary schools (VETDSS). VET gives students specific practical skills and knowledge to help them in the workplace. VET allows students to do nationally-recognised training as part of their VCE. Students can combine general and vocational studies to explore career options and pathways, and develop skills that prepare them for the workforce and further study.

Why choose VET?

- Combine general and vocational studies
- Explore career options and pathways
- Gain a nationally-recognised qualification or credit towards a qualification that contributes to the VCE
- Develop skills that equip students for the workforce and further study

VET credit towards the VCE

- All VCE VET programs provide credit towards the VCE in the same way as a VCE study. One unit is awarded after the completion of 90 nominal hours of Units of Competency (UOCs).
- Most VCE VET programs can provide credit for VCE Units 1 to 4. A small number of shorter qualifications can provide credit for VCE Units 1 and 2 only.

The contribution of VCE VET programs to the ATAR is as follows:

- Where a scored Units 3 and 4 sequence is available, it contributes directly to the ATAR, either as one of the student's primary four studies or as a fifth or sixth study. Students must complete additional scored assessments and an exam.
- For unscored VCE VET programs, students who successfully complete a Units 3 and 4 sequence can receive a 10% increment towards their ATAR.
- The Victorian Tertiary Admission Centre (VTAC) may award students who receive a Units 3 and 4 sequence through Block Credit Recognition a 10% increment towards their ATAR.

For more information

VCAA Student Guides

VET information

Things to consider when selecting a VET course

Students can study selected VET courses through a TAFE institute or another secondary college one afternoon per week (usually on Wednesdays). Students are required to organise their own transport to and from the TAFE or other provider location.

Students who decide to do a VET course within VCE will complete five VCE subjects at Year 11 instead of six. The VET program takes the place of the 6th VCE study. The school timetable is developed to minimise a student missing other periods for VET each week; however, if a VET students misses a period to attend VET, it is their responsibility to stay up to date.

Certain VET courses incur an additional tuition fee. If applied, this will appear on your financial statement from the school. A materials cost of approximately $450.00 is often charged for some VET courses. In some instances, students will also be required to purchase and supply their own items such as uniform and steel capped boots (see Vocational Education and Training Delivered to Secondary schools (VET) for required items for the VET course). Payment of these charges are the responsibility of parents.

A list of VET courses available to students can be obtained from the Senior Coordinator and Careers Office.

Useful Resources to Consider

01. VTAC Year 10 Guide

Provides information to help Year 10 students identify their strengths, weaknesses and goals.

Year 10 Guide

02. VTAC Year 11-12 Guide: Researching courses

Provides information to help Year 11 students identify their strengths, weaknesses and goals.

Year 11 Worksheet

03. Course Search

Discover information about post-secondary courses (universities, TAFEs and colleges).

Course Information

04. My VCE Guide

Support and resources provided by VCAA to help navigate VCE.

Student Guide

Secondary Support Staff

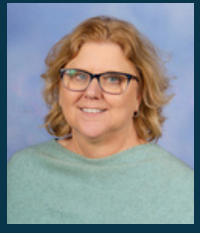
With extensive experience, our staff are always available to offer advice, support, and encouragement as students navigate the complexities of Years 11 and 12.



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