

Dear Principal

The purpose of this letter is to provide details of new measures to address the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on VCE students.

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) will introduce a new 'Consideration of Educational Disadvantage' process to calculate VCE scores, taking into account disruptions to learning this year.

To calculate scores, the VCAA will consider a range of data provided by schools, together with each student's exam results.

The data will include:

- the ranked order of students prior to and following the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- a student's indicative grades prior to and following the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- school assessments completed prior to remote and flexible learning
- the General Achievement Test (GAT)
- a range of statistical analyses used to calculate final results.

Information about the onsite conduct of SACs and VCE examinations will be provided shortly.

Consideration of Educational Disadvantage

The Consideration of Educational Disadvantage process when calculating VCE scores will require schools to provide the VCAA with information on students and school circumstances to help calculate their study scores.

This will include information about the circumstances and impact of the disruption on students, as well as additional data, such as estimated assessment scores.

To ensure the fairness of final results, the VCAA will consider all available information, including the General Achievement Test (GAT) and appropriate comparisons of performance across all assessments and schools.

Based on this analysis, where disadvantage has been identified, this will be factored into students' final scores, which will then contribute to the study score calculation. This approach will ensure that Victorian students are not disadvantaged in comparison to interstate students in the calculation of their individual ATAR.

Examples of significant severe impacts relating to coronavirus include:

- direct impact on the health and wellbeing of the student and/or their immediate family
- long-term or multiple school closures and significant gaps in continuity of learning
- ongoing issues while learning remotely, e.g. internet connectivity issues, unavailability of a suitable device or workplace
- students dealing with substantial extra family responsibilities, e.g. increased caring responsibilities for other siblings
- ongoing mental health challenges
- financial stress
- family violence
- family member losing their job (student needing to extend their hours of employment or gain employment).

Further details about this process will be communicated to schools via a Notice to Schools shortly.

Key dates

The General Achievement Test (GAT) will be rescheduled to Wednesday 7 October 2020.

The scheduling of end of year examinations will remain unchanged, with the exception of the Critical Thinking Test, which will be rescheduled from Wednesday 12 August.

The examination dates provide sufficient time for teachers and students to complete adjusted VCE Unit 4 learning and school-based assessments, and to adequately prepare for the examinations.

They also allow for VCE and VCAL students to receive their results and ATARs on 30 December as per the current schedule.

VTAC

Students applying for tertiary places in 2021 can also submit a Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS) application to VTAC.

The VCAA is working closely with VTAC to ensure information collection processes are complementary and do not create unnecessary additional administrative burden for schools and/or students.

Students who have been impacted by additional factors and circumstances can still apply for special consideration through the VCAA's existing processes to ensure they are not adversely and unfairly affected.

Victorian Certificate of Education – Vocational Education and Training Programs

A number of VCE VET Units 3 and 4 sequences have practical assessment as a core component of their design.

The VCAA is mindful of the significant variations in VCE VET programs.

Where possible, the VCAA encourages schools, assessing groups and registered training organisations to support students to complete units contained within the VCE VET scored programs and to undertake scored tasks as close to normal as possible – provided they can be done safely, under the current health restrictions.

For VCE VET programs where students are unable to complete all required practical assessments from a unit, schools may use completed assessments of other units, to arrive

at a school-based assessment score. This will support students to meet the VCE VET requirements and completion of the VCE.

Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)

The VCAA encourages schools to use the existing flexibility within VCAL to adjust learning and teaching programs to support students who may be learning remotely.

Existing current provisions that allow for adjustment within the VCAL include:

- assessing on more than one occasion can mean as few as two
- assessing in multiple contexts includes topics and/or content and can all be online and still be in different contexts
- teacher professional judgements continue to form the basis for the successful completion of VCAL units.

It may be difficult for students to demonstrate certain key skills, such as teamwork and developing community projects, while they are learning remotely. Strategies to address this are available on the [VCAA website](#)

More information

Minister Merlino has prepared a [video message](#), I encourage you to view this and to share with all staff at your school.

Attached is a letter from the Minister for you to share with your Year 12 students.

For more information about VCE and VCAL, see the [VCAA website](#)

If you have any other concerns or queries, please contact us on vcaa@education.vic.gov.au or 03 9032 1629.

Yours sincerely



SHARYN DONALD

Chief Executive Officer

10 August 2020