Mary MacKillop College
2017 Year 11 VCAL Handbook
You are about to undertake your final years at Mary MacKillop College and as senior students you will play a very important role in the life of the College. You will be in a position to provide leadership to the more junior students both on and off campus. They will look to you for example, encouragement and advice. Hence your approach to life as a VCAL student must be positive, well considered and in keeping with your career and further education aspirations.

In 2017 we are encouraging all VCAL students to embrace the challenge of not only pathway success but also in being leaders and role models for the College Cohort.

All VCAL students have the capacity to show leadership. In any capacity, both formal and informal, they have the opportunity to have a positive impact on not only other students and the College in general but on themselves. We are challenging the VCAL students to participate and integrate with College life and understand that VCAL is about career pathways, but also carries the responsibilities of leadership.

The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning is a hands-on option, which provides practical work-related experience, as well as literacy and numeracy skills and the opportunity to build personal skills that are important for life and work. The Year 11 and 12 VCAL program has a vocational emphasis. It is an applied learning approach to senior studies. It offers a pathway into employment, traineeships or apprenticeships. In VCAL students connect with their communities and gain real life experiences. Real life tasks are used to achieve leaning outcomes from a number of the VCAL strands. Learning is at times integrated across a number of subjects. In VCAL knowledge is shared and teachers recognise the knowledge learners bring to the learning environment.

VCAL is not for all students. It is for those that want to work towards an apprenticeship, traineeship or school based apprenticeship. It is for students who are highly motivated, industrious and have initiative. Students need to be hardworking in classes and demonstrate that they can work independently. VCAL is for students that are working to the best of their ability.

The College looks forward to working with the VCAL students in 2017 as they pursue success and all its rewards.
The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

The VCAL Program

VCAL is not designed for all students; it is a specific program that may be undertaken only by application to the VET Coordinator.

The program is designed around Applied Learning where VCE is structured around theoretical practice of studies. VCAL is designed to be based upon the foundation of competent skills and application, this does not mean that VCAL is any less of an academic challenge to students, it requires a specific skill set and students must meet very strict criteria to be assessed as competent in outcomes.

The principles behind VCAL require a negotiated curriculum, where teachers and students engage in a dialogue about their curriculum. Student will attend school each day for lessons and have access to some VCE subjects if they wish to select these.

A change in 2017 is that Work placement will take place during the last two weeks of each term.
Student Programs

Work Related Skills (WRS)

School based projects focusing on enterprise, teamwork, communication, resume writing, job applications, researching industry areas, OH&S etc. This unit includes structured work placements.

Please note: Students are responsible for their own work placements. literacy and numeracy skills and the opportunity to build personal skills that are important for life and work.

Personal Development Skills (PDS)

This subject builds on competencies developing the knowledge and skills that leads to the development of self, social responsibility, building community, civic responsibility and improving self-confidence.

Literacy & Numeracy Skills (LNS)

Literacy Skills curriculum encourages the development of knowledge/skills, in the contexts of family, employment, further learning and community.

Numeracy Skills curriculum develops skills to use mathematical skills within society related to design, measuring, time, travel etc.

Religion

This subject looks at practical aspects of Religion to everyday life. Students work to developing their faith into real life applications of their life and practical applications of issues around refugees, social justice and community.
VCAL Assessment

School-Based Assessment

For satisfactory completion of a unit, a student must demonstrate achievement of each of the outcomes as specified in the Unit of Competency. The teacher of the unit makes decisions as to what constitutes “competency.” As school-assessed coursework forms part of the on-going learning, feedback will be provided to students on the work being assessed. Students are advised to retain all coursework until end of the school year in case the Victorian Curriculum & Assessment Authority wishes to examine the material.

Achievement of an outcome means:

- The work meets the required standard
- The work was submitted on time
- The work is clearly the student’s own
- There has been no breach of rules
Assessment principles for VCAL learning programs

Assessment within the VCAL should be based on the following principles:

- Assessment tasks/activities should be grounded in a relevant context and not be culturally biased.
- Students should have the opportunity to demonstrate achievement at their own pace.
- Instructions for assessment tasks/activities should be clear and explicit. Students must know what is expected and the criteria by which satisfactory completion will be established.
- Time allowed to complete a task should be reasonable and specified and should allow for preparation and reflection as appropriate to the activity. Where the assessment task is linked to a project or activity, the assessment tasks/activities may take place over a number of weeks.
- Assessment tasks/activities should be open-ended and flexible to meet the specific needs of students.
What must students do to receive a VCAL qualification?

A student is awarded a Certificate when they gain credits for 10 units that fulfil the minimum requirements for a student’s learning program. A credit is gained for successful completion of a unit of study. A unit of study can be:

- 1 VCAL unit
- 1 VCE unit
- 90 hours for VET modules/units of competence and/or Further Education (FE) modules.

Each unit of study must be justified against the purpose statement for one of the four VCAL curriculum strands.

A student’s VCAL learning program must include:

- a minimum of two VCAL units
- at least one literacy unit*
- at least one numeracy unit
- at least one unit from the Industry Specific Skills strand. At the intermediate and Senior levels this must include a unit of study from a VET qualification
- at least one unit from the Work Related Skills strand
- at least one unit from the Personal Development Skills strand
- at least six credits at the level or above, of which one must be literacy and one VCAL Personal Development Skills unit.

*If a student is enrolled in a VCAL literacy unit to fulfil the Literacy Skills strand requirement, the student must complete the VCAL Literacy – Reading and Writing unit at the certificate award level.

For satisfactory completion of a unit, a student must demonstrate achievement of each of the outcomes for that unit as specified in the Study Design. This decision will be based on the teacher’s judgment of the student’s performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit. The College has developed a number of policies to enable these judgments to be made as consistently and fairly as possible. A summary of these policies follows. Students and parents should become very familiar with them.
The School and VCAA requires regular attendance.

Therefore:

Students must be in school throughout the hours of a normal school day.

Students are to attend all timetabled periods. In addition to VCAL classes this includes all Homeroom sessions, Assemblies and scheduled subject activities.

Students are expected to attend TAFE and work placement.

Students are to be punctual to school and to class.

Appointments are expected to take place out of school hours. If this is not possible, advance notice is required. Appointments for driving lessons and tests and other such activities are not permitted during school hours.
Submission of work

Deadlines and late submission of work

A VCAL Student has the sole responsibility of ensuring all of their pieces of assessment are given to their class teacher on time. A VCAL Student must be able to organise and manage their time effectively.

If a student is absent on the due date, they must make every effort to ensure the work is delivered to the teacher on the day they return to the College. Otherwise, the work must be submitted to subject teacher accompanied by a note from the parents explaining the absence and appropriate documentation.

Extension

Extension is the process of granting additional time to complete work.

- At the beginning of the Unit work schedules will be provided to students showing all dates for the submission of assessment tasks.
- Subject teachers may grant extensions of up to two school days at their own discretion, if satisfied with the reasons given by the student.
- A longer extension may be granted to students by the VET Coordinator, if they submit a written application with supporting evidence for an extension. This must be done at least 3 days prior to the published submission date. Requests for such extensions will only be considered in the case of serious circumstances.
- The VET Coordinator, in consultation with the subject teacher will make final decisions on extensions.
- Normally only one extension will be considered in each Unit of competency.
- Where an extension has been granted and a student fails to submit a piece of work by the revised date, the “Not component” result will be recorded and parents will be informed.
- Subject teacher’s records will show all details of extensions granted.
- Students who fail to submit work by the appropriate date may be referred to the VET Assessment Panel.

Parents will be advised by the subject teacher if a student:

- fails to submit work by the due date
- submits work of an unsatisfactory standard

Parents will be sent a letter by the VET Coordinator if a student:

- repeatedly fails to submit work by the due date
- has been identified as at risk of failure
**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is a Learning Outcome?**

For every subject there is a series of learning outcomes. These outcomes state what you will be studying during the unit, and what you should be able to do by the end of the semester. These are the things you will be tested on, and they form the basis of your assessment; you must satisfactorily complete them.

**What does Competent mean?**

This means that you have fulfilled the requirements for a particular outcome. The teacher will set a number of tasks, and these must be completed properly to demonstrate that you have achieved that outcome. To achieve satisfactory completion of a unit, you must satisfactorily complete every outcome in that unit of competency. The consequences of failing to do this are serious. The unit cannot be counted towards your VET or VCAL, and you may even find yourself having to repeat it, especially if it is required for a university course you wish to enter. In addition, you can be given an grade of “Not competent” – if you:

- hand the work in late
- copy someone else’s work
- help someone else to cheat
- accept “undue assistance” for the work
- Breach the school’s attendance rules.

For further information refer to the Policy of Satisfactory Completion of VCAL Studies section of the Manual.

**What is VET?**

VET stands for Vocational Education and Training. It refers to enhanced senior school studies, which enable a secondary student to combine their VCAL studies with vocational training.

**Where can I get more information about VCAL?**

For general VCAL information consult the ET Coordinator. For subject specific information, consult your subject teacher. Useful websites on VCAL are [www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au).

**What if my child wishes to study a VET through an external provider and what is the cost?**

If a student elects to study a VET subject that is not offered by the College parents must pay the gap between the course cost and the funding the College receives through VETIS. Enrolment for external VET courses will not be completed until payment is made in full to the College. For further information, please see the VET Coordinator.

The present costs of subjects studied through the trade skills centre is $450.
Application to enrol in the VCAL Course

This form should be printed and completed and returned to Mrs Steenholdt by 10 June 2015.

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Please answer all of the following questions in the box below each question

**What are your interests once you have finished school?** (eg. Apprentice motor mechanic, TAFE Course, employment).

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**Do you currently hold a part-time job? Please outline where if you do.**

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**Are you involved in any community or sporting activities?** (E.g. volunteer work, sport).

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<td>Which VET/TAFE subject would you like to include in your VCAL?</td>
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<td>What are your expectations of VCAL? What do you think it will be like?</td>
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