VCE studies and the ATAR in 2015
Common misconceptions

Areas you may need explained when selecting your VCE studies are:

- how scaling works
- ‘easy’ and ‘hard’ studies
- why completing a VCE LOTE or a mathematics study does not guarantee you a ‘high’ ATAR
- Higher Education studies (replacing Extension studies in 2012).

Choice includes example VCE programs with a variety of study combinations showing that it is not which studies you choose that affect your ATAR, but how well you perform in those studies.

If you have any queries about this publication, talk to your VCE coordinator or careers teacher, see the VTAC website: www.vtac.edu.au or telephone VTAC on 1300 364 133.

About this publication

Choice is a companion to VICTER 2015. Choice provides a snapshot of the tertiary education system for Year 10 students, explains the terms you need to be familiar with and debunks some of the myths commonly associated with choosing studies by using real life examples.
VTAC CourseLink

VTAC CourseLink is a web-based information service available on the VTAC website.

You can register under student access by entering your email address, choosing a 4-digit PIN and planning a VCE program by selecting from the VCE studies available in a selection box.

You can save the program created and go back in using your login and PIN.

By developing your own sample VCE programs you can:

• compare VCE studies with course prerequisites for 2014 or 2015

• compare one VCE program with another

• sort tertiary course choices by region, area of interest or institution.

VICTER

VICTER is a publication in which institutions outline the VCE study requirements needed for entry into their courses in two years time. This advance information is vital for Year 10 students planning a VCE curriculum and a future tertiary direction.

VICTER is available online at www.vtac.edu.au and is regularly updated so students have access to the most up to date information when choosing their VCE studies.
Other resources

**TAFE and Training Course Directory**

Email tafe.courseline@edumail.vic.gov.au  
Telephone 131 823 (local call)  
(+613) 9651 4701 (interstate/international)  

**The Job Guide**

Web www.jobguide.deewr.gov.au  

**Youth**

Web www.youth.gov.au

**Youth Central**

Email youthcentral@dhs.vic.gov.au  
Web www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au
As a Year 10 student about to choose your VCE study program, the choices can seem a little overwhelming. There might be many questions you are asking yourself:

- How do I know what I will want to do in two years? Study? Work? Travel?
- What if I change my mind?
- How do I know which studies are going to suit my interests?
- How do I know which studies are best for me?
- What if I don't get a good ATAR, and what is a good ATAR?

It is important to realise that the decisions you make now are not binding for life. There are many avenues to tertiary study and/or the job you want. It doesn't hurt however to do some investigation and planning so that you give yourself the best opportunity to be happy with your choices in the long run.

Think about what you like, are good at and what field of study and/or work you are interested in pursuing. If you are interested in tertiary study then check out **VICTER 2015**, which lists the tertiary courses you will be able to choose from when you finish your Year 12 studies—these are tertiary courses that commence in 2015.

Even if you haven't made up your mind yet about tertiary study keep reading and use the information in this booklet to help you choose your VCE studies.
Understanding jargon

Sometimes the most confusing thing about making informed decisions is understanding the language used. The following definitions may provide you with some clarity.

Frequently used statements

Minimum tertiary entrance requirements
You must meet minimum tertiary entrance requirements for Victoria to be eligible for entry into courses (Certificate IV and above) through VTAC. To meet the minimum tertiary entrance requirements you must have satisfactorily completed the VCE or its equivalent—including the appropriate number of units and have completed Units 3 and 4 of an English study in that sequence in the same year.

Course and institutional requirements
You must meet institutional and course requirements to be eligible for entry into a course. No matter how good your ATAR is, unless you also meet the prerequisites and complete the extra requirements you will not be considered by course selection officers for their courses.

Prerequisites
Prerequisite studies are those VCE studies that you must have successfully completed in order to qualify for a course. Courses with prerequisites specify which VCE units are required and the result that must be achieved. VICTER 2015 lists the prerequisites required for the courses you will be applying for through VTAC when you finish your VCE.

To stay up-to-date on any changes or additions to course information subscribe to our RSS Feed, VTAC Blog, Twitter or Facebook page.

Extra requirements
These are requirements set for a course in addition to the VCE that you must satisfy to be considered for selection.

Extra requirements for art and design courses at some institutions are published in their policy statements in VICTER 2015.

If you want a hint of what's to come, check out Extra requirements under the course information in CourseSearch on the VTAC website (www.vtac.edu.au)

Middle-band
Many courses specify additional factors that are considered for applicants whose ATAR falls in the middle-band. The middle-band is the ATAR range just below the minimum ATAR for automatic selection for a course.

Higher Education studies
The VCAA provides very able students the opportunity to undertake some approved Higher Education study as part of the VCE. These studies are recognised as Higher Education studies contributing to completion of the VCE. If you are undertaking such a study, it may count as an increment (fifth or sixth) study provided the conditions outlined in VICTER 2015 are met.

Study groupings
There are many study groupings used in prerequisite, middle-band and ATAR calculation statements. English and mathematics are the most common. For a complete list refer to VICTER 2015.

Mathematics studies
Further Mathematics; Mathematical Methods (CAS); Specialist Mathematics; any Mathematics Higher Education study.
English studies
English; English (ESL); Literature; English Language; any English Higher Education study.

(VCE) VET studies
VET programs with Unit 3 and 4 sequences can contribute to the ATAR in two ways. VET sequences with scored assessment may be included in the calculation of the ATAR aggregate. VET studies with no scored assessment may be counted as fifth and/or sixth studies. The increment will be 10% of the average of the primary four ATAR subject scores.

Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)
Like the VCE, the VCAL is a recognised senior qualification. The VCAL is another pathway to tertiary study. Students who undertake the VCAL are generally focused on training at TAFE, apprenticeships or getting a job after completing Year 12.

Terms associated with the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)

ATAR
The ATAR is an overall percentile ranking reflecting your comparative Year 12 achievement relative to the relevant age group in a given year. Your ATAR is developed from an aggregate of your VCE study scores. The aggregate is calculated by adding the scores of the primary four studies to a maximum of two available (and permissible) increments. To be eligible for an ATAR you need a minimum of four permissible scorable studies and have successfully completed the VCE. ATAR calculations are subject to the restrictions outlined in VICTER 2015.

Study score
A score from 0-50, determined by the VCAA, which shows how you performed in a study relative to all other students doing that same study. It is based on your results in school assessments and examinations.

Scaling
A study score provides an indication of your relative performance in a particular study. Scaling adjusts for differences in abilities of students undertaking different studies, so that the scaled study scores are comparable across different studies. It ensures that students are neither advantaged or disadvantaged on the basis of the studies they choose. All VCAA study scores are scaled by VTAC. See ABC of Scaling on the VTAC website.

ATAR subject score
The scaled score is referred to as the ATAR subject score and contributes towards the calculation of the ATAR.

Restrictions on studies used in the ATAR calculation
Studies with similar emphasis or content may not be used in combination for the calculation of the ATAR. For a complete list of these restrictions, refer to VICTER 2015.

ATAR calculation

Primary four
The four studies that are counted first in the calculation of the ATAR. The primary four aggregate is made up of the ATAR subject score in one of English, English (ESL), Literature or English Language added to the next best three permissible ATAR subject scores.

Increments
An increment is 10% of any fifth and/or sixth permissible ATAR subject score that is available. Increments are added to the primary four during the calculation of the ATAR.

Aggregate
The total produced by adding the primary four to a maximum of two available (and permissible) increments.
VTAC

The Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) is the central office that administers the application and offer process for places in tertiary courses at university, TAFE and independent tertiary colleges. VTAC receives and forwards application information and supporting documentation to the course selection authorities at institutions.

After selection decisions have been made by the course authorities at institutions, VTAC sends offer letters to applicants on the institutions' behalf.

- VTAC provides a central point of contact for applicants, by ensuring that relevant information is collated into one place and distributed to the institutions.

- VTAC calculates The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank and is responsible for scaling the VCAA study scores into ATAR subject scores.

- VTAC conducts information sessions for secondary school students and their parents, careers teachers and adults returning to study.

Contact details:
Telephone: 1300 364 133
Email: www.vtac.edu.au/contact-us.html
Web: www.vtac.edu.au

VCAA

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) administers the two Victorian senior secondary certificates. The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) is awarded for the successful completion of secondary education and provides pathways into tertiary education, training and work.

The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) is a practical work related certificate and provides pathways into training, apprenticeships and work.

Once your VCE and VET results have been issued, your study scores and grades are passed on to VTAC for the calculation of the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

Contact details:
Telephone: (03) 9651 4300
1800 134 197 (for country callers)
Email: vcaa@edumail.vic.gov.au
Web: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au
Participating institutions and qualifications

Types of Institutions
Currently there are 12 universities, 18 TAFE providers and 26 independent tertiary colleges offering courses through VTAC. There are also 12 independent tertiary colleges which administer their own applications and offers but promote their courses through VTAC. These institutions are listed in the VTAC Guide and in VICTER 2015.

Universities
...offer mainly 3-year and 4-year degree courses, although some offer diplomas, advanced diplomas, double degrees and honours programs of differing lengths. Many university courses have prerequisites.
Prerequisite studies for specific courses are listed in VICTER 2015 and should be read closely when planning your VCE program. Students can use this information in VTAC CourseLink to plan their VCE program and work towards the course they would like to do.

TAFE providers
...offer certificate I-IV, diploma and advanced diploma courses. Most courses are offered either full-time or part-time. Some TAFE providers also offer degree courses.
Many VET courses don't have prerequisites, so VICTER 2015 provides an overview of the types of courses that can be undertaken at TAFE providers. Generally, TAFE courses offered through VTAC are post-Year 12 and include full time certificate I to IV, diploma, advanced diploma and degree courses.

Independent Tertiary Colleges (ITCs)
...offer a range of courses including certificate, diploma, advanced diploma and degree courses.

Types of courses
Courses available to current Year 12 students through VTAC include bachelor degrees, associate degrees, advanced diplomas, diplomas and certificate I-IV courses.
A bachelor degree is an award for a three to four year completed tertiary course and associate degrees require at least two years full-time study.
Diplomas and advanced diplomas generally require at least two years full-time study although some offer an accelerated one year program.
Diplomas are designed to teach theoretical knowledge and improve technical and creative skills while certificate IV courses can be (but are not always) the first year qualification of a diploma and are largely focused on preparing students to go straight into the workforce.

Higher education courses
Higher education courses provide professional qualifications with an emphasis on theory and the development of transferable skills. Some courses are vocational, leading to careers in clearly identified areas while others are 'generalist' with no vocational skills component.

Vocational Education Training (VET) Courses
VET courses provide both professional and para-professional qualifications with an emphasis on practical skills and vocational outcomes that lead into higher level training, higher education or employment. A wide variety of study areas are offered.
**Why are studies scaled?**

In calculating VCE study scores, the VCAA does not determine any measure of overall performance in the VCE, but rather the performance of each student in each individual study. In order to facilitate selection, institutions require an overall measure of the performance of students undertaking the VCE. Before the scores of different VCE studies can be added together for the ATAR, they need to be scaled to take into account the different ability levels of the students taking different studies. This ensures that the ATAR provides a fair comparison for all students regardless of the combination of studies they take. The scaled score is called the ATAR subject score.

**Principles of scaling**

Scaling is the process which adjusts VCE study scores to enable:

- you to take the studies that you enjoy and are good at
- all studies to be treated equally in the ATAR
- tertiary institutions to fairly compare students who have taken different combinations of studies.

VTAC adjusts study scores for each study to take account of the strength of competition in each study. The strength of competition is measured by how well the students performed in their other studies.

- If competition is high—study scores are scaled up.
- If competition is low—study scores are scaled down.

For example, Economics students in 2011 were of above average strength in their other studies. Therefore the scaling process adjusted the study scores upwards so that the average ATAR subject score for Economics was set at 32.

The 2011 Psychology students averaged around 28 in their other studies, therefore the scaling process adjusted the study scores downwards.

**When are study scores scaled?**

VCE studies are always scaled in the year in which they were undertaken (this may not necessarily be in the year in which you receive your ATAR). If you do a Unit 3 and 4 in Year 11, the study will be scaled that year.

- This scaling process is carried out each year for each VCE study and VCE VET program for which there is a study score. There are no pre-determined outcomes. The adjustments are based on the performance of students each year. Nevertheless, the process is very stable and there is very little difference from year to year in terms of the scaled ATAR subject score.

**Mathematics**

VCE mathematics studies are designed to cater for students of differing abilities and interests. Specialist Mathematics is the most difficult, followed by Mathematical Methods (CAS) and then by Further Mathematics.

To ensure that students undertaking the more difficult mathematics studies are not disadvantaged, all three mathematics studies are scaled against each other as well as being scaled against all other studies. The higher of the two resulting scales is used.
Like all VCE studies, there is no point choosing the more difficult mathematics unless you are capable of performing well.

**Languages Other Than English (LOTE)**

As a result of government policy to encourage the study of languages, each LOTE is adjusted up by adding five to the initial ATAR subject score average. All students of a LOTE receive an adjustment, but it is not a uniform adjustment.

For scores at or close to 30, the adjustment is 5, but the adjustment decreases as the score moves away from 30. For full details refer to *VICTER 2015*.

For more information about Scaling and the ATAR refer to the ABC of Scaling available at www.vtac.edu.au
Choosing your VCE studies

Selecting your VCE program based on studies that are scaled up will not guarantee you a high ATAR.

The ATAR is based on your overall performance in VCE studies, not just one or two studies.

You are better off choosing studies that:

• you enjoy
• you are good at
• reflect what you are interested in studying at tertiary level
• help provide you with more career options if you are undecided.

Scaling ensures that all studies are treated equally in the ATAR calculation, so that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged by the studies they undertake.
Examples of ATAR calculation

The following real examples provide an overview of some of the study programs chosen by the 2011 graduating VCE group.

**KIM**

Here is an excellent example of a student who knew what she liked, what she was interested in and good at. Kim chose studies based on all of these factors and as a result was in the top 10% of the state.

Kim completed Psychology in Year 11 so her study score was scaled in 2010. Her result for Psychology was included as an increment in the calculation of her ATAR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Unit 3/4 Results</th>
<th>GA 1</th>
<th>GA 2</th>
<th>GA 3</th>
<th>Study Score</th>
<th>ATAR Subject Score</th>
<th>2011 Aggregate Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39.86</td>
<td>39.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Mathematical Methods (CAS)</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>38.43</td>
<td>38.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37.40</td>
<td>37.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36.77</td>
<td>36.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35.52</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33.46</td>
<td>3.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Aggregate Truncated at 1 decimal place* 159.3

**2011 ATAR** 90.05
JADE

Jade chose five studies that were scaled up. Jade did not excel in any of her studies and even though five of her six studies were scaled up, the ATAR was still not as high as it might have been if she had chosen studies based on what she was good at, interested in and enjoyed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Unit 3/4 Results</th>
<th>GA 1</th>
<th>GA 2</th>
<th>GA 3</th>
<th>Study Score</th>
<th>ATAR Subject Score</th>
<th>2011 Aggregate Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30.02</td>
<td>30.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25.74</td>
<td>25.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Mathematical Methods (CAS)</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>E+</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25.05</td>
<td>25.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Specialist Mathematics</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21.68</td>
<td>21.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.63</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>E+</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18.63</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aggregate Truncated at 1 decimal place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>106.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011 ATAR</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>54.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ALEX

Alex didn't know what he wanted to do when he left school, so he chose a wide range of studies that he was good at. He performed well across all of his studies, met the prerequisites of the course he was interested in and was offered a place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Unit 3/4 Results</th>
<th>GA 1</th>
<th>GA 2</th>
<th>GA 3</th>
<th>Study Score</th>
<th>ATAR Subject Score</th>
<th>2011 Aggregate Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31.00</td>
<td>31.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Religion &amp; Society</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39.89</td>
<td>39.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>History: Revolutions</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36.65</td>
<td>36.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Further Mathematics</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28.70</td>
<td>28.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Information Technology - IT</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27.04</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24.60</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aggregate Truncated at 1 decimal place 141.4

2011 ATAR 80.20
PETA

Peta did a total of six studies over two years. A maximum of six studies can contribute to the ATAR. English and the next three highest study scores after scaling make up the primary four. The two highest increments are then included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Unit 3/4 Results</th>
<th>GA 1</th>
<th>GA 2</th>
<th>GA 3</th>
<th>Study Score</th>
<th>ATAR Subject Score</th>
<th>2011 Aggregate Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41.61</td>
<td>41.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43.05</td>
<td>43.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Further Mathematics</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>39.40</td>
<td>39.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36.67</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Approved University Extension Study: Result: Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aggregate Truncated at 1 decimal place

2011 ATAR

As can be seen in the example, Peta attempted an approved Extension Study.

Note: Extension studies have now been replaced by recognised Higher Education studies, which will include first year university studies and advanced standing TAFE courses, recognised by the VCAA and made available to VCE students who are very able academically and have the endorsement of their school principal. Upon satisfactory completion, such a study will contribute as an increment in the calculation of the ATAR.

Peta's result in the Extension study program contributed 5.0 to the aggregate. Results in Higher Education studies will contribute as an increment based on the student’s performance in the particular Higher Education Study.

See VICTER 2015 for more information and calculation details about Higher Education studies.
Sam chose a range of studies including VCE VET Equine Industry Studies which was included in the primary four along with English, Health & Human Development, and Biology.

VET in Schools programs contribute directly to completion of the VCE. VET programs with Units 3 and 4 scored sequences are calculated for the ATAR in the same way as other VCE studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Unit 3/4 Results</th>
<th>GA 1</th>
<th>GA 2</th>
<th>GA 3</th>
<th>Study Score</th>
<th>ATAR Subject Score</th>
<th>2011 Aggregate Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30.04</td>
<td>30.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Health &amp; Human Development</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32.14</td>
<td>32.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>VCE VET Equine Industry</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30.56</td>
<td>30.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29.13</td>
<td>29.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Business Management</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24.85</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Further Mathematics</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22.73</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Aggregate Truncated at 1 decimal place 126.6

2011 ATAR 70.05
TESS

Tess completed a VCE VET Wholesale Retail & VET Personal Services Program that does not have a scored component. This means that this study contributed only as an increment. The increment is calculated as 10% of the average of the primary four studies. In this example it means that the ATAR increment for the VCE VET Wholesale Retail & VET Personal Services Program was 3.36.

Tess has done a total of seven studies over two years. The seventh study, which is English is provided to institutions for their information.

See VICTER 2015 for more information about VET studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Unit 3/4 Results</th>
<th>GA 1</th>
<th>GA 2</th>
<th>GA 3</th>
<th>Study Score</th>
<th>ATAR Subject Score</th>
<th>2011 Aggregate Contribution</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>SS</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>35.18</td>
<td>35.18</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Further Mathematics</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>31.79</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Wholesale Retail &amp; VET Personal Services A Bulk Credit (non scorable VET)</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>10% of Primary Four Average</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aggregate Truncated at 1 decimal place 141.2

2011 ATAR 80.05
Kris was interested in studying in the humanities field, so he chose mostly humanities based studies to meet the prerequisites for those courses.

Kris enjoyed these studies and was good at them so he performed well overall and received a good result. He met the prerequisites for the course he was interested in and was offered a place. It is interesting to note that Kris did not undertake any mathematics studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Unit 3/4 Results</th>
<th>GA 1</th>
<th>GA 2</th>
<th>GA 3</th>
<th>Study Score</th>
<th>ATAR Subject Score</th>
<th>2011 Aggregate Contribution</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
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<td>A+</td>
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<td>SS</td>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Art</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>2.53</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Aggregate Truncated at 1 decimal place 163.6

2011 ATAR 91.80
MIA

Mia completed VCE LOTE Polish and the scaling process added 5 points to the average of the initial Polish scaled score, giving her an ATAR subject score of 29.19.

Choosing a LOTE does not guarantee 5 extra ATAR points. The 5 point adjustment is made at the average or mean scaled score, prior to finalising the ATAR subject score for the LOTE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Unit 3/4 Results</th>
<th>GA 1</th>
<th>GA 2</th>
<th>GA 3</th>
<th>Study Score</th>
<th>ATAR Subject Score</th>
<th>2011 Aggregate Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
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<td>LOTE: Polish</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29.19</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Further Mathematics</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Information Technology - IT Applications</td>
<td>SS</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>2011</td>
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Aggregate Truncated at 1 decimal place 126.6

2011 ATAR 70.05
Students say

Masad, 18

What were your reasons for choosing your VCE studies? Was it related to the course you wanted to do?

I chose the subjects which I loved and was really eager to study. I actually found the selection process arduous and confusing, mainly due to the fact that I wanted to study everything and was mesmerised by all the available subjects. Eventually though I narrowed it down to the subjects I was most interested in after seeing the textbooks and content of the main subjects.

What resources were the most helpful?

Past students, teachers, looking at past exams.

Is there anything you wish someone had told you before you chose your studies?

I wish I knew how heavily dependent the medicine course was on Year 12 biology. Had I known that, I probably would have studied it.

Do you have suggestions for others choosing their VCE studies?

Do what you love. It is excruciatingly difficult to study for a subject which you do not enjoy, especially around exam time when you have to immerse yourself in the subject. Have variety in your subject choices.

I found that moving between different subjects, from the nebulous, philosophical world of English to the empirical, concrete knowledge in maths really assisted my study. I don't think I would have been able to sustain my sanity in Year 12 had I been doing subjects all of one type.

Was Year 12 what you expected?

Before the year commenced, I was enveloped by a shroud of fear and apprehension. I expected it to be the worst, most agonising time of my life. But, it wasn't. I would say, rather, that it was the most enjoyable time of my life. The bonds which were created in that year with teachers, co-ordinators and fellow students are different from anything else. There was also virtually no competitive atmosphere at my school. Therefore, I found the collaborative environment, which permeated almost every aspect of our lives, really nurturing and sustaining.

VCE Studies
(Isik College, Eastmeadows)

English, Literature, Chemistry, Further Mathematics, Mathematical Methods (CAS), Physics.

Now Studying:
Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery at Monash University.

“Enjoy It. It was seriously the most fun-filled time of my school life.”
There were definitely the sporadic episodes of anxiety, tears and stress, but they weren't representative of my Year 12 experience, for which I was very glad. I was also warned by many that Year 12 strains all friendships, but I never experienced that.

What was the most difficult part?
I would say the most difficult part about Year 12 was taking it seriously when the students around you are not. This attitude was especially prevalent at the commencement of the year. Personally, consistent study helped me, as opposed to condensing everything in a few weeks. It was difficult, though, to maintain that consistency when everyone was relaxing and forgetting about work. I tried, though, to always keep my goal in perspective and work towards it.

Is there anything you wish someone had told you before you started Year 12?
I wish I was properly informed about the role stress played in illness. I am finding that now, after I have come to know the relationship between academic performance and stress, I have become better at controlling my stress levels. So, I would really recommend that schools thoroughly educate their students about this.

If you could do it again would you do anything differently?
Eat healthier food and structure my time well. Also, allocate ‘family time’ as I found that I became disconnected from my family at many points during that year. Additionally, (I would) appreciate it and enjoy the year more and get to know everyone in my cohort. There were many girls at my school who I didn’t get to know as well as I should. Now, I wish I had properly known them when I had the chance.

Who or what helped you keep going?
The most important person in my life during Year 12 (and always) was my mother. She was the one who listened to me, calmed me and kept everything in perspective. I found talking to her really reassuring and comforting. We made going out for coffee a regular ritual, even during exam time. This helped me unwind and forget about the academic facet of my life for a couple of hours each week.

My older sister, who had finished Year 12 the previous year, was extremely helpful as well, constantly reminding me of what really mattered. In terms of academic motivation, though, my teachers were the ones I sought help from.

What changes did you make to your life during Year 12?
I studied two Unit 3 and 4 Subjects in Year 11, so I was already accustomed to the workload and expectations and already had made changes to my lifestyle to accommodate for that. I established a routine of studying around four hours a day during weekdays. Consequently, there was not much time for socialising, except on the weekends and holidays.

What advice would you give to others studying the VCE?
Enjoy it! It was, seriously, the most fun-filled time of my school life. Coming to school everyday was exciting and I genuinely looked forward to it. Also, don’t perceive it as a competition. Losing friendships is not worth it at all. My amazing friends were what got me through Year 12. Without them, I would not have achieved anything. In addition, having knowledge and studying with others helped me retain information. So, it was beneficial from a selfish point of view as well.
Thomas, 18

VCE Studies
(Camberwell High School):
English, Classical Studies, Drama, Further Mathematics, History: Revolutions.

Now studying:
Bachelor of Arts (Global) at Monash University.

What were your reasons for choosing these studies? Was it related to the course you wanted to do?
I chose my subjects primarily based on interest. At the beginning of Year 12 I had no idea where I wanted to head in terms of tertiary education. I chose a maths in order to keep my options open, but chose histories purely based on interest and drama simply because I love it.

What resources were the most helpful?
When it came to keeping my options open in terms of prerequisites, the VICER was a great reference to flick through, although for me, I believe talking to older students about their subject choices is the most beneficial thing you can do in terms of getting an idea of how you want to be spending your time in VCE.

Is there anything you wish someone had told you before you chose your studies?
Don’t even look at how subjects scale. I almost didn’t take drama, put off by how much it apparently ‘scaled down’. In the end, it was my best subject and I loved it.

Do you have any suggestions for others choosing their VCE studies?
Regardless of what people tell you, unless you need a specific subject for your desired course there is no point doing something you don’t enjoy. You will be dedicating a huge amount of time to your studies, and it is a lot easier to do well at something you enjoy, rather than struggling for inspiration in a subject you find dry and can’t wait to finish.

Was Year 12 what you expected?
It’s hard to know what to expect going into Year 12, so I can’t say it was, no. But that definitely wasn’t a bad thing.

What was the most difficult part?
Year 12 can be very stressful, and there are times where it can be hard to balance studying and stressing about studying.
Is there anything you wish someone had told you before you started Year 12?
Not particularly, I got many different people telling me many different things, which at times seemed contradictory, but all proved to be true. Take any advice you can get, and don’t be afraid to ask for help.

If you could do it again, would you do anything differently?
Not really. I enjoyed myself for the most part, and was pleased with how everything turned out. Having said that, if I had my time again, I wouldn’t stress over the smaller things. Don’t worry if you get a poor SAC result, in 12 months, you’ll realise how little it matters in the realm of things.

Who or what help you keep going?
A positive attitude and good mates. And my parents, if I didn’t mention them I’d be in trouble.

What changes did you make to your life during Year 12?
At home, I developed an understanding with my parents. VCE was almost as stressful for them as it was for me. As for my social life, I found myself going out of an evening more, dedicating day time to work.

What advice would you give to others studying the VCE?
VCE is as much about attitude as it is hard work. Maintain a positive outlook, keep doing the things you love, even if it is harder to strike a balance and remember not to let it get the better of you. Hard work and a good time aren’t mutually exclusive.
Holly-Jayne, 19

What were your reasons for choosing these studies? Was it related to the course you wanted to do?
Yes it was related. I thought studying Physical Education and Psychology would give me a good insight into the physical education course and prepare me for what I was going to study at UB. I also chose to study health as I wanted to teach it as my second subject when I became a fully qualified teacher.

What resources were the most helpful?
I found the VTAC Guide really helpful when choosing my subjects. It allowed me to look up the courses I may be interested in studying, and provided me with the subjects I would have to complete to be eligible for that course. Teachers and career advisers that came to our school were also very helpful in discovering what VCE studies I should venture on with.

Is there anything you wish someone had told you before you chose your studies?
Choose subjects that relate to what you think your chosen career will be. This makes your course selection process a lot easier at the end of the year.

Do you have any suggestions for others choosing their VCE studies?
Make sure you choose subjects that you enjoy. Of course these have to benefit you when it comes to choosing your tertiary studies, but there is no point going into the school year wishing you had chosen other subjects.

Was Year 12 what you expected?
In a way yes and no. I knew there would be a lot on my plate in relation to homework and school work. There definitely was a lot of work involved. The social side of it allowed me to have a break from my studies every now and then, but I’d recommend a good balance of work and play. It’s only one year of hard work and you’ll thank yourself in the end if you put your best effort into your VCE.

VCE Studies
(Ballarat Clarendon College):
English Language, Further Mathematics, Health & Human Development, Physical Education, Psychology.

Now studying:
Bachelor of Education (Physical Education) at University of Ballarat.

“Aim high, you will surprise yourself at your results if you work hard and put in the effort. VCE is over before you know it.”
What was the most difficult part?
Having to work out a good study routine. Coming up to SACS and exams, I used to "stress myself out" trying to cram an endless amount of information into my brain. If you work out early in the year what type of study routine best suits you, you'll place less stress on yourself.

Who or what helped you keep going?
My friends and family. They were always there to push me along and motivate me, but also allowed me to have a break from my studying and get away from the work load for a short while. Remember to be good to them!

What changes did you make to your life during Year 12?
I had a special studying area set up, so whenever I sat down in that area I knew I had to be focused and get my work done. I also had to make a lot of sacrifices in regards to my social life, it is only for such a short time though so it didn't affect me in a big way.

What advice would you give to others studying the VCE?
Make sure you study in a quiet area away from others, it will benefit you when it comes time to sit your exams.

Is there anything you wish someone had told you before you started Year 12?
Aim high, you will surprise yourself at your results if you work hard and put in the effort. VCE is over before you know it! Make sure you enjoy it as well though, you want Year 12 to be a memorable experience.

If you could do it again would you do anything differently?
I would try to be a bit more organised in terms of studying for my SACS. During the year you really need to keep track of upcoming SACS, and make sure you are as well prepared as possible when studying for them. Don't leave it to the last minute, schedule your SACS study weeks ahead.
Annie, 18

What were your reasons for choosing these studies? Was it related to the course you wanted to do?

I chose English Language and Literature because I love language; though I’m not particularly good at learning other languages. I love the concept of language in general and although very different (and an unusual combination) these two subjects gave me a good grounding in both. International Studies I chose for its humanities basis, plus the opportunity to gain a better understanding of world politics. Geography I completed a year ahead, and I chose this subject as I thought it would be a good one as an introduction to VCE which it did very well. Biology and Maths were to keep some maths and science in my program though not necessary, I thought it would be useful just in case to have some variation.

What resources were the most helpful?

There are so many resources out there you just have to find them (and have the ability to judge their worth). VCE Notes is particularly good for maths/science; SparkNotes was brilliant for Literature (assuming they had the text I was studying). Google Alerts I used to send me email alerts of newspaper articles for Geography, International Studies and English Language. I never had enough time to read them for the first two but they were brilliant for Language. The VCAA website is also extremely useful. And, of course, my teachers and friends the two best resources of all!

Is there anything you wish someone had told you before you chose your studies?

Possibly to have thought more about doing three essay based subjects. Whilst I don’t regret them, and wouldn’t give them up if I could go back, I wish that I’d been a bit more prepared for them. I knew that I would have to do a lot, but had tried to ignore it to some extent. But when between the three exams I had to write four essays and five extended responses (plus short answer) and two of the exams were on the same day - It was something that I wish I’d thought about more.

“IT was one of the most enjoyable years of my life so far.”

VCE studies
(Strathmore Secondary College)
English Language, Literature, International Studies, Geography, Biology, Mathematical Methods (CAS)

Now Studying:
Bachelor of Arts at The University of Melbourne
Do you have any suggestions for others choosing their VCE studies?
Make sure you do what you love. If you enjoy a subject, you'll do far better in it. Having said that, my least favourite subject in terms of what we were studying, Maths was one of my favourite classes, due to the teacher and class make up. But primarily do what you love (and ensure you take into account prerequisites).

Was Year 12 what you expected?
In some ways yes it was extremely full on, especially towards the end, and I never had enough time. But in others, no it was also one of the most enjoyable years of my life so far. Nothing beats the camaraderie (both students and teachers) of Year 12.

What was the most difficult part?
Juggling everything. I had far too many extra-curricular commitments. I don't regret these, as I managed to get into the course that I wanted and complete so much outside of my actual studies. But juggling so much was definitely the most difficult part.

Is there anything you wish someone had told you before you started Year 12?
Remember that you are there to study and do well. If you find that you're sitting with a group of people that are pulling you back or distracting you in class, even if they're close friends, move and the sooner the better. I didn't realise until it was far too late, and I wish that I'd sat somewhere else in a particular class from the beginning of the year.

If you could do it again would you do anything differently?
I wish that I'd identified sooner that I was struggling with Literature, and where I was struggling with it. I was expecting a drop in marks, so thought nothing of it when it occurred. I wasn't until some time later that I realised that my marks were dropping. All of my friends were continuing to get high scores. If I'd worked on that sooner, I'm sure I could have done significantly better in that subject.

Who or what helped you keep going?
I found that I never got stressed out about my study, as I was also, as a member of the Scout Association, completing my Queen's Scout and a number of other associated activities. I was always stressed about these things, so by the time I got to school, I was usually the calmest in the class.

What changes did you make to your life during Year 12?
I tried (unsuccessfully) to cut down on outside activities, but did manage to take up nothing new. I tried harder to get to bed early (unsuccessfully), and tried to be more ruthless with my time. Don’t waste it, as there’s never enough.

What advice would you give to others studying the VCE?
Prioritise subjects based on their importance to your end score. Be frank with yourself, your teachers, and your parents; and be practical with your time.
To help you choose your VCE study program...

**Do**

- think about what interests you have and what you like doing
- check out what VCE studies your school is offering
- talk with your careers teacher and/or VCE coordinator
- keep your options open
- log on to VTAC CourseLink to start researching the types of courses you will be eligible to apply for
- attend Open Days.

**Don't**

- panic if you have no idea what studies to take up
- choose studies that you don't like just because you think doing those studies will help you get a 'good' ATAR—your ATAR represents your performance across all of your studies
- choose studies based on their scaling—there is no point selecting a study that you struggle with simply because it is scaled up.