Rationale

This policy is specifically designed to address the assessment of VCAL at the CCAE. Accurate and comprehensive assessment of College and student performance aids in establishing open communication, guides student learning, assists in establishing future direction, and helps to identify areas of exemplary performance, as well as those in need of support and assistance.

Aims

- To assess College and student performance accurately and comprehensively.
- To improve student learning by determining areas of future need and areas of current exemplary performance.

Implementation

- Assessments will be used to identify future lessons and directions, rather than simply as a reporting tool.
- Teachers will include a variety of assessment strategies in teaching programs to provide multiple sources of information about student achievement. These may include tests and assignments, projects, portfolios, performance observations, discussions and involvement in state-wide standardised testing processes such as AIM and College entry assessment tests.
- Teachers will develop a manageable system of keeping records that provide a rich mixture of observations of student learning.
- The College will develop individual learning improvement plans for all students in consultation with students, parents and where appropriate, with others with specific expertise.
- Self-assessments by students against individual goals will be a feature of our assessment regime.
- Program support groups will help develop individual student profiles containing learning goals. Progress towards learning goals will be assessed and reported by the program support group.
- Students for whom English is a second language will have their progress in English assessed in relation to the stages of the ESL Companion.
- The College will provide all required performance data to VCAA and the community by means of the College Council’s annual report, as well as an Executive Summary of performance data to all families.

Assessment Principles

The following principles will underpin assessment within VCAL:

- 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 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 in order to meet the specific needs of students.

Integrated Assessment

- Assessment of VCE units will be conducted in accordance with VCE study designs and cannot be integrated with other assessment.
- Nevertheless, where possible, assessment in VCAL will focus on integrated curriculum projects/activities.
- In developing an integrated or holistic approach to assessment, a number of outcomes (VCAL learning outcomes and/or Vocational Education and Training [VET] or Further Education [FE] learning outcomes) from curriculum components in one or more strands can be grouped in logical, assessable activities that take into account project-based or thematic activities.

Assessment for Students with Special Needs

While flexibility in relation to assessment methods, assessment tools and context is encouraged to meet the specific needs of students, the validity and reliability of the assessment must not be compromised in any way.

Flexibility in assessment methods is important particularly for students with disabilities. In these instances allowance should be made for the students as they may take longer to adequately respond to the tasks/activities required for the assessment and it may be unrealistic to expect these learners to achieve the outcomes in the stated nominal hours

- Students should be given an extended time-frame when, and if, required, to complete the required learning outcomes.
• For those students who do not have the ability of speech then other forms of communication should be used to demonstrate achievement of unit outcomes.
• Similarly learners who are learning impaired may sign their responses.
• Students with physical disabilities may use any modes of communication that have been devised to assist them in the communication process (e.g. voice synthesisers or communication boards).

In terms of the nationally accredited VET programs, those students with special needs will be judged as competent or not yet competent based on the same industry performance criteria as are applied to other students/employees.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in VCAL**

• Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is applicable to students who are able to demonstrate prior knowledge and experience relevant to the Personal Development Skills (PDS) unit and Work Related Skills (WRS) units. Where students have been granted RPL, evidence will be kept and filed by the CCAE that demonstrates successful completion of all the unit learning outcomes associated with the RPL process.
• RPL is the acknowledgement of skills and knowledge obtained through any combination of formal or informal training, work experience or general life experience. Decisions regarding RPL for VCAL PDS and WRS units are the sole responsibility of CCAE and its accredited staff and RPL Manager.
• RPL attracts an administrative fee of $7.50 per nominal hour (capped at $250.00 per unit) plus $50 enrolment fee with this cost paid in full prior to the RPL process being commenced. There is no guarantee that the RPL will produce a ‘competent’ outcome. It could be that the student is regarded as ‘not yet competent’ at the conclusion of the RPL process and has those units to complete by other means.

**Assessment Principles for Specific VCAL Units**

A VCAL unit provides learning outcomes that are not linked to a particular curriculum or syllabus design. This enables the development of locally relevant teaching and learning programs encompassing broad generic skills important for active citizenship, work and further study that will lead to achievement of the learning outcomes. The learning outcomes are those provided by the published VCAL Curriculum Planning Guides for Literacy, Numeracy, Personal Development Skills and Work Related Skills units.

The assessment principles as outlined at the beginning of this policy document are applicable to the assessment of VCAL units and should enable:
• An integrated or project approach to the development of assessment tasks that recognise that learning has occurred in the context of work and community settings
• Assessments that are linked at times to authentic tasks and activities
• More than one opportunity to demonstrate a learning outcome successfully
• Successful completion of learning outcomes either through an integrated task or spread over a number of tasks
• Assessments that do not disadvantage a student by providing a range of flexible methods that cater to the needs of individual students.

**Assessment Methods for VCAL Units**

A range of assessment methods can be used to verify successful completion of the learning outcomes of each VCAL unit in the VCAL learning program. Assessment methods must be flexible, valid, reliable and fair and may include a compilation of a student portfolio of evidence that can include, but is not restricted to, documented evidence of:
• Student self-assessment
• Teacher observation
• Reflective work journals
• Student log books
• Oral presentations
• Oral explanation of text
• Written text
• Physical demonstration of understanding of written or oral text
• Discussion
• Debates
• Role-plays
• Folios of tasks or investigations
• Performing of practical tasks
• Photographic/video production
• Power-point presentations

**Satisfactory - VCAL Unit Result**
• A student will receive an **S** (satisfactory achievement) for a unit in Work Related Skills, Personal Development Skills and Literacy Skills units when they have **demonstrated** competence in all learning outcomes for the unit.

• In Numeracy Skills units, students must demonstrate competence in five (5) of the six (6) learning outcomes at Intermediate level and six (6) out of the seven (7) learning outcomes at the Senior level.

• All activities designed for assessment of VCAL learning outcomes should be assessed by teachers to verify successful completion. The assessment criteria/elements are provided to further describe the learning outcomes and are intended as a guide for teachers in the design of assessment tasks so as to ensure consistency in the way learning outcomes are interpreted and assessed. There is no requirement to collect evidence for each single criteria/element.

• The curriculum components in a VCAL learning program must be assessed in accordance with the requirements and guidelines outlined in the curriculum documents for the units and units of competency/modules delivered in the learning program.

• All VCAL units must be assessed according to the assessment and quality requirements of the VCAA.

• CCAE is responsible for coordinating the assessment and collection of results for all curriculum components within the VCAL learning program. The satisfactory completion of curriculum components must be in accordance with the assessment guidelines for the accredited curriculum.

• For VCAL units, students will receive a satisfactorily completed (**S**) or a not yet complete (**N**) result for each unit.

• When assessing students with particular/special needs, the validity and reliability of assessment must be maintained. Flexibility in assessment methods should be used to ensure alternative methods are utilised to allow the demonstration of successful completion of learning outcomes without disadvantaging the student.

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**Not Satisfactory - VCAL Unit Result**

Students will receive an **N** in a VCAL unit if they do not meet the course requirements outlined in the Curriculum Planning Guide.

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**Satisfactory - VET Unit of Competency Result**

- Students receive an **S** for a unit of competence when they have demonstrated competence as assessed by the qualified trainers of the Accredited VET Courses that the students enrol in.
- Students receive an **S** for a module when they have demonstrated achievement of all the learning outcomes assessable by CCAE.

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**Not satisfactory - VET Unit of Competence Result**

- Students will receive an **N** for a unit of competence if they have not yet demonstrated competence.
- Students receive an **N** for a module when they have not yet demonstrated achievement of all learning outcomes.
- Where a student has not satisfied sufficient units of competence/modules to be awarded satisfactory completion of a VCE VET unit, the result is left blank.

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**DEALING WITH DELAYED COMPLETION OF SATISFACTORY WORK**

**REDEEMING Outcomes: Submitting Further Work**

- Normally students complete work for a unit during the semester in which the unit is undertaken.
- The CCAE reserves the right to decide to delay decisions about satisfactory completion in order to allow a student to complete or submit further work. This decision is made as a result of consultation between the teacher, the coordinator of the VCAL program and the Manager and/or Administrative Manager.
- If, in the judgement of the teacher/trainer work submitted by a student for assessment of an outcome does not meet the required standard for satisfactory completion the teacher/trainer, **after obtaining written approval** of the coordinator of the VCAL program, may take into consideration work previously submitted by the student provided it meets the requirements set out, or allow the student to submit further work.
- A teacher/trainer, **after obtaining written approval** of the coordinator of the VCAL program, may permit a student to submit further work to meet satisfactory completion requirements of a unit.
- Students may not submit further tasks for the reconsideration of school-assessed coursework [SAC] scores awarded by the College.

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**EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually